Can the sociodramatic theories of social change of Boal be used to change intermediate student outlook on life? (Augusto Boal).

Deanna Marie. Pecaski McLennan

*University of Windsor*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd](https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd)

**Recommended Citation**


[https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/1350](https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/1350)

This online database contains the full-text of PhD dissertations and Masters’ theses of University of Windsor students from 1954 forward. These documents are made available for personal study and research purposes only, in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act and the Creative Commons license—CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivative Works). Under this license, works must always be attributed to the copyright holder (original author), cannot be used for any commercial purposes, and may not be altered. Any other use would require the permission of the copyright holder. Students may inquire about withdrawing their dissertation and/or thesis from this database. For additional inquiries, please contact the repository administrator via email (scholarship@uwindsor.ca) or by telephone at 519-253-3000 ext. 3208.
Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal be Used to Change Intermediate Student Outlook on Life?

By

Deanna Marie Pecaski McLennan

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Faculty of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2003

©2003 Deanna Marie Pecaski McLennan
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.
ABSTRACT

This study examined whether weekly drama sessions based on the sociodramatic theories of Boal (1985) could be used to change intermediate student outlook on life. Grade Eight students participated in ten, forty-minute weekly drama sessions. Each session consisted of activities based on the work “Theatre of the Oppressed,” created by Augusto Boal.

The sample consisted of thirteen boys and eleven girls from an elementary school within a large, urban board of education in Ontario. The criteria for subject selection were pre-determined by the school principal. This was a pre-existing group of “at-risk” adolescents. They had been identified by school staff as being “at-risk” due to behavioural problems in the classroom, lack of motivation in classroom activities, social problems in the classroom and playground, and lack of respect towards peers and/or staff. Often these students were problematic due to varied backgrounds.

Data was collected in many forms. Before students participated in the drama sessions, they wrote a pre-test of the Piers Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale. Students wrote a post-test of this same scale after the tenth drama session. Students wrote in personal reflective journals at the conclusion of each drama session. Field notes on student participation were taken by the teacher-researcher. A final member check was conducted in the form of a written questionnaire.

Five themes emerged from an analysis of the data. It was discovered that student participation in sociodramatic activities affected student outlook on life. Participant exposure to these same activities allowed a means for safe self-expression. The
researcher observed gender differences in the dramatic activity. Student commitment to the drama affected self-concept. The drama sessions were affected by many outside influences in the school the sessions took place. In all, findings indicate that each student who participated in the drama workshops had at least one change in response to the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) – indicating that change occurred in student self-concept. Students also indicated in responses that the drama workshops provided a positive opportunity for their own self-expression. There was also a distinct difference between the involvement of boys and girls in the drama sessions. Boys were more likely to be involved in group discussion and presentation. Girls were passive participants in the games and activities and were less involved in discussion and presentation. Students who were fully committed to the drama in the workshops also had changes in self-concept on the PHCSCS. Students who were not as committed had different kinds of changes on the PHCSCS.
DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my parents, Ernest and Antoinette Pecaski, for their unwavering support and faith in all of my educational endeavours. I believe that my love of education is a reflection of my parents’ fine example. They have each aspired to high achievements in their own educations and have accomplished much in their careers as educators. My father’s Master of Education degree has been the inspiration behind my own burning desire for graduate work. Thank you for encouraging me to follow my dreams!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Kara Smith who served as my Faculty advisor and provided guidance and support throughout my entire thesis process. I truly appreciate the time and effort she has devoted to my work. Dr. Smith was always available to aid me with questions and concerns. She was a wonderful advisor and I genuinely enjoyed the experience of working with her.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Ian Crawford who willingly took on the role of second reader. I have greatly enjoyed the experiences I have had in his classes. He is a great professor and I have always looked forward to having him as an instructor.

I would also like to thank Dr. Bernie Warren. I have had the privilege of having Dr. Warren as a professor and advisor throughout my undergraduate degree. It was Dr. Warren who first introduced me to the dramatic techniques of Augusto Boal. Dr. Warren is a leading researcher in the Drama in Education field, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from him.

To my husband Trevor, I extend my love and gratitude for your undying support throughout my Master of Education experience. Thank you for your continual words of encouragement and support! I love you!
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td></td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. General Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Significance of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Definition of the Terms</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II</td>
<td>REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Self-Concept</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Drama with Adolescents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Theatre of the Oppressed for Social Purpose</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Research Question</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III</td>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Subjects</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Instrumentation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Procedures</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Limitations of the Design</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV</td>
<td>THE STUDENTS AND THEIR RESPONSE TO BOAL</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V</td>
<td>ANALYSIS OF THE DATA</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Student Outlook on Life</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Self-Expression</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Gender Differences in Dramatic Activity</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Commitment to the Drama</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Outside Influences Affecting the Drama</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION ........................................................................................................... 73
A. Conclusions and Recommendations ............................................................. 73
B. Areas for Future Research ........................................................................... 77

REFERENCES .......................................................................................................... 81

APPENDIX A – Piers’ Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale ......................... 86
APPENDIX B – M.Ed. Thesis Petition ................................................................. 90
APPENDIX C – Letter to the School Board Superintendent ......................... 101
APPENDIX D – Letter to the School Principal ............................................... 106
APPENDIX E – Consent Form ......................................................................... 107
APPENDIX F – Student Ranking Sheet of Drama Activities ......................... 109
APPENDIX G – Final Written Questionnaire ..................................................... 110

VITA AUCTORIS ...................................................................................................... 111
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. General Statement of the Problem

'Theatre of the Oppressed' is a form of interactive theatre designed by Augusto Boal in the 1950's (Boal, 1985; Boal, 1992). In this form of theatre, audience members interact with actors on stage by suggesting changes in their dramatic action. This involvement empowers audience members because they are no longer passive viewers of the drama occurring on stage. Instead, they control the action and witness actors giving life to their ideas for change. This allows for a state of constant dialogue to exist between the actors on the stage and the audience members viewing the performance. Many of Boal’s activities focus on bringing the audience into the action of the occurring drama instead of enabling them to be passive onlookers. Engaged participants rehearse strategies for personal and social change (Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994). Theatre of the Oppressed also focuses on the use of theatre and theatre activities to promote self-discovery, self-limitation, and personal attitudes.

Theatre of the Oppressed has been used by actors, political activists, therapists, and social workers to address issues requiring personal and social change (Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994). Theatre of the Oppressed empowers both the actors and audience members involved in its process. It has been used less frequently in the educational system, especially with adolescents. This study seeks to examine whether the empowering techniques of Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed can be used with the same success to create a change in self-concept with adolescent students who engage in its techniques during drama sessions.
The use of Social Theatre in the workplace has had much success in creating social change (Creel, Kuhnes, & Riggle, 2000), (Schutzman, & Cohen-Cruz, 1994), (Helm, 1980), (Kaye, & Ragusa, 1998), (Nelson, 1993). This study seeks to discover whether this same success can be attained in a school setting.

A crucial period for the development of self-concept is early childhood (Helm, 1980). This implies that every attempt should be made as early as possible to aid students in developing a positive self-concept. Teachers need to make every effort to assist students in the quest for higher self-awareness. It has long been acknowledged that the arts, including drama, allow practitioners the tools and opportunities for development of a healthy and positive self-concept (Ackroyd & Pilkington, 1997), (Al-Saadat, & Afifi, 1997), (Irwin, 1987), (Kitaoka, Omizo, & Omizo, 1998) (Taylor, 1994), (Nelson, 1994). As drama is a subject that is currently part of the Ontario curriculum, it seems logical for teachers to utilize its benefits and incorporate its use into students’ daily programs.

The theories of 'Theatre of the Oppressed' have been successful in creating controlled social change (Feldhendler, 1994). This study seeks to discover whether the basic dramatic theories of Boal can be transplanted into an educational setting with the same success as they have had in social settings.

B. **Significance of the Study**

An examination of the literature relating to the research question revealed the following information:

The dramatic techniques of Boal require its participants to role-play forms of conflict that have built up and remained unresolved in their lives. Theatre of the Oppressed performs certain forms of dramatic activities to institute some social change in
the participants' lives. Boal has been used infrequently in Education to try to institute change regarding student concepts of "outlook of life" (Adelman et al, 1989). It has been utilized successfully in other areas with stage actors, business managers, political activists, therapists, and social workers (Schutzman& Cohen-Cruz, 1994). There is a limited amount of research and documentation on the use of Boal activities within the educational environment (Kay & Ragusa, 1998). This study will use the dramatic activities of Boal to create a change in "attitude" for adolescents at risk. Direct involvement in creative activities can develop personal attributes that help people overcome obstructions in their lives. This may aid “at-risk” adolescents to change their perceptions of themselves and their life choices in relation to the rest of society (Nelson, 1993).

The conclusions of this study will affect and influence a number of different groups. These groups include, but are not limited to, students, parents, teachers, curriculum writers, and community artists.

If conclusions of this study support the use of sociodrama in the school environment for the improvement of self-concept, students will benefit the most. Students need to have as many opportunities as possible for self-expression (Somers, 1996) and the development of self-concept, and any activities, which will promote these objectives, will be of great interest and benefit to students.

Parents will be interested and affected by the results of this study because they have a great deal invested in their children and will want to advocate activities in schools which will aid the improvement and growth of children’s self-concept.
This study could affect teachers in a number of ways. Teachers will be interested in practicing sociodrama with their classes if the research supports the use of sociodrama in the development of self-concept.

If results support the use of Boal’s sociodrama with self-concept development, curriculum developers may wish to include mandatory sociodrama activities and regulated amounts of time devoted to sociodramatic activities within the curriculum. If drama is already in the existing curriculum, developers may wish to modify the existing regulations depending on the results of this study.

Community artists involved in sociodrama and the arts will be very interested in the results of this study. All artists wish to advance their field through the respect of the community and the valuable information gained through the use of their art form. If sociodrama is discovered to be beneficial, community experts may be called in as advisors or volunteers to school environments to aid with the implementation of sociodramatic work.

C. Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for this proposal:

Actors: Students who are engaging in the activities and exercises of drama.

Included in this definition would be students taking on the characteristics of a role and engaging in situations as that character.

Forum Theatre: A sociodramatic technique described by A. Boal (1992). It involves the enactment of a scene in which participants dramatize oppressions. Spectators are invited by the leader, or joker, to replace the protagonist in the scene so that alternative endings to the conflict can be created (Schutzman, M., & Cohen-Cruz, 1994).
Image Theatre: A sociodramatic technique described by a series of exercises and games designed to uncover oppressive truths about societies and cultures. Participants are allowed to make still images of their lives, feelings, experiences, and oppressions through the many tools of drama. These tools may include tableaux, role-playing, mime, theatre of the face, dance, or creative movement (Boal, 1992).

Improvisation: Courtney (1989) defines this as “impromptu performance.”

Role-Play: The deliberate acting out of the role of another person. For the purposes of this study, the role-playing is done as part of a learning session directed towards understanding that role or the role’s situations.

Sculptor: An individual who leads his/her peers into a frozen tableau scene, which represents an importance issue or conflict in the sculptor’s life. Without speaking, the sculptor places his/her peers into different positions as though they were pieces of clay. The people being sculpted do not know at that time what the scene or issue is about. An improvised ending to the scene is usually conducted once the frozen scene has been completed. This generates multiple resolutions to the issues. Discussion by participants follows.

Self-Concept: An individual makes a distinction about their self-worth in many areas of life including their physical appearance, personal attributes, anxiety, intellectual status, school status, behaviour, popularity with peers, happiness and life satisfaction. This is known as a measure on the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (see Appendix A). The scale measures six areas of life including physical appearance, personal attributes, anxiety, intellectual status, school status, behaviour, popularity with peers, happiness and life satisfaction.
**Self-Esteem**: The feelings an individual has for himself or herself. For the purposes of this thesis, this term is used synonymously with the term self-concept.

**Sociodrama**: Torrance (1975) defines sociodrama as:

>“Sociodrama examines a group or social problem by dramatic methods. Multiple solutions may be proposed, tested, and evaluated sociodramatically. As new insights or breakthroughs occur, these too can be practiced and evaluated. The production techniques facilitate creative breakthroughs and increase the chances that creative solutions will be produced.”

**Theatre of the Oppressed**: “Dramatic techniques that activate passive spectators to become spect-actors – engaged participants rehearsing strategies for personal and social change” (Schutzman, & Cohen-Cruz, 1994).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Introduction

In order to explore the research question, this literature review covers four distinct domains of theory and research in illuminating self-concept, drama with adolescents, the use of Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1985) for social purpose, and research in drama.

B. Self-Concept

At the turn of the century, the human self was the focus of much study and interest. It became defined by James (1890) as being the sum of all a person can call his or her own. This included the areas of physical self, psychological traits, feelings, family, significant others, possessions, avocation and vocation. These domains composed the significant territories of any person's life and aided in defining what that person considered their true self. Cooley (1902) refined the definition of James and created the concept of looking-glass self. This concept consisted of the idea that a person hypothetically viewed their self in a looking glass or mirror. This allowed the individual to perceive their self as others perceived them. Cooley felt that if the individual could see how others saw them, the individual would be affected positively and negatively by these perceptions and use them to understand their definition of self more fully. These imagined perceptions by the individual using the looking-glass self mentality allowed individuals the opportunity to notice their strengths and weaknesses. Individuals could then build upon these observations and have a better understood self.

Hall and Lindzey (1957) advanced the modern concept of self, when two definitions were assigned by their studies. One part of self became characterized as
consisting of a person’s attitudes, feelings, and evaluations regarding the self, while the other self was characterized by that particular individual’s processes of thinking, remembering and perceiving. Self became divided into two equal parts. Each part needed to exist simultaneously with the other for a person to have a true comprehension of identity.

Taylor (1965) stated that dramatics has been used in schools for many reasons, including as aid to the mental, physical and emotional development of children. It was theorized that drama emphasized creativity, spontaneity, and self-expression, and was an ideal discipline to use in conjunction with the modern classroom to aid students in their development of self-concept.

The value one placed on self was not something that merely existed regularly and naturally for an individual. According to Frey and Carlock (1989), there were many factors which influenced the development of self-concept such as social learning, school experience, parent interaction, group membership, heredity, maturational rates, beliefs, values, attitudes, morals, cognitive dissonance and perceptual field. All of these factors aided the individual in further understanding as well as strengthening the importance and value associated with their self-concept. Frey and Carlock concluded that human interaction and social learning influenced the development of self-concept.

C. Drama with Adolescents

Drama has been described as a method of teaching individuals about many things beyond the scope of the curriculum. According to Way (1967), drama was a rich and living art form, which engrossed its participants in many absorbing occurrences. Drama was concerned with the uniqueness of individuals. Dramatic context allows participants
to truly express themselves in ways they normally could not. A safe environment was created through drama where participants could explore issues, feelings, and situations they normally could not encounter in their real life. Role-playing allowed people the opportunity to develop their self-concept by taking risks and exploring issues important to them. The art form of drama was concerned with the development and expression of individuals and this resulted in the growth and maturation of its actors. The many exercises and activities of drama provided a forum for shared communication and adventures. These exercises were attainable by all who attempted them. In therapeutic and educational drama, all people were able to perform and engage in drama. This interaction of people allowed for the sharing of ideas and emotions, which resulted in a better appreciation for one's self and one's peers. The use of drama was effective in facilitating personal growth and expression of individuality because drama allowed people to begin from whatever growth stage at which they were, and work toward bettering themselves in many different areas.

A two year research project by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts found that students who participated in a comprehensive art program acquired many benefits (Garcia, 1993). These students learned to solve problems, make decisions, build self-esteem and self-discipline, and acquired skills in cooperation and group problem solving. Drama was a subject that was incorporated more into the normal activities of the classroom. The use of drama became an alternative to the traditional paper and pencil method of responding to new information presented in the classroom. Drama was also used as a way for students to respond to new ideas and information shared within the
classroom. The key implication of the research was that drama allowed students the opportunity to explore their own ideas and present these ideas to peers.

An integral part of drama and theatre was the use of movement. According to Warren (1993), the body was an instrument of expression and by using the movements of the body, individuals began to build a picture of the world in which they lived. As participants of drama explored the abilities of their bodies in various styles of movement, they began to realize what they were capable of doing. Individuals began to use their bodies in positive and productive ways that resulted in an awareness of the body’s structure and an increase in self-concept. There was also a direct link between movement and emotion. The way people moved helped them to express their thoughts and feelings. Movement became an outlet for emotions and as a result, people engaged in the movement had an easier time expressing as well as understanding their feelings. Warren explains that dancing and movement allowed individuals to gain in self-confidence and self-management through the acquired knowledge of their bodies, minds, and places in the world. Movement allowed individuals to feel unique and special, and this resulted in a better self-concept for every person involved.

A four year study undertaken by a group of high school and elementary teachers examined the effectiveness and implications of using drama in the classroom on a consistent basis (Somers, 1996). Data was collected using an attitude questionnaire as well as a social distance scale that measured how physically close students would get to one another. The researcher concluded that when students became involved in dramatic activities, they were engrossed in many learning situations. Learning involved studying components of the curriculum as well as developing personal growth and knowledge
through self-exploration. Drama allowed students to create and explore new insights on specific situations, allowing students to become more familiar with items and issues in their immediate environment. This knowledge empowered students, which increased self-knowledge and self-concept. Students also learned to interact with each other on a more effective, consistent basis, so that helping others became a major focus of the study. This resulted in increased group cooperation and collaboration. All of these factors aided in increasing the positive atmosphere in the classroom and a direct result was students felt more positively about themselves and their peers.

In a study involving students with emotional and behavioural difficulties, Widdows (1996) discovered that the drama techniques of role-playing and forum theatre aided in the psychological health of the students involved. Through the use of drama, students built the confidence to take risks and fully engage themselves in this process employed by the teacher. The structure of drama allowed students to feel connected to fellow actors (peers) because the individual actor's personal and sociological interactions were essential elements that allowed the drama to occur and continue in a productive manner. Students involved in the drama were encouraged to work together. Successful drama was a positive result of the cooperation and energy expressed by the students involved. According to Widdows, the long term dramatic activities resulted in students being more sensitive, committed, confident, assertive, eager to learn, and positive. All of these qualities helped to increase student self-concept.

According to Ackroyd and Pilkington (1997), multicultural education has two goals: meeting the educational needs of ethnic minority children and preparing all pupils for life in a multi-racial society. A play was used as a basis for providing students with
the opportunity to experience life in a multicultural society. The drama portrayed in this article allowed children to experience first-hand the joys and frustration of belonging to a particular culture. Children created their own rituals to help portray and experience their culture. The drama allowed children to experience the difficulties that exist when different cultures must live together. The fictional context provided a safe forum for exploring highly contested real world issues. The drama allowed each group to dramatize their own daily life and rituals. These activities allowed students to quickly identify with their own culture and stereotype the other. Teacher narration during the drama explained to each community that a volcanic eruption had destroyed both islands and that now both communities were to live together on an uncharted island. Through role-playing and storydrama, the two communities tried to discover each other, while living in peace on the same island. Pupils were encouraged by their teacher (who was in role) to find ways that the Unicoms and Ebbites could live together peacefully on the island while respecting one another's differences. The Unicoms were a technologically advanced society that thrived through the use of computers. Ebbites were a primitive culture, which relied on nature for basic needs. Students were then stopped for discussion and reflection on what it was like to be a part of a specific culture and then how it felt to suddenly be thrust into living with another culture that was stereotyped. Students discussed how they managed to keep their own "cultural" identity while learning to live with another culture.

Drama and theatre are valuable tools for revising girls’ negative self-images (Lanoux & O'Hara, 1999). According to Lanoux and O'Hara, (1999) positive self-images in pre-adolescent girls can be revised from those based on images dictated from
culture as being the norm. Creative activities for safe self-expression can help pre-adolescent girls, ages eight to eleven, to find their own voice and bring them into their own power. Safe drama activities can provide a safe outlet for girls to begin building their confidence and get in touch with their true self.

The Living Stage Theatre Company of Washington, D.C. conducted a two-week improvisational theatre program with teen mothers ages thirteen to sixteen, living in the Washington, D.C. area. The goal of this program was for the young mothers to adopt the Living Stage philosophy of empowerment through creativity and apply this to their interactions with their children and community (Nelson, 1993). The first few days of the workshop were spent presenting the women with creative challenges that allowed them to draw on their own life experience for solutions. The acting company performed many short scenes about characters in crisis after which the women in the audience were to suggest alternative endings. The women also expressed their feelings through their bodies in human sculptures, painting, visual art media, and photography. Toward the end of the workshop, scenes presented to the women focused on individual characters who had powerful dreams of achieving some goal but were opposed by forces beyond their control. According to Nelson, in each of these scenes, the women chose every time to have the protagonists overcome the issues preventing success. The goal of the workshops was to change the women’s self-perception and their choices in relation to the rest of society.

Al Saadat & Afifi (1997) concluded that drama activities and role-playing could be used as psychological aids to foster self-confidence in inhibited and passive students in the classroom. Students who belong to families in paternal communities tend to be
inhibited in the presence of elders, including teachers. This passiveness usually affects class participation and behaviour. Role-playing activities can be used to help students develop their speaking and communication skills in the classroom and help promote student motivation. Drama also allows students to experience the reward of being an active part of real language communication.

Omizo, Omizo, & Kitaoka (1998) concluded that the use of guided affective and cognitive imagery can be used to enhance self-esteem among Hawaiian children. Sixty children from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of one elementary school were involved in ten weekly guided affective and cognitive imagery sessions. Each session had a specific activity, was forty-five minutes in length, and was scheduled according to the rotary schedule. The goals were to increase awareness of self and others and to develop life skills such as problem solving, coping, and stress management, and also to enhance self-esteem.

In a study involving twelve seventh grade social studies students, Taylor (1994) concluded the teacher-researcher’s structural arrangement of activities was partly responsible for levels of student engagement in the drama. Students were asked to create a human tableau as a beginning drama activity instead of a lengthy, improvised scene. In the researcher’s opinion, an improvised scene at the beginning of the drama work would have been too demanding and logically inappropriate for students with no prior drama experience. Students needed to feel comfortable within the environment to do the drama. Taylor states that “the demands of structural thinking requires teachers not only to contemplate which activity would best fulfill an educational goal, but also where that activity could logically be placed to facilitate that goal.” In this study, the drama
structure was socially determined and constructed based on the students’ needs, interests, and skills. With the growing experience and comfort of the participants, the drama activities were redesigned and modified towards more intricate drama activities.

D. Theatre of the Oppressed for Social Purpose

Theatre and drama were two subjects that were very similar in theory and practice. Boal (1985) has stated that the art of theatre, like drama, allowed for human interaction. This interaction between people created an outlet for expression that allowed the theatre practitioners a place to explore themselves, their peers, and their surroundings. Theatre allowed them a place to invent and discover themselves and the world around them. Through the techniques and art of theatre, a person was able to perceive who they were or were not, and imagine what they might be. This self-evaluation aided participants in exploring their ideas regarding their own self-concept, and provided opportunities for them to explore and strengthen their self-esteem.

According to Linds (1998), Theatre of the Oppressed practices can be adapted for use in educational programs to prevent racism in schools by students as well as teachers. In these programs, facilitators used power plays to allow people who did not know each other to eventually create short plays about whatever concerned them as a collective group. Participants explored how power and powerlessness could be expressed through the body and emotions. Participants used non-verbal exercises to build an understanding of complex themes that were used to create a play to be performed for their peers. These plays are based on the work of Boal. These plays were then concluded with a Forum Theatre performance. This performance aided the group in suggesting and enacting alternative ways of dealing with situations presented in the power plays. Multiple
solutions to the issues presented could be brainstormed. Linds (1998) believed teachers need to be able to identify their own complicity in the education system.

The theories of Boal have been used as a way to discover teachers' further potential for use of theatre in their classrooms (Kaye & Ragusa 1998). A study was presented to examine the multicultural reality of today's schools and to evaluate student teachers' use of Boal's sociodramatic theories. This qualitative study involved reflective journals, classroom discussions, observations, and a series of classroom activities which helped student teachers develop critical thinking strategies for the use of Boal's Theatre in their classrooms. There were three aspects of student activities involved in this study. Students used weekly reflective journals. In each entry, students wrote about different perspectives concerning a question, situation, or case study introduced by the instructor. After the first two weeks of school, exercises from Theatre of the Oppressed were used at the beginning of each class. Small group analyses of responses to these exercises then followed. Scenes were performed again, using suggestions on how to reformat them. Enactments were based on current educational issues. A constructivist classroom was created where participants were able to try out solutions to real-life problems and to discuss the transformation process for solutional change. Participants also began to talk of being in training for further action to bring about change in their own classroom activities. The activities allowed student teachers the opportunity to view their own choice of role in the classroom and school. According to Kaye and Ragusa, (1998) Boal's drama allowed the student teachers a safe space to think about what made their school a positive place for both students and teachers.
Social Action Theatre is an interactive theatre that encourages audience participation (Wilson, 1998). A dramatic scene is presented to an audience. At a random point, a moderator stops the dramatic action and encourages the audience to ask questions of the characters. Actors remain in-role while responding to the audience. After approximately thirty minutes of questions and answers, the actors move out of character. Actors then introduce themselves to the audience and answer questions based on their own life. Actors involved in social action theatre usually have beliefs and issues in their own life similar to those of the character they portray. Actors as well as the audience are allowed self-expression and a creative way to experience the issues in their lives. Social Action Theatre provides a safe and creative way to explore controversial issues and express politically incorrect feelings in a productive format. In this article, Wilson (1998) provides an example of Social Action Theatre performed on a college campus to explore the issue of diversity on campus. Three actors play a scene to an audience and at some point a moderator will stop the action and encourage the audience to ask questions of the characters. After the drama, the audience will have an opportunity to talk with the actors out of character. The scenarios are born of the experiences of at least one of the members of the Social Action Theatre Company and provide safe and creative ways to explore controversial issues and express politically incorrect feelings in a productive format for resolution.

According to Johnson (2001), forum theatre is used in community and young peoples’ theatre, as well as primary and secondary schools to raise levels of consciousness and empower people to challenge victimization. Two female actors piloted a workshop with girls from a year 10 class in a mixed comprehensive school. A
scene was created based on the experience of one of the girls being bullied in the
lunchroom by a fellow male classmate. Through discussion during and after the scene,
the girls became conscious of the occasions they allowed themselves to be bribed,
flattered, and “played” by male classmates to survive in their classroom. The experience
and discussion through drama revealed the issue of sexual harassment and many girls
shared their personal experiences. The forum theatre scene about sexual harassment
allowed the girls to act together, empowering them. A number of decisions were made
including raising the issue of sexual harassment at the next school council meeting,
making an appointment with the head teacher to discuss the harassment incidents, and the
agreement to keep records of any further experiences. Two months after the forum
theatre workshop, a new school rule regarding the intolerance of sexual harassment
involving students was mandated.

In a study by O’Toole & Burton (2002), the issue of sibling confrontations was
explored by a group of year 9 and 12 students through a modified “forum theatre”
experience. The class was invited to intervene and make suggestions regarding how the
confrontation in the scene could be avoided or mediated. The students were permitted to
trial mediation and possible solutions, which are tested in the action of the situation and
also examined by the audience of peers. In this situation, the grade twelve students
created the conflict and invited the grade nine students to provide solutions. A grade nine
member provided a solution that seemed so effective that the class spontaneously and
enthusiastically applauded. The grade twelve students then took separate groups of grade
nine students and created further forum theatres, exploring different conflicts.
Students and teachers in an urban college were involved in a series of Theatre of the Oppressed workshops to respond to student writing anxieties (Creel, Kuhne, & Riggle, 2000). A number of recommendations for the implementation of Theatre of the Oppressed in higher education were formulated as a result of this study. Theatre of the Oppressed in a classroom placed student anxieties and problems into context and urged the students to respond to their learning process in fresh ways. It brought these anxieties into a public space and provided systems for change. The authors suggest that Theatre of the Oppressed in the classroom must be responsive, reflexive, and situated in the moment. It provides students with a space where they can direct their own course of action as a result to personal problems. Teachers are also participants in the process for change because they are asked to act alongside their students. However, Creel, Kuhne, & Riggle (2000) also state that when Theatre of the Oppressed is brought into the classroom, it is distorted from its original form. It is bent into a purpose and power relation for which it was not initially created.

In a separate study, O'Toole & Burton (2002) worked with year eleven, twelve, and nine drama students for an entire term using three sets of drama techniques to explore the nature of conflict. Students were divided into four groups and given their choice of working in process drama, forum theatre, or group play building. Four major conflict areas were identified through student questionnaires – conflicts within the family, conflicts with teachers, conflicts within the community, and conflicts with other students in the school. Students were allotted three weeks to explore their choice of one of these issues. The groups that chose to explore conflict using forum theatre became lost and defocused in their work during this period. Conflict and power struggles among students
emerged within the working groups. Students needed much support and help from the teachers in the classroom. O‘Toole & Burton (2002) discovered through student interviews and journals that drama was a successful method to introduce and explore conflict management with students. Year nine students expressed enthusiasm for becoming involved in official mediation procedures in the school. Also, a number of year nine students demonstrated in their forum theatre and process drama pieces that they were capable of mediating some levels of conflict effectively. Year eleven and twelve students also responded positively in interviews that their experience was positive. More than half the students attempted to apply what they had learned in their drama work to their own real life conflicts. The drama was empowering students beyond the drama and into real life.

Social Drama, such as Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed, has had positive effects on teen mothers, teachers, student teachers, college professors and students, and in the workplace. This provides a good base of evidence indicating that it may provide positive results for at risk teens within a school setting.

E. Research Question

Based on the literature review and the discussion of its educational relevance, the research question is:

Based on the sociodramatic theories of social change of Boal, can such drama be used in an integrated drama education unit with a group of “adolescents at risk” to change students’ outlooks on their lives within a ten week unit of activities?
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

A. Subjects

The subjects in this study were all grade eight students from an elementary school within a large urban public school board in southern Ontario. There were 24 students involved and they were between 13 and 14 years of age. These students attended every class together including homeroom and all rotary subjects. The criteria for subject selection were pre-determined by the school principal. This is a pre-existing group of “at-risk” adolescents. “At-risk” criteria, as determined by the school principal and staff, included the following areas: behavioural problems in the classroom, lack of motivation in classroom activities, social problems in the classroom and playground, and lack of respect towards peers and staff. According to the school principal and staff, students may be problematic due to varied backgrounds.

B. Instrumentation

The study attempted to discover whether the basic dramatic theory of Boal could be transplanted into an educational setting with the same success as it had in social settings (Linds, 1998), (Kaye & Ragusa, 1998), (Johnson, 2001), (O’Toole & Burton, 2002), (Creel, Kuhne, & Riggle, 2000). In the tradition of “Grounded Theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and “Action Research” (Woods, 1986), this research consists of a qualitative, in-depth, case-by-case study of the twenty-four participants, the collecting of qualitative research information in the form of researcher-observer field notes, participant journals; and a quantitative instrument, the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS)(see Appendix A). The PHCSCS is an eighty-item self-report instrument
designed to assess how children and adolescents 7-18 years of age feel about themselves in areas of physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, intellectual and school status, behaviour, happiness and satisfaction, and popularity. Items are composed of simple descriptive statements. Children indicate whether each item applies to them by selecting a yes or no response. Summary scores give an overall measure of self-concept, whereas subscale scores give a more detailed interpretation in each of the six sub-categories.

C. Procedures

Permission was sought from the Graduate Committee, Faculty of Education, and the Ethics Committee, University of Windsor, the Research Committee of the school board involved, and the principal of the school (see Appendixes B, C, and D). Letters of permission were obtained from all subjects involved (see Appendix E). Prior to the drama workshops, all subjects involved in the study completed the instrument. Subjects were then involved in a series of ten, fifty-minute drama workshops, commencing March 26, 2002 and concluding June 13, 2002. The following were the activities conducted in each workshop.

**Boal Drama Curriculum (Based on activities from Boal, 1992)**

**SESSION 1**

**Goals:** *Learning names*

*Becoming comfortable within the drama space*

1. Students complete instrument “Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale.”

2. Proceed to drama space

**Physical Warm-Up**

3. Name Games (Developmental Drama)
Participants sit in a circle on the floor. Each participant has a turn to say their full name, along with something unique about their name.

2nd Version Participants say their name with an inflection and action. Everyone in the class then repeats the name, inflection and action in their own space within the circle.

Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

SESSION 2

Goals: Continuing to learn names
 Becoming comfortable within the drama space
 Working collectively and cooperatively as a group

1. Proceed to the drama space.

Warm-Up

2. The Circle of Knots (Boal, pg. 67)

The participants make an ‘elastic circle’ by joining hands to form a ring. The participants must not change or loosen their grip for the whole activity. One participant at a time starts to move forward, pulling his/her neighbours after him/her or her. (always very slowly, as if in slow motion). This participant travels over and under the hands of the people opposite, as if trying to tie a knot. Participants take turns creating knots until no more can be made. At this point, very slowly and without violence, everyone tries to get back to their original positions.

3. The Circle of Knots Variation #3 (Boal, pg. 68)

The same activity as above, but participants are formed in a line instead of a circle.

4. The Circle of Knots Variation #4 (Boal, pg. 68)

In a tight circle, each person joins a hand with two different people opposite. Then, without loosening their grip, they try to undo the knots.
Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

SESSION 3

Goals: Continuing to become comfortable within the drama space
Promoting group work

1. Proceed to the drama space.

Activities

2. The Circle of Knots (Boal, pg. 67)

   The participants make an ‘elastic circle’ by joining hands to form a ring. The participants must not change or loosen their grip for the whole activity. One participant at a time starts to move forward, pulling his neighbours after him or her. (always very slowly, as if in slow motion). This participant travels over and under the hands of the people opposite, as if trying to tie a knot. Participants take turns creating knots until no more can be made. At this point, very slowly and without violence, everyone tries to get back to their original positions.

3. The Big Chief (Boal, pg. 96)

   Participants sit in a circle, on the floor. One person leaves the room. The group chooses the ‘big chief’, who is the person who will initiate all the changes in the rhythm and all the rhythmic movements in the circle. The person outside the room is invited back into the room and must try to work out who is the big chief.

Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

SESSION 4

Goals: Continuing to promote group work, moving into small groups and pairs

1. Proceed to the drama space.
Activities

2. The Space Series (Boal, pg. 116)

A Joker is chosen (first time the term “joker” is introduced to the group). All participants walk around the room briskly, always trying to fill all the spaces. The Joker calls out the following prompts to get participants into random groups.

- a number – groups of 2, 3, 4, etc.
- a number and a geometric figure – 3 circles, 3 triangles, 5 squares, etc.
- colour and item of clothing – pink shirts, blue pants, etc.

3. The Plain Mirror (Boal, pg.121)

Two lines of participants standing facing each other. Those in line A are the subjects and those in line B are the images. Each subject undertakes a series of movements and changes in expression, which the image must copy, right down to the smallest detail. Reverse.

4. The Object Transformed (Boal, pg. 148)

Groups of five are randomly formed. Many different objects are brought in. In groups, participants change their meaning by using them differently or in different contexts. The groups try to guess what the new object is. This activity can be attempted in larger groups or as a whole group activity.

Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

SESSION 5

Goals: Promoting work in small groups and pairs

1. Proceed to the drama space.

Activities

2. Good Afternoon (Boal, pg. 119)

Each participant has to say “Good Afternoon” to all other actors, at the same time shaking hands with them. But he or she must always have one hand shaking hands with someone – so only when both hands are occupied in handshaking can
he or she disengage one to find someone else. Each participant must attempt to shake every other person’s hand at least once.

3. Complete the Image (Boal, pg. 130)

Participants are put into groups of four or five. A pair of actors shake hands. Freeze the image. The rest of the group will brainstorm the possible meanings of the image (i.e. a business meeting, friends parting forever, a baseball team, mofia meeting, etc.) A meaning is chosen and then each person in the pair must improvise two lines to convey this meeting to the group.

4. The Fighting Chickens (Boal, pg. 160)

This is a game developed to facilitate improvisation. In pairs, one person accuses the other of having done something wrong. The other person has to defend himself/herself and justify the action, in the process creating a character.

Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

SESSION 6

Goals: Promoting work in groups and pairs

1. Proceed to the drama space.

2. The Fighting Chickens (Boal, pg. 160) – in pairs

This is a game developed to facilitate improvisation. In pairs, one person accuses the other of having done something wrong. The other person has to defend himself/herself and justify the action, in the process creating a character.

3. The Fighting Chickens – in small groups

Journal Entry

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)
SESSIONS 7,8,9,10

Goals: *Introduction to Image Theatre*  
*Group Problem-Solving*

1. Proceed to the drama space.

2. This session introduces students to the basics of Boal’s Image Theatre (sociodrama). Students discuss and choose imaginary situations involving social issues/conflict. Using the image theatre model, students are encouraged to mould each other in tableau images to show the conflicts and alternative solutions to the issue presented.

*Journal Entry*

Students are asked to reflect on their experience in the workshop. (prompts: what they thought, how they felt doing activities, which activities they liked or disliked and why, whether they’ve had experiences in life that relate to these activities)

At the conclusion of the ten drama workshops, students were asked to complete a post-test of the PHCSCE. Students were also asked to complete a page asking them to rank the activities done in the drama sessions in order of preference and answer questions that may not have been answered in student journals (see Appendixes F and G). The researcher collected journals, the post-test PHCSCE, and concluding question pages.

D. *Limitations of the Design*

This section discusses the limitations of the design of this thesis. The ten sociodrama workshops were provided to students during the time frame of March 26, 2002 to June 13, 2002. This is a very busy time of year, especially for grade eight students. There are many activities occurring in the school in which students are involved. These activities would sometimes interrupt the scheduled drama workshop. This occasionally left long periods of time between workshops. On two occasions, the scheduled place for the drama workshop had to be moved to accommodate other
activities occurring in the school. A change in environment for the drama workshops was not anticipated.

The researcher is a teacher within the school that the drama workshops were held. The researcher during the course of the workshops served as participant-observer and teacher supervising the class. On occasion, the homeroom teacher of the students participating in this study was present during the drama workshops. This teacher did not take part in the drama activities, rather spent the time working independently in the room in which the drama occurred. The homeroom teacher’s presence in the room impacted student response and behaviour. This teacher disciplined student behaviour while the researcher attempted to lead sessions. Also, the researcher found it very difficult to lead the class in the drama workshops, observe students for the recording of field notes and supervise students in a school environment simultaneously.

The researcher in this study has a dramatic arts education background, however, the researcher has not formally been trained in the area of Boal’s “Theatre of the Oppressed” techniques. Attending a training workshop prior to implementing the drama workshops may have assisted the researcher in providing richer workshops. Having the regular homeroom teacher in the room to provide supervisory support may have provided a richer opportunity for the researcher to implement activities. It may have been beneficial to have another person lead the workshops so that the researcher could have focused on observing. The use of a video camera to record the sessions may have also provided richer opportunities for student observation.
CHAPTER IV

THE STUDENTS AND THEIR RESPONSE TO BOAL

Biographies of Participants

The following are biographies of each student’s participation and response within the 10 drama sessions. Names have been changed so that the participants’ identities may remain confidential.

Aaron

Aaron did not take the drama sessions seriously at first. In sessions one and two, he did not participate actively in the activities, but rather, spent his time as an audience member talking with others during performances and mocking people’s work. His body language portrayed his level of discomfort. He spent a great deal of time standing off to the side of the room with his arms crossed. In sessions 3 and 4 he seemed passive and unhappy. Toward the end of session 4, he was asked to leave the drama session for inappropriate behaviour by his homeroom teacher. Beginning in session 5, his behaviour and concentration in the sessions seemed to change slightly. Aaron began to participate in drama work with some researcher prompting, however, he would refuse to participate in certain activities if he was not interested in the activity. Toward the end of the drama sessions, Aaron became removed from his peers again. He argued with other group members about the topic of the dramas. He often sat away from the other students, uninvolved in the activities.

Bailey

Bailey had some difficulty focusing at the beginning of the drama workshops. He had difficulty focusing on the activities and instead spent time joking with his friends and
commenting aloud in a negative manner regarding people’s work. Beginning in session 6, Bailey started to express small amounts of interest in the sessions. He occasionally participated during class discussions and scenes. Some of his drama work was used as a tool for mocking other students in the class. He frequently had difficulty focusing on tasks at hand. He was absent on a frequent basis.

Billy

From the start of the drama workshops, Billy was constantly involved in strong leadership roles. He consistently volunteered to be the leader in games and activities. He helped lead discussions with peers and usually volunteered to help demonstrate specific techniques to the class. He positively worked with other group members and often encouraged them in their own dramatic work with kind words and positive body language such as smiling, nodding his head, and clasping his hands. Toward the end of the workshops, Billy was always volunteering to be the leader in his group and he almost always volunteered to present his work to the class.

Bobby:

During sessions 1 – 4, Bobby was consistently disruptive and unfocused in the workshop activities. He yelled at other students, made distracting noises and ignored researcher instructions. Beginning in session 5, Bobby began to work actively in groups. He began to lead warm-ups, discussions and demonstrations. He also began to reflect on his leadership roles in his written work and conversations with the researcher. Toward the end of the drama workshop, he discussed how he was more comfortable being a leader in games and activities than just a participant.
Brayden:
Brayden was a quiet, reserved participant in the early drama sessions. He rarely participated in any workshop activities. Beginning in session 5, Brayden began to participate actively in class discussions. He began to consistently volunteer to lead his drama groups in Image Theatre work by volunteering to be the scene’s sculptor. He began to express a desire to present his group’s drama work in session 7. In his written member check, he discussed “[The thing I liked best about the drama work was] taking a leadership role during drama experiences.”

Carl:
Carl was an outgoing drama participant from the beginning of the sessions. He was an outgoing student who volunteered on a consistent basis to lead his peers in image theatre activities. He demonstrated strong leadership skills by leading peers in group work and discussions. Carl’s score on the PHCSCS was above the class average for a number of negative responses at the end of the workshops.

Carrie:
Carrie had much difficulty concentrating during drama sessions at the beginning of the workshops. She spent a lot of time giggling and whispering to her friends while other students were discussing or presenting work. During session 3, she was disruptive enough to warrant a reprimand from the researcher. She did not volunteer to be active in any part of the workshops at this point. Beginning in session 4, Carrie volunteered to take a small part in a drama activity. She participated in an on-task manner, focusing on her work and presenting her ideas to the group. She continued participating on a more consistent basis in the remainder of the sessions. Toward the end of the sessions, she
began to take an active part in discussions. She concentrated well and appeared to take her drama work seriously. Carrie followed guidelines for drama work and was eager to present her scene in session 7.

Cassie:
Cassie was a very passive participant in our drama activities and class discussions. She never volunteered to lead a scene and was always very reluctant to present her scenes, even if her group’s sculptor wanted to. She often sat away from the group. She rarely interacted with her peers and avoided eye contact with the person she was speaking to. Cassie scored above the class average for positive, negative and overall changes on the PHCSCS. Her participation and lack of interaction with peers did not change at all over the course of the workshop. She remained just as withdrawn at the end of the workshops.

Danielle:
Danielle was a very quiet participant at the commencement of our drama sessions. She did not volunteer to answer questions or participate in discussions, and made little eye contact with anyone in the class when they spoke to her. When asked to tell the class something interesting about herself in session 1, she responded that she did not have anything interesting to say. In session 2 she did not let the boys in her drama group participate in the activity. She refused to work with certain individuals. Beginning in session 6, Danielle appeared to actively focus on listening to other participants during discussion. She worked well with her group and volunteered to present her scene to the class. She appeared comfortable throughout the session. She began to reflect in her journal on a continual basis that she was beginning to feel more comfortable in class.

Her member check revealed that by the end of the sessions, she felt not as afraid to get in
front of the class. It was observed that Danielle began to participate more in class
discussions by the end of the sessions. She became more involved in the class.

Gordon:
Gordon was absent on a frequent basis for the drama workshops. His homeroom teacher
also removed him from the workshop in session 2 and 4 for poor behaviour. Gordon
would occasionally volunteer to take part in drama activities, sometimes in a leadership
role. He did not take part in any classroom discussion. His journal entries were not
insightful. He rarely wrote more than a sentence per entry. His behaviour and level of
participation remained constant towards the end of the workshops, with no change or
improvement.

James:
James expressed displeasure at being involved in the drama sessions throughout the entire
workshop process. He was frequently late and absent. He usually sat apart from the
other students, isolating himself in corners of the room. He occasionally became
argumentative with his peers and the researcher. In sessions 8 and 9 he refused to work
with his group because he disagreed with the topic of the group’s drama. He would
refuse to comment on drama work in his journal. He was not active throughout the
drama sessions.

Jamie:
Jamie usually participated in the drama work, but without much concentration and effort.
He went out of his way to talk to the researcher during drama sessions and also in passing
in the halls at school. He was usually very silly in class, unable to control his laughter.
He rarely participated in leadership roles within the drama, instead seemed to enjoy just
following the directions of the researcher or his peer leaders. He frequently discussed enjoying the drama because he could work with his friends. Jamie’s journal entries often discussed using the drama work to make fun of his peers. Even at the end of the sessions, Jamie was a passive participant in drama work who did not take the drama seriously.

Jenny:
Jenny was usually very quiet and removed from her peers in class. She would only participate in the drama when prompted by the researcher. She usually would “pass” her turn in activities when it required her to be the leader or sculptor in a scene. She was often absent from class. Her level of participation did not improve by the end of the sessions.

Jocelyn:
Jocelyn was an active participant in our drama sessions from the start. She usually volunteered to take part as a leader and sculptor in her group. She was fairly active during group discussions. Occasionally the researcher would speak to her regarding her constant talking with friends while other class members were sharing ideas. Towards the end of the drama sessions, she began to write in depth journal entries that discussed her work in the sessions. She also went out of her way to talk to the researcher when she was out at recess time. This continued until the end of the sessions.

Justin:
Justin was a very quiet boy in our class. He had great difficulty participating in the drama sessions at the beginning of the workshops. When it was his turn to say something, he often sat and stared at the researcher, appearing unsure of what to do. He was often influenced by peer suggestions for his behaviour. In sessions 2, 3, and 4, he
refused to participate in any activities, instead watching others from across the room. He commented in his journal that he did not feel comfortable in class and only wanted to watch others. Even with constant researcher prompting, he refused to participate in any drama game or activity. He would only answer questions in discussion when prompted by the researcher. Beginning in session 5, he participated in small group activities. He also began to participate in discussion by offering short answers to questions. In session 5, he also began to express great interest in communicating on a one-on-one basis with the researcher. He would ask the researcher to respond to his journal entries in writing. He would also seek the researcher out in the school halls and playground for discussion. In sessions 6, 7, and 8 he began to take risks in class, by volunteering to take part in class dramas. He even volunteered to present a scene.

Kaitlyn:

Kaitlyn’s involvement in the drama sessions remained consistent. She never volunteered to be a leader in any drama activity. She did not participate in class discussions and would reluctantly present scenes, often only after prompting from her peers. Kaitlyn would also follow the directions of the researcher and do as she was asked, but she would never go beyond or act independently. There appeared to be no change in her involvement even by the end of the workshops.

Kellie:

Kellie was a very reluctant participant in the drama from the start of the workshops. She would only participate in the drama work when prompted repeatedly by the researcher. She would often ask to have her turn to act or speak in discussion “passed” so that she didn’t have to participate at all. During drama work she would often just stand around,
disassociated from her group while everyone else was taking part in activities. Her journal entries were vague and information was sparse. Kellie would often be late coming to class. This did not change or improve by the end of the sessions.

**Leonard:**

Although Leonard was absent for drama sessions on a frequent basis, he was often involved in the drama work. Unfortunately, his homeroom teacher removed him from session 4 for poor behaviour. He often volunteered to take part in drama activities and class discussion. His level of participation remained constant. He wrote very little in his journal entries. He had a number of absences towards the end of the workshops.

**Michael:**

Michael was a quiet participant at the beginning of the drama sessions. He appeared interested in the activities presented, but did not participate in group discussion and wrote little in his journal entries. In session 3, Michael began to demonstrate strong leadership while volunteering to lead his peers in group work and class discussion. He often volunteered to lead his group in Image Theatre activities. Towards session 6, he offered to help the researcher demonstrate specific techniques and activities to peers. His participation and commitment to his work remained consistent from session 6 until 10.

**Nicole:**

Nicole participated in drama sessions on a consistent basis from the start of the workshops. She always took part in games and activities, but never in a leadership role. She interacted well with her peers and occasionally took part in discussion. Nicole would always follow the researcher's instructions and she would comply with the leader in her
drama groups. Sometimes Nicole would be reluctant to present her work to the class. Her level of involvement remained constant throughout the drama sessions.

Sam:

Sam was a very quiet participant in the drama sessions. He rarely talked to the researcher and other participants and would never participate in discussions. He needed constant prompting by the researcher to be involved in drama work. Sam never offered to be a leader or sculptor in his group’s scenes. He often appeared uncomfortable; avoiding eye contact and standing apart from others. When his groups presented work to the class, he often appeared extremely uncomfortable. He never spoke in drama scenes. His involvement in drama work stayed constant for the 10 sessions.

Sarah:

Sarah was one of the more active girls in the class. Right from the start, she consistently expressed interest in participating in the drama sessions. She usually volunteered to take part in the sessions, sometimes as the leader and sculptor of her group. She usually volunteered to present her drama scenes to the class and she almost always participated in group discussions. Sarah did not hesitate to respond to the drama sessions in her journal.

Sierra:

Sierra was an active part in the drama activities, right from the very first session. She chose not to volunteer to be in a leadership role and instead opted for passive roles. At the beginning of the sessions, she was not a good audience member when her peers were presenting drama scenes or participating in discussion. She usually needed prompting from the researcher to stop talking to her friends or laughing at what the other participants were saying. Sierra usually complied with instructions from the researcher.
Sierra’s concentration during the drama sessions seemed to improve slightly as sessions went on. The number of times the researcher needed to speak to her decreased.

**Vera:**

Vera was a reluctant participant in the drama sessions. She did not participate unless prompted by the researcher. She never acted as sculptor or leader in the drama sessions. Vera would comply with peer or researcher prompting in drama scenes, but she did not act independently. Vera’s involvement in the drama sessions remained consistent throughout the ten drama workshops.
Qualitative data was collected from 24 subjects in the form of field notes, participant journals, and a final member check in the form of a written questionnaire. A pre- and post-test of the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) was administered prior to and following the activities. As a result of student responses to the PHCSCS, student responses in journals and researcher field notes, five themes emerged from the data: A., Student Outlook on Life, B., Self-Expression, C., Gender Differences in Dramatic Activity, D., Commitment to the Drama, and E., Outside Influences Affecting the Drama.

A. **Student Outlook on Life**

Students’ pre- and post-tests of the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) were examined to note a number of positive changes, negative changes and number of overall changes in response. Twenty-two participants completed both a pre- and post-test. Two students completed only a post-test. These latter two results are not included in the class averages.

It was found that each of the twenty-two students who participated in the drama workshops had at least one change, be it negative or positive, in response to the PHCSCS (see Table 1). The average number of positive changes (5.1) for students, the average number of negative changes (8.7), and the average number of overall changes (13.8) for students were compared to each student’s individual results. Seven students had a number of positive changes, eight students had a number of negative changes, and six
students had a number of overall changes above the class averages. These findings indicate that there was a change in the sense of self-concept for the participants involved in the Boal Drama sessions, but not always positive.

Quantitative and qualitative data was collected throughout this study. It is interesting to note that the majority of participants who responded to the quantitative PHCSCS had a negative score above the class average at the conclusion of the ten drama workshops. Using Glaser's theory of triangulation (1967) the qualitative data was collected using field notes, journals, member checks and a search of the current, relevant literature. This qualitative data supports observations of a slight, positive change in student self-concept. This contradicts the results of negative change on the quantitative PHCSCS data. Why do the quantitative and qualitative results differ? Perhaps the PHCSCS was an inappropriate scale for this research. The majority of the data was collected qualitatively. Perhaps qualitative collections of data are a more appropriate method for collecting information in drama in education research.

Students may have been affected by other influences that resulted in negative scores on the PHCSCS. Drama periods were constantly rescheduled, the environment the workshops occurred was constantly changing, and there were many outside interruptions in the drama. These occurrences may have affected the level of comfort that students felt in the drama workshops. According to Way (1967), a safe space needs to be created in order for productive drama to occur. Taylor (1994) states that students need to feel comfortable in order to participate in drama activities. Although every effort was made by the researcher to create a safe, comfortable environment for participants, the constant
interruptions and changes in environment may have affected student participation in the
drama that resulted in above average negative scores on the PHCSCS.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobby</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jocelyn</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlyn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brayden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
<td><strong>192</strong></td>
<td><strong>304</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that all students who participated in the weekly drama
sessions had changes on the PHCSCS, with number of changes ranging from four to fifty.

Students involved in these sessions had little exposure to drama in their regular
homeroom class, prior to the sessions. A weekly drama period was scheduled by the
homeroom teacher for the students, but it was rarely utilized. Even though drama is one of eight required curriculum subjects in the province of Ontario, the homeroom teacher did not engage students in drama activities. With these drama sessions, students had a reliable timetable for dramatic activity. The researcher leading the drama classes had a vast dramatic background. Students had drama classes to look forward to. The drama sessions provided students with ample opportunities to move in creative ways, dramatize important issues, and discuss their lives with peers. The changes in self-concept may be related to the students’ opportunity to explore their own feelings and ideas in a consistent dramatic medium. The sociodramatic activities allowed students to work with their peers, use their entire bodies in the creative process, and dialogue regarding their unique experiences. Each of these activities allows participants to discover themselves in a creative way.

According to Warren (1993) movement is an outlet for emotions. Warren states that movement allows individuals to gain in self-confidence and self-management through the acquired knowledge of their bodies, minds, and places in the world. When individuals feel unique and special, they develop self-confidence.

Widdows (1996) discovered that the drama techniques of role-playing and forum theatre aided in the psychological health of the students involved. According to Widdows, the long term dramatic activities resulted in students being more sensitive, committed, confident, assertive, eager to learn, and positive. Widdows states that all of these qualities helped to increase student self-concept.

When observing changes in scores of the PHCSCS and examining the literature, it appears as though participation in weekly drama sessions based on the sociodramatic
theories of Boal promotes negative change, overall change and some positive change in self-concept. An area for future study might be how one could use drama to increase positive change in student self-concept.

Therefore, a number of changes occurred in student outlook on life as a result of these drama sessions. The sociodramatic activities of Boal had some impact on these changes because they allowed students to work together through critical thought and action to address important issues in their lives that may not otherwise have been addressed. By using Boal’s games and techniques, senses became heightened and participants were encouraged to move beyond habitual thinking and interacting. Trust and interaction with other participants was also fostered through these interactions.

B. **Self-Expression**

Students responded to a final written questionnaire (refer to Appendix G) after completing the PHCSCS. Students responded in response journals after every drama session. Students did not seem to enjoy responding to their work in the drama sessions in a written journal format, which may be due to their academic (in) abilities. Even with written and oral prompting, students provided limited answers in their journals. These prompts included asking students to comment on why they had or had not participated in dramatic activities for a session, ranking drama activities in order of least to most favourite, and discussing other students they had worked with in a particular session. Videotaped interviews with students may have provided richer insight into the feelings of students regarding work in the drama sessions. Interviewing students in a different format to obtain their responses to workshops may have been more successful if done in person or by videotaped responses or interviews.
When reviewing student responses, the theme of self-expression was prevalent. Students indicated in responses that the drama workshops provided a positive opportunity for their own self-expression. In Carl’s reply, he stated that the thing he got most out of the drama was the:

“[The opportunity] to express myself in different ways and be like myself and not someone else. I prefer small groups because you have more parts and you can do more things by yourself but still be in groups.”

Jocelyn stated,

“It was fun and it was hard to be embarrassed when expressing myself. The Fighting Chickens [was my favourite activity] because you could express yourself very easily.”

Jocelyn also wrote in her final questionnaire that she “liked the acting handshake game because it made me feel more confident in front of people.”

The theme of positive opportunity for self-expression was also ubiquitous in student journals. Danielle wrote on a continuing basis about drama allowing her to feel more comfortable presenting in front of the class. She stated in journal entries towards the end of the sessions “I think I am getting a lot more comfortable in front of the class because of these classes.” She also wrote “I was a little scared at first but I wanted to go up because every time I do I get a little less scared when I have to present projects.” In Danielle’s written questionnaire, she also wrote “What I got most out of the drama classes was that I am not as afraid when I get in front of the class.” Towards the end of the sessions, it was observed that Danielle began to participate in class discussions. She
began to volunteer presenting drama scenes in session five. This involvement continued
until the end of the drama sessions.

Every attempt was made by the researcher to create a positive and comfortable
environment for the drama sessions. Although some workshops were affected by outside
influences, participants were given ample opportunities to take part in many varied
sociodramatic activities. The researcher chose the activities so that students would have
the opportunity to explore self-directed issues of importance through drama with their
peers. Participation in any activity was completely voluntary. On occasion, if a student
did not feel comfortable with a particular activity, they had the choice of “passing.” A
safe and comfortable space was established at the beginning of the sessions; therefore
students had the opportunity to express their ideas comfortably. Many students took the
opportunity to be involved in the drama.

Students involved in this drama had not been given the opportunity to work in
dramatic activities in a comfortable space prior to these sessions. They were not given
consistent blocks of time within their schedule for regular drama. At the beginning of the
sessions, students appeared uncomfortable being involved in the activities. With time
and opportunity for practice, many students began to become more involved in the drama
as the sessions progressed. Both Brayden and Bobby became very active in class
discussions and drama scenes around session 5. Each boy began to reflect on his work in
class through discussion with the researcher. Danielle began to participate on a more
frequent basis in class discussions towards the end of the ten drama sessions. In her
journal entries she stated that the workshops allowed her to feel more comfortable
presenting to the class. After examining field notes, participant journals, and written
questionnaires, it appears as though a consistent involvement in drama will provide opportunities for student self-expression. This data contradicts the quantitative data collected from the PHCSCS.

Persistent classroom disruptions, inconsistent attendance, and outside factors influencing the drama sessions may have impacted student commitment to the drama. The drama was not held in the same environment for every session, the class’ homeroom teacher interrupted the workshops by removing disruptive students from the group, and an outside teacher attempted to discipline students in the presence of the researcher. These outside factors may have affected the comfort level in the workshops, which may have affected student level of commitment to the drama. Workshops free from any outside influences may have provided students with a more comfortable environment that nurtured student commitment to the drama sessions. As a result, student responses may change.

According to Way (1967) a teacher must consider where drama with students takes place, because “if we want to avoid artificial work then we must avoid imposing an artificial environment.” Way suggests that a student involved in drama must have a confident relationship with their environment in order for successful drama to take place. It is the teacher’s responsibility to help facilitate the creation of this safe and nurturing environment.

C. Gender Differences in Dramatic Activity

Throughout the drama workshops, it was observed that there was a distinct difference between the involvement of boys and girls in the drama sessions. Boys were more likely to be involved in leadership roles in drama games and image theatre
activities. Boys were also more likely to be involved in group discussion and presentation. Girls were passive participants in the games and activities. Girls were less involved in discussion and presentation. They appeared to enjoy not being in control of drama scenes. Girls enjoyed participating in unfamiliar drama scenes. They enjoyed finding out what the drama theme was at the end of the scene, when the leader explained it.

Boys discussed the issue of leadership consistently in their written questionnaires and journal entries. They wrote of the enjoyment they felt leading others in drama work. In his written questionnaire, Brayden stated that the thing he liked best about the drama sessions was “taking a leadership role during drama experiences.” He also stated in his journal “I thought the tableau was very good and made us express our actions amongst each other and make us sculpt our friends into a scene.” Field notes reveal that Brayden consistently volunteered to lead his groups in Image Theatre by volunteering to be the scene’s sculptor on numerous occasions. He was also very active in class discussions after session 5. Beginning in session 5, students were involved in fewer activities based on Boal’s games and instead involved in more Image Theatre activities.

During sessions 1 – 4, Bobby was consistently disruptive and unfocused in the drama activities. He would yell at other students, make distracting noises, and ignore teacher instructions. Beginning in session 5, Bobby began to work actively in his groups and dramas. He started to lead many image theatre scenes by volunteering to be the sculptor. He also became very involved in the other activities in the sessions including warm-ups, discussions, and demonstrations. He would quiet other students when they were being disruptive in sessions 5 – 10. In session 8, Bobby was a participant in a scene
that was being sculpted by a fellow female classmate. He stepped out of his role of participant and tried to help the sculptor, Sarah, lead the scene. Sarah was very passive when Bobby was doing this. She was allowing him to take over her role. It was at this point that the researcher stepped in and asked Sarah to resume her activities as sculptor. At many times in sessions, Bobby tried to overtake the scene as sculptor instead of being a quiet participant.

Bobby reflected on his leadership roles frequently. He wrote the following in his questionnaire. “I improved my leadership skills a lot by playing the games you taught us. Thanks a lot for helping me to improve my skills, I will surely use them later.” Bobby also dialogued frequently with the researcher regarding the roles he chose to pursue in the drama activities. At the conclusion of a number of sessions, he would discuss how he was more comfortable and preferred being a leader in the games than just a participant.

Billy was another boy in the class that took on strong leadership roles in drama sessions. Billy’s written questionnaire and journal entries did not provide much personal information. However, field notes reveal that Billy was one of the strongest leaders in the drama sessions, consistently volunteering to be the leader in games and activities, leading discussions with peers, and volunteering to demonstrate specific techniques to the class. In image theatre work, Billy constantly volunteered to take on the role of sculptor for his groups. He would actively work with members of these groups to lead them in poses related to his personal themes, while following the rules of the activity. He would encourage his group members in their dramatic work by nodding when they had achieved the posed look he wanted. Billy frequently volunteered to present his sculpted scenes.
He would then lead his groups in dramatizing alternative solutions to the issues presented.

Much like Brayden, Bobby, and Billy, there were a number of other boys in the class who demonstrated strong leadership while volunteering to lead their peers in group work and class discussions. Carl and Michael also volunteered to lead their peers in image theatre activities on a consistent basis. Both of these boys volunteered to demonstrate specific techniques and activities to peers, led their groups in image theatre work, and participated in class discussions. When examining the changes in score on the PHCSCS, one can see that Carl, Michael, and Brayden had scores of negative changes above the class average. Billy had a positive and negative score above the class average. Bobby does not have results because he did not participate in a pre-test of the PHCSCS. It appears as though boys who were most committed to the drama also had the most negative changes on the PHCSCS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobby</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brayden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Average</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the girls in the class expressed interest in participating in drama games and activities rather than leadership. The girls’ participation differed from the boys because the girls were less likely to participate in a leadership role. Also, the girls
appeared to enjoy being led in a scene in which they did not know their role or the scene’s circumstances until told by the leader, usually male.

In her written questionnaire, Sarah stated “I liked other people being the leader because it’s interesting to see their view on what the scene should look like, to my view.” Many others also expressed a similar attitude in journal entries. Carrie wrote “I liked being molded because it was interesting being in a scene when I didn’t know what it was about. I liked the scene I did at the beginning also because I had no clue what I was doing and when I found out what was going on it was pretty funny.” In one entry, Nicole stated “Today we did the Image Theatre and I enjoyed creating scenes with my classmates and seeing images my other classmates created. Today I was sculpted. I enjoyed being sculpted because it allowed the sculptor to express themselves. It was very interesting.” Jocelyn also had a journal entry which discussed others being sculptors. She wrote “I liked the Image Theatre game and I liked it because it was interesting to see the sculptor place the people that were clay people around.”

It is interesting to note that these girls discuss the drama games allowing other people, in particular, those being the sculptors, the opportunity to express themselves through the drama. The girls also discuss how they were interested to see this process. The girls do not seem as interested in their own person expression, but rather want to help empower the leader in his. This might be a result of the girls feeling that they do not need to lead the drama because they are not interested in sharing their ideas with others. According to Lanoux and O’Hara, (1999) girls in pre-adolescence have difficulty finding their own voice and expressing themselves. The girls in this class may have been
reluctant to share their ideas with peers or take leadership roles because they felt uncomfortable doing so.

However, Lanoux and O'Hara (1999) also state that drama and theatre are valuable tools for revising girls' negative self-images. Creative activities for safe self-expression can help pre-adolescent girls find their own voice and bring them into their own power. Safe drama activities can provide a safe outlet for girls to begin building their confidence and get in touch with their true self. Perhaps the girls in these drama sessions felt comfortable within the activities and were taking risks by allowing others to lead them into unknown scenes in the drama work. These girls trusted others to lead them into drama scenes, which involves more risk-taking than leading others.

There were many girls that did not participate actively at all in the drama activities or class discussions. Kellie, Jenny, and Cassie were very passive in the sessions. They never volunteered to lead a scene and were always very reluctant to present scenes, even if the sculptor wanted to. Cassie often sat away from the group, towards the back of the room. She rarely interacted with her peers and avoided eye contact. Kellie and Jenny would participate in group work, but only after much prompting from the researcher. They needed constant encouragement.

When comparing the seven girls' positive, negative, and overall changes in response to the PHCSCS, it is interesting to note that there are very few changes that are above the class average. Nicole and Kellie are both above the average for number of positive changes, while Cassie is above the average for positive, negative, and overall changes.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jocelyn</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Average 5.1 8.7 13.8

After examining the data, it appears as though the scores of positive, negative, and overall change on the PHCSCS as compared to the class averages, are related to gender and leadership styles. Five of the thirteen boys expressed very strong leadership during the drama sessions. There were a total of seven scores that were above the class average. Seven of the eleven girls in the class, who expressed a desire to be led in activities, had only five scores that were above the average.

Written Member Checks and Questionnaires

As a follow-up to the above findings, each student was given a written member check and questionnaire at the conclusion of the ten drama workshops. Due to limited journal responses and certain questions emerging from the data, the follow-up questionnaire was needed to help explain portions of the qualitative data that was collected. The class was asked on the written questionnaire whether they preferred a younger teacher, a female teacher, or a teacher different than their homeroom teacher leading the drama. Girls and boys responded almost identically in their answers. The majority of both boys and girls preferred a female teacher and a younger teacher leading the drama sessions (see Table 4 and 5). There were no students who answered that they
did not prefer a female teacher and a younger teacher. When asked if students preferred a teacher other than their homeroom teacher leading the drama sessions, the majority of both boys and girls responded that they did prefer a different teacher (see Table 6). A number of boys responded that they did not prefer a different teacher. However, no girls responded in this way. It appears as though the gender and age of the teacher-researcher in this study did not influence either girls or boys decisions to participate in leadership roles in the drama due to the evidence that both girls and boys overwhelmingly preferred to be led by a young, female teacher. If the teacher-researcher had been the class’ homeroom teacher, would some of the boys’ participation in leadership activities have been different? It is interesting to note that 2 of the 11 boys did not prefer having a different teacher lead the drama sessions. According to Creel, Kuhne, & Riggle (2000) teachers are also participants in the classroom when involved in the process for change using Theatre of the Oppressed techniques. This is because in Theatre of the Oppressed dramatic activities, teachers are usually required to act alongside students. This creates a powerful relationship between teacher and students.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="chart1.png" alt="Pie Chart for Boys" /></td>
<td><img src="chart2.png" alt="Pie Chart for Girls" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you prefer a female teacher leading the drama sessions?
Table 5

Do you prefer a younger teacher leading the drama sessions?

Boys

Girls

Table 6

Do you prefer a teacher other than your homeroom teacher leading the drama sessions?

Boys

Girls

Why did the boys in the class participate on a more consistent basis in leadership roles than the girls? Why did the boys have more scores that were above the class average on the PHCSCS than the girls? The boys in the class seemed to be very interested in activities which allowed them to take on leadership roles, while the girls in
the class appeared interested in activities which were more group focused. Each student was asked to rank each of the activities in the 10 drama sessions in order of preference (refer to Appendix F). When examining the data, it is interesting to note that the boys preferred the Image Theatre activities (Small Group Image Theatre, Large Group Image Theatre, and Image Theatre Improvisation) that allow one person to lead a group of participants. Girls preferred whole class games where there is no real leader, and everyone is involved at all times (see Table 7, 8, and 9).
Table 7
Student Favourite Drama Activity (1st. Choice)

[Bar chart showing the preferences of boys and girls for different drama activities]
Table 8

Student Second Favourite Drama Activity
Table 9

Student Third Favourite Drama Activity

- Unique Name Game
- Small Group Circle of Knots
- Large Group Circle of Knots
- The Big Chief
- Getting into Groups
- The Object Transformed
- Handshake (Complete Image)
- The Fighting Chickens
- Small Group Image Theatre
- Large Group Image Theatre
- Image Theatre Improvisation
D. Commitment to the Drama

When observing the results from the data regarding self-concept and gender differences, another theme emerges. It appears as though students who were fully committed to the drama in the workshops also had the greatest number of changes in self-concept on the PHCSCS. Students who were not as committed, had different kinds of changes on the PHCSCS. The Getty Centre for Education in the Arts (Garcia, 1993) found that students, who actively participated in a comprehensive art program for two years, acquired many benefits including the ability to solve problems, make decisions, increased self-esteem and self-discipline. In a study conducted by Widdows (1996), students involved in drama workshops were encouraged to work together. The structure of these workshops allowed students to feel connected to fellow peers as well as the drama activities they were involved in. Results indicated that students became more sensitive, committed, confident, assertive, eager to learn and positive. These two studies support the idea of a connection between student commitment to drama and student self-concept.

Carl, Michael, Bobby, Brayden, and Billy were all boys in the class that were highly involved in the drama. In each of these cases, the commitment to the drama began around session 5. Before this session, Carl, Michael and Brayden were very quiet in class. They did not volunteer to participate in activities and they did not take part in discussion. Beginning in session 5, all three of these boys volunteered to be involved in leadership roles within the drama, they participated in class discussions, and occasionally helped the teacher demonstrate dramatic techniques to the class. These boys began to take risks: leading other in dramatic work in the drama sessions, discussing with peers,
and performing in front of the class. Billy was enthusiastic in the drama sessions from the beginning, but his enthusiasm and involvement in the activities seemed to strengthen as the sessions progressed. In the first few sessions, Billy would volunteer to lead his group in activities, but the complexity and seriousness that he brought to his work strengthened around session 5 and continued to grow towards the end of the workshops. Bobby began the first four drama sessions by acting in a very disrespectful manner. Bobby was asked to leave the first session by the regular homeroom teacher for making rude noises during the activities. In these sessions, Bobby would laugh at his fellow students, make silly noises, refuse to comply with instructions, and he did not volunteer to be a leader or participate in activities. Beginning in session five, Bobby had a complete change in attitude in personality. He volunteered to be a leader in activities, he wanted to share ideas in discussion, he continuously asked to present his work, and even tried to overtake scenes in which he was not the leader. Bobby ended the drama sessions being a very active and committed participant, who took his work seriously.

When examining the five boys’ changes in score on the PHCSCS (see Table 2), one can see that there were many scores above the class average. Each boy, with the exception of Bobby, scored above the class average on number of negative changes. This may have been due to the constant environmental changes, classroom interruptions, or an inappropriate quantitative scale. Carl and Billy scored above the class average in regards to number of overall changes, with Michael and Brayden scoring exactly at the class average. Billy was above the class average in every category. These results imply that males in the class who were committed to the drama had high changes in score.
Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobby</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brayden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Average</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many girls in the class were participants in the drama sessions, but not to the same extent as the boys. Many girls participated in the drama, but not in leadership roles. Sarah, Danielle, Vera, Sierra, Carrie, Jocelyn, Kaitlyn, and Nicole were all girls in the class that were fairly active in the drama sessions. They would follow instructions when asked by the teacher and they would comply with the leader in the drama groups. They would occasionally be reluctant to participate, and usually would not want to present their work to the class. These girls would occasionally participate in class discussions.

Sarah, Danielle, Jocelyn, and Carrie were the more active girls in the class. Sarah consistently expressed interest in participating in the drama sessions. She usually volunteered to take part in the drama sessions, sometimes as the leader and sculptor of the group. Sarah usually volunteered to present her drama scenes to the class, and she usually took part in discussions. Danielle began the drama sessions as a very shy and quiet participant. She was very reluctant to participate in class discussions, and when her group wanted to present their scene to the class, she was always hesitant, expressing her nervousness and displeasure. Towards the end of the sessions, it was observed that Danielle began to participate in class discussions. She began to volunteer presenting drama scenes in session five. This involvement continued until the end of the drama
sessions. Carrie always participated in class activities, but never volunteered to lead or present. She always did what was asked by the leader of her groups or the teacher, but did not venture out on her own as a leader. She seemed comfortable in the drama, but did not stand out.

Vera, Sierra, Kaitlyn, and Nicole were all girls in the class that did not participate at all to be the leader in any dramas. These girls would not participate in class discussions and would reluctantly present scenes. They did what they were asked to by the researcher, but did not go beyond. They rarely acted independently. Their involvement in the drama stayed consistent throughout the ten drama workshops. There appeared to be no change in their involvement in the activities. In her journal, Sierra wrote “I didn’t like to be the sculptor because I had nothing to sculpt.”

Cassie, Kellie, and Jenny were all girls that rarely participated in the drama. Each of these girls was very quiet and removed from the work in the class. Cassie would often sit removed from the class during discussion and presentations so that she was not a part of the group. She was very quiet and would not participate in activities, even when prompted to by the teacher or her classmates. Her journal entries revealed very little information about how she felt regarding the activities. Kellie and Jenny would participate in drama activities only when requested by the teacher. Both of these girls opted to “pass” their turn on numerous occasions when time to be a sculptor or leader in the group. Neither of them would participate in class discussion. Kellie would come to class late on a consistent basis and Jenny had many absences.

It is interesting to note that when the girls’ scores on the PHCSCS were examined, very few were above the class averages. This may be an indication that
commitment to the drama is necessary for change. Research literature such as (Nelson, 1993), (Lanoux, C., & O'Hara, E., 1999) supports this. Vera, Kellie, and Nicole all have number of positive changes above the class average. Cassie is the only girl to have scores above the class average in all three categories. These results imply that individual scores on the PHCSCS are related to the level of commitment each participant had in the drama sessions. Many of the boys in the class were very committed to the drama workshops, participating in many drama activities, taking leadership roles, and participating in class discussions. These boys had high levels of changes above class averages. The girls who participated in the drama but not in leadership roles, and were not as committed to the drama had very little change in score on the PHCSCS. The level of commitment to the drama by the participants was directly related to their change in self-concept and attitude.

Nelson (1993) had similar results when conducting a two-week improvisational theatre program with teen mothers. The first few days of the workshop were spent presenting the women with creative challenges that allowed them to draw on their own life experience for solutions. The women also expressed their feelings through their bodies in human sculptures, painting, visual art media, and photography. The more the women participated in the workshops, and the higher the commitment to the drama, the more committed they became to their work. At the end of the two weeks, almost all of the women began to adapt games, songs, and exercises from the workshops for use in activities with their children. The women realized that they were in better positions to take action in their own lives. The women were empowered through the Living Stage workshops.
Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlyn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jocelyn</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a group of boys in the class that differed from the above group. James, Gordon, Leonard, Bailey, Aaron, Justin, Jamie, and Sam were not as active in the drama sessions. These boys participated when prompted by the teacher. They did not volunteer to lead their groups as consistently as the previously mentioned boys. They also had a greater number of behaviour incidents in the drama sessions, which impacted their participation in classes.

James expressed displeasure at being involved in the drama sessions throughout the entire workshop process. He was absent on numerous occasions (sessions 3, 4, 5) and frequently late for others. He would often sit apart from the other students, isolated in corners of the room. James would often express displeasure at being involved in the drama, and on occasion, become argumentative with the researcher. In session 8 he argued with peers and the researcher regarding the importance and use of improv. In sessions 8 and 9 he refused to work with his group because he disagreed with the topic of
teen drug use that the sculptor had chosen, stating that it was “inappropriate for school.” He would refuse on occasion to record entries in his journal. In the journal entry for session 3, he wrote “I found the Circle of Knots to be very boring and primary, as well as the Big Chief.” For sessions 7, he wrote “No Comment” as his entry. For his final written questionnaire, James wrote “I don’t have a favourite game.” “I don’t like the games we have played.” “The games we played were too kiddish and not very creative.” James was not active throughout the drama sessions and his poor attitude is reflected in field notes, journal entries and a final written questionnaire.

Gordon, Leonard, and Bailey were three boys who were involved in the drama on a frequent basis, but not to the extent of other boys in the class who were fully committed to the work. Each of these three boys was absent on a frequent basis for the drama workshops. Gordon and Leonard were each removed by their homeroom teacher from the drama sessions for poor behaviour. Gordon was removed in sessions 2, 4, and Leonard was removed in session 4. Both Gordon and Leonard would volunteer to take part in drama activities, sometimes in a leadership role, but not frequently. They would not take part during group discussions. Bailey was usually involved in the drama work, but not usually in a leadership role. He rarely participated in discussion, and usually had trouble concentrating on his work. He frequently made fun of other students in the drama work, sometimes using the drama itself as a tool for mocking others. In session 2, 4, and 5, he would laugh out loud at student performances or responses. In session six he used a scene being performed in front of the class to make Justin look silly and defenseless. He did this by surprising Justin with an uncomfortable scene about Justin’s parents.
Aaron and Jamie were sometimes involved in the drama work, but not in a serious manner. Like Bailey, both boys would use the drama as a tool for making fun of others. Aaron consistently made fun of other students by laughing at them when they participated honestly in discussion or were presenting their scene. In his journal, he even commented on using the drama to mock others. He wrote, "I liked the fact that we were in a small group so we could use all of us and I loved when I was sculptor because I got to make fun of Jamie. Aaron also refused to participate in certain activities if he was not interested in them. In sessions 2, 3, 4, and 8 he sat apart from his group, not involved in the activity. His teacher removed him from the class in session 4 for not following directions for activities.

Jamie usually participated in the drama work, but without much concentration and effort. He was usually very silly, unable to control his laughter. He rarely participated in leadership roles within the drama, and instead followed the directions of the teacher or group leader. His journal entries provided little insight into his feelings regarding the drama. He frequently discussed the drama being fun or funny because he could work with his friends. Jamie also used the drama on occasion to make fun of his peers. He would laugh at other students during group work. In session 7 he wrote, "It was lots of fun because Aaron tried to make fun of me. I hope next time I get to be a sculptor so I can make fun of Aaron." Both Aaron and Jamie were passive participants in the drama, who did not take their work seriously and instead used it as a tool to take advantage of others.

Justin and Sam were very quiet boys in the class. At the beginning of the sessions, they rarely talked to other students and never participated in discussions. Sam
would only participate in drama sessions when prompted to by the teacher. This did not improve by the end of the sessions. Sam still needed to be encouraged to participate even at the end of the workshops. He never participated in discussions. He wrote very little in his journal entries. He seemed shy and usually sat and stood away from his peers.

Justin had great difficulty participating in the drama sessions at the beginning of the workshops. When it would be his turn to participate, he often sat and stared at me, appearing to be unsure of what to do. He was often influenced by peer suggestions, and would use them to determine his responses. In sessions 2, 3, and 4, Justin refused to participate in any activities, instead standing at the side of the room, and watching from afar. When prompted to join by the researcher, he still refused, stating that he “wasn’t comfortable touching other people.” He seemed to be comfortable only watching other participate in activities. In his journal for sessions 1 and 2 he wrote, “I didn’t feel comfortable doing the tie knot thing because I don’t feel comfortable. I liked the name game the best.” He also wrote “Again I didn’t like the knot thing because it’s not me. I don’t like touching other people’s hands.” Beginning in session 5, Justin would participate a little in the small group activities. He began to participate in class discussion by offering short answers to questions. This risk-taking continued until session 8. Justin never volunteered to lead his group in any activities. Justin also expressed great interest in communicating with the researcher beginning in session 5. At the end of each journal entry, he would ask that the researcher comment on his entries. He wrote, “Please respond!!! I can’t wait to read.” Justin would also seek out the researcher in the school halls and at recess time for casual discussion. He would rarely
discuss drama sessions, but would instead talk about going to high school next year and ask questions about the researcher’s experiences at high school.

The length of the dramatic workshops may have affected the results of the study. A program that is forty minutes in length for ten sessions is unlikely to provide a probable impact. It might have been more effective to have the drama workshops run the entire length of the school year. Students may have not participated as effectively in these workshops due to the fact that it was near the end of the school year. Attendance decreased slightly for some students as the workshops coincided with the last few weeks of school. However, students may also have welcomed the change from the classroom routine. Student motivation and interest in the workshops may have been different if the workshops were scheduled for a different time of school year.

It is interesting to note that some of the students who appeared least involved in the drama activities also had the greatest changes in score on the PHCSCS. Four of the 9 students had positive changes or negative changes above the class average. Four of these students also have overall changes above the class average. Many of the number of changes are quite high. This correlation between PHCSCS scores, and self-concept and commitment, may be an important factor in our educational institution attempting to use Boal Drama to encourage change in “at-risk” students. That is, if the teacher or educational leader cannot ensure commitment, then the Drama may not have any effect. Therefore, a future research question arising out of these findings is: how can we ensure self-commitment to Drama in an educational institution?
Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Number of Positive Changes</th>
<th>Number of Negative Changes</th>
<th>Number of Overall Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. **Outside Influence Affecting the Drama**

In many instances, the events that were occurring within the school seemed to influence the drama sessions. The researcher had hoped to hold the workshops in the same room for all ten sessions so that feelings of comfort and routine would be established with students. If each session was held in the same space, the researcher hoped that a safe and secure atmosphere would be established for the participants. It was hoped that a safe and comfortable space would be created so that students would feel comfortable within the activities. The changing of environment and schedule may have been interferences to the drama workshops (Taylor, 1994).

The location and atmosphere of the sessions were changed on a continual basis. The researcher made every attempt to reserve a comfortable and private room, the large theatre, within the school for the drama sessions to occur in each week. However, due to
other events occurring in the school beyond the researcher’s control, the large theatre was not always available. The first, second, seventh, and ninth drama sessions had to be held in the Grade 8 homeroom or school library due to other events in the school needing the large theatre. The Grade 8 homeroom and the library are located in an open concept portion of the school. It was very crowded with furniture and open to the hallways. In the researcher’s opinion, they were not appropriate places to hold a drama workshop. It was especially detrimental to hold the first two workshops in a room other than the one reserved by the researcher, because, according to Way (1967) a safe space needs to be created for drama to occur. A safe space is a physically inviting environment that allows enough space to allow students free movement in their activities. It should also be secluded from the rest of the school so that outsiders cannot influence the drama or cause student performers anxiety. The space should have adequate lighting and be warm. The space also becomes safe once students have had a number of sessions and have built a level of comfort and trust within their group. A safe space cannot be created if the environment for the drama continually changes, especially at the commencement of the drama workshops.

Session 3 was postponed due to school events occurring the same day. On this particular day, the school was hosting a “pajama reading party,” during the periods already scheduled for drama. The drama was postponed because it was deemed by the grade 8 homeroom teacher that the pajama party was of more importance and the students needed to participate in this instead.

Prior to sessions 4 and 5, the principal of the school visited the Grade 8 class involved in the drama workshops to lecture regarding the negative behaviour of students
in the school towards their peers and teachers. This seemed to provoke the students into more negative behaviour, as these two sessions seemed to be the most disruptive ones in which the students participated. Field notes reveal that students had great difficulty staying quiet and listening to instructions in session four.

"I asked students to stand up and silently walk around the room. My intent was to explain the rules to 'The Space Series' game. I was disrupted four times while explaining and had to restart my instructions. It was hard to pinpoint who was disrupting, because so many students in the class were talking to each other and ignoring me. I feel that students were not taking part in drama or Boal work today. They seemed to just be putting in time."

Many students did not participate in session 8. They were absent due to a scheduled band field trip. The drama session could not be rescheduled so that more students could attend due to the Grade 8 schedule.

During session 7, the class was exceptionally noisy during their group work. According to field notes, the class was "noisy, but working on-task within their groups." The researcher felt that this noise was appropriate because all groups working seemed to be productive. During this work in the library, another teacher in the school approached the class and proceeded to yell at them for being loud and disruptive. She did this with the teacher-researcher present, without first consulting the teacher-researcher about the students' work. This disrupted the work of the students and impeded on the safe space the researcher was attempting to create for a successful drama session (Ontario College of Teachers, 1999).
In many instances, the location and atmosphere of the drama sessions was altered due to circumstances within the school that were beyond the control of the researcher. These circumstances affected the commitment some students felt towards the drama, which, in turn, affected their self-concept and attitude.
CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION

A. Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the sociodramatic theories of social change of Boal could be used to change intermediate student outlook on life. The dramatic activities of Boal were transplanted into an elementary school classroom to determine whether they would have the same success with intermediate “at risk” adolescent students as they have had in other similar social settings.

It was discovered that student participation in weekly sessions involving the sociodramatic activities of Boal did influence student outlook on life. Student commitment was a factor in this change. Students who participated in the study had changes in response to the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale, with number of changes ranging from four to fifty, when comparing the pre- and post-test results. Seven students had a number of positive changes, eight students had a number of negative changes, and six students had a number of overall changes above the class averages. Although the qualitative data suggests that the workshops provided a slight, positive change in student self-concept, the quantitative scale contradicts this finding. Many students had a negative score on the PHCSCS above the class average. Students may have been affected by influences that resulted in negative scores on the PHCSCS. Drama periods were constantly rescheduled, the environment the workshops occurred was constantly changing, and there were many outside interruptions in the drama. These occurrences may have affected the level of comfort that students felt in the drama workshops. The positive changes as observed in the qualitative data show that the drama
sessions provided students with ample opportunities to move in creative ways, dramatize important issues, and discuss their lives with peers. The changes in self-concept may be related to the students’ opportunity to explore their own feelings and ideas in a consistent, dramatic medium. According to Warren (1993), when individuals use their bodies in positive and productive ways, the result is an awareness of the body’s structure and an increase in self-concept. Warren states that dancing and movement allow individuals to feel unique and special, and this may result in a better self-concept for people involved. The sociodramatic activities allowed students to work with their peers, use their entire bodies in the creative process, and dialogue regarding their unique experiences. Students who participate in an arts program learn to solve problems, make decisions, build self-esteem and self-discipline, and acquire skills in cooperation and group problem solving (Garcia, 1993). Each of these activities allowed participants to discover themselves in a creative way. According to Nelson (1993) the use of drama workshops “enhances self-esteem, originality of thought, decision-making and interpersonal skills, team-building and socialization.” These findings indicate that there was a change in the sense of self-concept for the participants involved in the Boal Drama sessions.

Qualitative results indicate more positive changes. Measures such as field notes, written member checks, and participant journals also revealed that a change in student outlook did occur for some students. Field notes revealed drastic changes in participation levels and behaviour for students such as Carl, Michael, Bobby, Brayden, and Billy. These boys were reluctant to participate in drama work and discussion at the beginning of the sessions. They occasionally took on leadership roles within the dramatic work. As documented in field notes, their level of participation increased drastically around session
5, the midway point in the series of workshops. Students indicated in responses that the drama workshops provided a positive opportunity for their own growth and self-expression. Written member checks verify that students began to feel as though they could express themselves towards the end of the drama sessions. When examining Carl’s, Jocelyn’s, and Danielle’s journals, the theme of self-expression was prevalent. Students indicated in responses that the drama workshops provided a positive opportunity for their own personal growth.

Males in the class seemed to have more of a varied change in score on the PHCSCS, while females stayed more constant. Boys discussed the issue of leadership consistently in their written questionnaires and journal entries. They wrote of the enjoyment they felt leading others in drama work. After examining the data, it appears as though the scores of positive, negative, and overall change on the PHCSCS as compared to the class averages, are related to gender and leadership interest. Five of the thirteen boys expressed very strong leadership during the drama sessions. There were a total of seven scores that were above the class average. Seven of the eleven girls in the class, who expressed a desire to be led in activities, had only five scores that were above the average. According to Lanoux and O’Hara (1999) adolescent girls are more likely than boys to lose confidence and become self-conscious. Girls have been conditioned to pursue social acceptance at any cost. This implies that the girls who participated in the sociodrama workshops did not have the confidence to lead drama activities or did not want to lose the acceptance of peers as a result of participating in these activities.

Students participating in this study expressed that the sociodramatic sessions allowed them an opportunity for self-expression. The curriculum for Grade Eight
students includes dramatic arts, however, these students were not participating in a regular drama class with their homeroom teacher. The lack of drama experience prior to these workshops may have influenced the results. It is unclear whether the themes emerging from the data are due to the sociodramatic techniques being utilized by the researcher, or because students who had little drama experience were suddenly thrust into a weekly drama regimen.

Boys in the class were more involved in leadership roles than the girls. Girls chose to actively pursue passive roles in the drama, in which a leader, usually male, led them in dramatic activities. The researcher-practitioner in this study was a young female who was not a regular teacher. This may have unknowingly been a bias to the research. Students overwhelmingly responded that they preferred a younger, female teacher who was not their regular homeroom teacher, leading the drama workshops. Was their participation in the drama sessions influenced by a desire to impress or please a teacher who was leading their drama sessions under special circumstances of research? In written member checks students were asked to answer the question of whether they liked having a young teacher and a female teacher. Billy responded “I liked having Mrs. McLennan as our drama teacher ‘cause she has experience with drama and was fun to work with. She had a lot of energy and she would help us in the activity.” Vera wrote “Yes [I liked a female teacher] because I can relate to her more. She seems to be more active and fun.” Carrie said “It’s nice having a change and a different personality. It’s nice to have a teacher that had the same issues as us just a few years ago.” Summer answered the question emphatically, with the word “yes” written in capital letters followed by a double exclamation mark. Perhaps the boys in the class responded in
more of a leadership manner to the drama work because they were trying to please the researcher because she was young, female, and a teacher other than their homeroom teacher. It is interesting to note however, that the girls in this study did not fall into the stereotype that they have better interpersonal skills than boys do (Lanoux & O’Hara, 1999). The girls were not as involved in leadership roles and classroom discussion as the boys were.

B. Areas for Future Research

The following areas for future research occurred as a result of this study: how to gain commitment in Boal and Drama sessions, how to distinguish topics specifically for sociodramatic work, how to minimize school disturbances during classroom work, how to increase leadership roles for female participants, and how to affect positive change in students through sociodramatic work, not just change.

Gaining participant commitment in Boal and Drama sessions is important because the results of this study imply that individual scores on the PHCSCS were related to the level of commitment each participant had in the drama sessions. Many of the boys in the class were very committed to the drama workshops, participating in many drama activities, taking leadership roles, and participating in class discussions. These boys had high levels of changes above class averages. The girls who participated in the drama but not in leadership roles, and were not as committed to the drama had very little change in score on the PHCSCS. The level of commitment to the drama by the participants was directly related to their change in self-concept and attitude. According to Nelson (1993) the more women participated in improvisational theatre workshops and the higher the commitment to the drama, the more committed the women became to their work.
Minimizing school disturbances during classroom work is another topic for future research. In many instances, the location and atmosphere of the drama sessions in this study were altered due to circumstances within the school that were beyond the control of the researcher. These circumstances affected the commitment some students felt towards the drama, which, in turn, affected their self-concept and attitude. According to the Ontario College of Teachers (1999), disruptions in the classroom interrupt the learning of students and impede the safe space that teachers attempt to create for this learning to occur.

The concept of 'student commitment to drama work' emerges when one observes the results from the data regarding self-concept and gender differences. It appears as though students who were fully committed to the drama in the workshops of this study also had changes in self-concept on the PHCSCS. Students who were not as committed had different kinds of changes on the PHCSCS. If changes in commitment to drama activities increase and decrease students' self-concept scores, then an area for future research would be to examine how a drama instructor might organize and lead drama sessions so that student commitment to their drama work is strong. This also applies to workshops involving Boal's sociodramatic activities. Will a stronger commitment to drama activities in sessions lead to an increase in student self-concept? Will more commitment to Boal's sociodramatic activities lead to higher scores in self-concept on self-concept inventories? More research needs to be conducted to provide a clearer answer to these questions.

According to field notes, students had difficulty on many occasions choosing a topic for their drama scene. Even with much class discussion and warm-up activities,
students needed a great deal of teacher prompting to begin drama scenes and complete them in their entirety. Topics for the dramas in this study were always to be issues that students felt were important to them. The examples provided to students in discussion during sessions 1 and 2 were friendship, family relationships, the opposite sex, music and film interests, and fears about high school and the future. These topics were provided to students as a guide. In session 1, field notes reveal that students “didn’t know what to do when it was their turn in the drama. They asked the teacher for ideas.” Field notes for session 4, 5, 7, and 8 also reveal that students requested teacher assistance when choosing a topic for their drama. An area for future research might be to see how one could design activities to help participants develop topics of personal importance for their dramatic work. A sociodramatic activity may be more meaningful to participants if it is related to an area with which they are personally associated. More information needs to be collected on how to develop topics for scenes in sociodramatic workshops.

In many instances in this study, the events that were occurring within the school seemed to influence the drama sessions. Workshops were interrupted, postponed or relocated due to others needing the reserved drama space, in-school activities and special days (for example, pajama day), field trips, unscheduled announcements over the public address system, and other teachers disciplining the class in the presence of the researcher. Did the number of school disturbances affect the change in outlook on life that students experienced? Was student commitment to the drama activities and workshop compromised because of the constant delays and disruptions? Future research needs to be completed to see the effects school disturbances have on student participation and
learning. How can teachers minimize the effects of constant external interruptions on their classroom? This is an area that needs to be researched further.

The use of Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed techniques for “at risk” teens is a topic that also could be explored further in future research. The results of this study indicate that the use of Boal’s drama techniques with “at risk” adolescent students may result in a change in student self-concept. This drama may also provide an outlet for student expression and leadership styles. Further research may expand on how Boal’s drama could best be implemented into schools for students, including those that are “at risk.” Further research may also show how schools can use these techniques within classrooms as strategies for preventing and aiding “at risk” students.
References


Appendix A

Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS)

Here are a set of statements. Some of them are true of you and so you will circle the yes. Some are not true of you and so you will circle the no. Answer every question even if some are hard to decide, but do not circle both yes and no. Remember, circle the yes if the statement is generally like you, or circle the no if the statement is generally not like you. There are no right or wrong answers. Only you can tell us how you feel about yourself, so we hope you will mark the way you really feel inside.

1. My classmates make fun of me ........................................yes  no
2. I am a happy person ....................................................yes  no
3. It is hard for me to make friends .................................yes  no
4. I am often sad ..............................................................yes  no
5. I am smart .................................................................yes  no
6. I am shy .................................................................yes  no
7. I get nervous when the teacher calls on me ..............yes  no
8. My looks bother me ....................................................yes  no
9. When I grow up, I will be an important person ........yes  no
10. I get worried when we have tests in school .............yes  no
11. I am unpopular ...........................................................yes  no
12. I am well behaved in school .........................................yes  no
13. It is usually my fault when something goes wrong ......yes  no
14. I cause trouble to my family .........................................yes  no
15. I am strong ..............................................................yes  no
16. I have good ideas ........................................................yes  no
17. I am an important member of my family ....................yes  no
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I usually want my own way</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I am good at making things with my hands</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I give up easily</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I am good in my school work</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I do many bad things</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I can draw well</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>I am good in music</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I behave badly at home</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>I am slow in finishing my school work</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I am an important member of my class</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I am nervous</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I have pretty eyes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I can give a good report in front of the class</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>In school I am a dreamer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>My friends like my ideas</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>I often get into trouble</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>I am obedient at home</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>I am lucky</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>I worry a lot</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>My parents expect too much of me</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>I like being the way I am</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I feel left out of things</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>I have nice hair</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>I often volunteer in school</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>I wish I were different</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>I sleep well at night</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
45. I hate school ..................................................yes no
46. I am among the last to be chosen for games .....................yes no
47. I am sick a lot ................................................yes no
48. I am often mean to other people ................................yes no
49. My classmates in school think I have good ideas ............yes no
50. I am unhappy ................................................yes no
51. I have many friends ..........................................yes no
52. I am cheerful ................................................yes no
53. I am dumb about most things ...................................yes no
54. I am good looking ............................................yes no
55. I have lots of pep ..........................................yes no
56. I get into a lot of fights ......................................yes no
57. I am popular with boys ......................................yes no
58. People pick on me ............................................yes no
59. My family is disappointed in me ............................yes no
60. I have a pleasant face ......................................yes no
61. When I try to make something, everything seems to go wrong ...yes no
62. I am picked on at home .....................................yes no
63. I am a leader in games and sports. ..........................yes no
64. I am clumsy ................................................yes no
65. In games and sports, I watch instead of play ...............yes no
66. I forget what I learn .......................................yes no
67. I am easy to get along with ................................yes no
68. I lost my temper easily ......................................yes no
69. I am popular with girls .....................................yes no
70. I am a good reader ..........................................yes no
71. I would rather work alone than with a group .............yes no
72. I like my brother (sister) .................................................. yes no
73. I have a good figure ....................................................... yes no
74. I am often afraid ............................................................ yes no
75. I am always dropping or breaking things ............................. yes no
76. I can be trusted ............................................................... yes no
77. I am different from other people ........................................... yes no
78. I think bad thoughts ......................................................... yes no
79. I cry easily ................................................................. yes no
80. I am a good person ......................................................... yes no
Appendix B

M.ED. THESIS PETITION

To: Dr. L. L. Morton,
Graduate Committee,
Faculty of Education, University of Windsor

From: Deanna Marie McLennan,
Master of Education Program
Faculty of Education, University of Windsor

Date: Revised Copy of 22 October, 2001 Submission

Subject: Thesis Petition¹

Title: Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal and Moreno be Used to Change Student Outlook on Life?

Outline of the Proposed Study

'Theatre of the Oppressed' is a form of interactive theatre designed by Augusto Boal in the 1950's (Boal, 1985; Boal, 1992). It allows a state of constant dialogue to exist between the actors on the stage and the audience members viewing the performance. Many of Boal's activities focus on bringing the audience into the action of the occurring drama instead of enabling them to be passive onlookers. Engaged participants rehearse strategies for personal and social change (Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994). Theatre of the Oppressed also focuses on the use of theatre and theatre activities to promote self-discovery, self-limitation, and personal attitudes.

'Sociodrama' was founded by J.L. Moreno in the 1940's as a dramatic technique to help with common personal and interpersonal problems. Large groups of people enact dramatizations of their own in a natural, unstructured environment. Moreno's activities

¹ Please refer to Page 6 for those concerns and inquiries which were specifically received on 2 November, 2001.
are based on the sociodrama concepts of improvisational endings by audience members to scenes or skits performed by their peers. Moreno's approach is based upon his own 'theatre of spontaneity' (Feldhendler, 1994, Moreno, 1973).

The above two theories, 'Theatre of the Oppressed' and 'Sociodrama', have been successful in creating controlled social change (Feldhendler, 1994). This study seeks to discover whether the basic dramatic theories of Boal and Moreno can be transferred into an educational setting with the same success as they have had in a social setting. Thus, my research question is as follows:

Based on the sociodramatic theories of social change of Moreno and Boal, can such drama be used in an integrated drama education unit with a group of "adolescents at risk" to change students' outlooks on their lives within a twelve week unit of activities?

Statement of Educational Relevance

The dramatic techniques of both Boal and Moreno are similar due to the process of the drama. Each requires its participants to act out forms of conflict that have built up and remained unresolved in their lives. Each performs certain forms of dramatic activities to institute some social change in the participants' lives. Neither Boal nor Moreno have ever been used in Education to try and institute change regarding student concepts of "outlook of life" (Adelman et al, 1989). Both have been utilized successfully in other areas with stage actors, political activists, therapists, and social workers (Schutzman& Cohen-Cruz, 1994). There is a limited amount of research and documentation on the use of Boal activities within the educational environment (Kay & Ragusa, 1998). This study is interested in using the dramatic activities of Boal and Moreno to create a change in "attitude" for adolescents at risk. Direct involvement in
creative activities can develop personal attributes that help people overcome obstructions in their lives. This may aid “at-risk” adolescents to change their perceptions of themselves and their life choices in relation to the rest of society (Nelson, 1993).

**Research Procedures to be Followed and Proposed Timeline**

The population of this study will consist of twenty “at risk” adolescents ("at risk" as defined by the Principal of XXXX Public School and the XXXX School Board). The criteria for subject selection is pre-determined by the school principal. It is a pre-existing group of “at-risk” adolescents, (e.g., Those “at-risk,” as defined by the principal), currently meet nightly in detention as a result of poor classroom and group performances. Often these students are problematic due to varied backgrounds. In place of detention, and with the permission of the participants’ parents, the “at-risk” group will be asked to attend the proposed Drama session three times a week. 20 is the maximum number for a Drama unit to work successfully (Nelson, 1993); a lower number is optimum. The number of students currently identified by school authorities as “at-risk” is approximately 20.

The dramatic activities, based on the social theories of Boal and Moreno, will take place three times a week for fifty minutes each session, for a duration of twelve weeks. Research has shown that exposure to Drama must be for a minimum of this period of time (Kitaok, Omizo & Omizo, 1998). In the tradition of “Grounded Theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and “Action Research” (Woods, 1986), this research will consist of a qualitative, in-depth, case-by-case study of the twenty participants, the collecting of qualitative research information in the form of researcher-observer field notes, [possible] video recordings of sessions, participant journals; and a quantitative, Likert scale
administered in the first and last session of the drama unit. A survey was selected to define “attitude”, “life outlook”, or “perceived life satisfaction” for the quantitative portion of this study. It is the "Perceived Life Satisfaction Scale" (Adelman, Taylor & Nelson, 1989). This scale was designed to measure the degree of satisfaction and dissatisfaction children and adolescents have towards specific life events. It has five areas focusing on material and physical well-being, relationships, environment, personal development and fulfillment, and recreation and entertainment. It utilizes a six-point Likert-type scale to test one's "outlook on life" (Adelman et al., 1989).

"Outlook on life" will be defined by the quantitative measurement instrument (Adelman et al., 1989). It will examine whether the student has satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding aspects in one portion of this research of their life on a day to day basis, including material and physical well-being, relationships, environment, personal development and fulfillment, and recreation and entertainment.

There are two portions to the research design – a quantitative survey, “The Perceived Life Satisfaction Scale” (Adelman et al, 1989) which is a Likert scale designed by Adelman et al to measure the degree of “satisfaction” adolescents have towards specific life events at the beginning and end of the study; and a qualitative, “Action Research” portion where the researcher-practitioner must also act as a reflective observer to gain deeper insight to the processes of change within the study through subject and researcher journal observations (Burnaford, 2001; Woods, 1986).

The study group at the researcher’s school is a separate group from which the researcher teaches. As an action researcher, and qualitative participant, as mentioned above, it is necessary for the researcher to be the practitioner, not simply a passive
observer of the group, to gain greater reflective insight into the social dynamics involved in any perceived change.

The drama activities will occur three times a week for fifty minutes each session, for a period of twelve weeks (Afifi & Al Saadat, 1997). Consistent, regular drama experience will provide students with exposure and experience with the sociodrama techniques and activities. This will allow students to feel the drama is taking place in a safe, secure environment (Wilson, 1998). 2 hours per week, for a period of 12 weeks, is the minimum amount of time required for and Drama unit to have an effect on the student’ learning (Afifi & Al Saadat, 1997). In the Drama of Boal and Moreno, the optimum amount of time spent with a group was one session per week for twelve weeks. Exploratory discussions with parents and school authorities have already indicated a positive response to the suggested program, and that approval would be granted.

Each drama session will involve a drama warm-up, that will allow students to become comfortable working within drama activities and within their environment. During each session, students will focus on emotion and image making. Activities will focus mostly on the individual at the beginning of the unit. Risk taking activities will be introduced to the class that will lead into pair and group work.

Each drama session will utilize the dramatic activities based on the work of Boal and Moreno. Boal activities will be based on activities from Games for Actors and Non-Actors (Boal, 1992) and adaptations of forum theatre activities from Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1985). Many personal and social issues will be examined through various forms of drama including tableau, improvisation, movement, role-playing, and drama games. Students will focus primarily on activities relating to a sociodrama form.
Students will have many opportunities to become immersed in the drama. Each session will contain a main theme or relevant topic, and it will conclude with a cool down activity. Students will be allotted time for writing about the drama session in their reflective journal.

Through a twelve week dramatic unit, based on the theories of Boal and Moreno, board-identified “at risk” adolescents will be monitored for a change in “life outlook”. Through this in-depth, qualitative study, it is hoped that the researcher will discover whether it is possible to transplant the theories of Boal and Moreno into an educational setting, to see if they function in the same fashion as they have in social settings.

The proposed timeline is as follows:

January 7, 2002 – Complete and Submit University of Windsor Ethics Form.

January 15, 2002 – Approach Board, Principal, and Parents for Permission for Study.

January, 2002 – Preparations for Drama Unit and Study; Send out Notices, Collect Permission Forms

February, 2002 – Begin first Drama session

February – May – Gather Qualitative Field Data; Administer Quantitative Survey(s)

May, 2002 – Complete Study, Collect Journals, Organize Field Notes

Begin Review of Data

June, 2002 – Evaluate Data

Complete Writing of Thesis

**Background Which the Candidate Brings to the Study**

The researcher has a vast background in drama and education - an Honours Bachelor of Arts with a major in Drama in Education from the University of Windsor in June 1999, a Bachelor of Education with a major in the Primary and Junior Division from
the University of Windsor in June 2000. During my Bachelor of Arts, I spent much time researching the use and effectiveness of Boal's dramatic activities in the classroom with adolescents. I have always been interested in the use of sociodrama for social purposes, especially with adolescents "at risk".

I am currently a Grade Four teacher and teacher-librarian at XXXX Public School, with the XXXX School Board. This is my second year of teaching. I have had numerous placements at local schools, both prescribed and voluntary, at many different grade levels for varying lengths of time.

I have had a personal interest in the work of Augusto Boal since 1995, when I was first introduced to his work through research in the Drama in Education program. My interest has always included the use of Boal's activities in an educational setting.

**Members of the Faculty of Education**

Dr. Kara Smith, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, whose area of expertise is in qualitative literacy research and drama education, is willing to serve as the supervisor of this proposed study. Dr. Ian Crawford, Faculty of Education; University of Windsor, whose one area of expertise includes general curriculum issues, is willing to serve as the second, internal reader of this proposed study. Dr. Bernie Warren, Faculty of Drama, University of Windsor, author and expert in Drama Therapy and the theories of Boal and Moreno, is willing to serve as the external reader of this proposed study.
References:


Graduate Committee Concerns

Each of the following seven inquiries, dated 2 November 2001, has been specifically addressed below the question asked.

1. "From the perspective of researcher objectivity, should the study group be at the school where the researcher is employed?"

7. Confusion between qualitative and quantitative (design and measure and analysis)... Need clarification here.

1., 7. There are two portions to the research design – a quantitative survey, "The Perceived Life Satisfaction Scale" (Adelman et al, 1989) which is a Likert scale designed by Adelman et al to measure the degree of "satisfaction" adolescents have towards specific life events at the beginning and end of the study; and a qualitative, "Action Research" and "Grounded Theory" portion where the researcher-practitioner must also act as a reflective observer to gain deeper insight to the processes of change within the study through subject and researcher journal observations (Burnaford, 2001; Woods, 1986).

The study group at the researcher’s school is a separate group from which the researcher teaches. As an action researcher, and qualitative participant, as mentioned above, it is necessary for the researcher to be the practitioner, not simply a passive observer of the group, to gain greater reflective insight into the social dynamics involved in any perceived change.

2. "1800 minutes represents a substantial amount of instruction time: will parents and school authorities approve?"

2. 2 hours per week, for a period of 12 weeks, is the minimum amount of time required for a Drama unit to have an effect on the student’s learning (Afifi & Al Saadat, 1997). In the Drama of Boal and Moreno, the optimum amount of time spent with a group was one session per week for twelve weeks. Exploratory discussions with parents and school authorities have already indicated a positive response to the suggested program, and that approval would be granted.

3. "Will the board and school authorities approve the teacher spending this amount of instructional time in this way?"

3. The Drama program suggested for exploratory research will be conducted as an extracurricular activity outside of the regular school day. In this way, the teacher is neither paid nor neglecting regular duties for the proposed course. As mentioned, exploratory discussions with school authorities have suggested that approval will be granted.
4. "Are these 20 “at-risk” children to be selected from a pre-existing group? If so, by what criteria? Are these 20 “at-risk” children to be selected especially for this study? If so, what criteria would be used to reach 20?"

4. Procedures to be Followed and Proposed Timeline

The criteria for subject selection is pre-determined by the school principal. It is a pre-existing group of “at-risk” adolescents. (e.g., What does the principal regard to be “at-risk”?) The “at-risk” group currently meets nightly in detention. In place of detention, and with the permission of the participants’ parents, the “at-risk” group will be asked to attend the proposed Drama session once a week. 20 is the maximum number for a Drama unit to work successfully (Nelson, 1993); a lower number is optimum. The number of students currently identified by school authorities as “at-risk” is approximately 20.

5. Title?

5. The title is Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal and Moreno be Used to Change Student Outlook on Life?

6. Timelines?

6. Timeline:

The proposed timeline is as follows:

January 7, 2002 – Complete and Submit University of Windsor Ethics Form.

January 15, 2002 – Approach Board, Principal, and Parents for Permission for Study.

January, 2002 – Preparations for Drama Unit and Study; Send out Notices, Collect Permission Forms

February, 2002 – Begin first Drama session

February – May – Gather Qualitative Field Data; Administer Quantitative Survey(s)

May, 2002 – Complete Study, Collect Journals, Organize Field Notes
Begin Review of Data

June, 2002 – Evaluate Data
Complete Writing of Thesis
Appendix C

January 14, 2002

Mrs. XXXX
Superintendent
XX School Board

Dear Mrs. XXXX;

As a graduate student at the Faculty of Education, I am requesting permission from the XXXX School Board to conduct a research study on the self-concept scores of grade seven and grade eight students who have drama workshops three times a week. This proposal is in partial requirement of the requirements of my degree of Master in Education.

The study will be conducted at XXXX Public School, XXXX School Board. Subjects will be male and female grade seven and eight students pre-selected by the principal of XXXX Public School. Subjects will have a pre and post-test of the Piers-Harris Children’s’ Self-Concept Scale.

Participation is completely voluntary and participants may withdraw at any point. No foreseen harm will come to the students in the study. Parental consent will be sought before any testing takes place and all data collected and results obtained will be confidential and accessed by the researcher and people involved in the study only. All participants will remain anonymous.

Please find an enclosed copy of the proposed research plan and description of the instruments. The results will be available upon request. If you have further questions, please contact me at XXXX or my advisor, Dr. K. Smith, at XXXX ext XXXX.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deanna Marie McLennan
Enc.
Application for Permission to Conduct Research

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

A. Name of Investigator: Deanna Marie McLennan
B. Address: XXX
C. Phone(s): Home XXXX Work XXXX
D. Affiliation/Institution: Faculty of Education, University of Windsor
E. Context: Masters Thesis

II. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

A. Title of Research: Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal and Moreno be Used to Change Student Outlook on Life?

B. Issue/Hypothesis to be Researched: Based on the sociodramatic theories of social change of Moreno and Boal, can such drama be used in an integrated drama education unit with a group of “adolescents at risk” to change students’ outlooks on their lives within a twelve week unit of activities?

C. Purpose of Research: This study is interested in using the dramatic activities of Boal and Moreno to create a change in “attitude” for adolescents at risk. This study also seeks to discover whether the basic dramatic theories of Boal and Moreno can be transferred into an educational setting in the same success as they have had in a social setting.

D. Relevance of Research to Education: This study is interested in using the dramatic activities of Boal and Moreno to create a change in “attitude” for adolescents at risk. This study also seeks to discover whether the basic dramatic theories of Boal and Moreno can be transferred into an educational setting in the same success as they have had in a social setting.

E. Procedure for Sample/Participant Selection: The population of this study will consist of a Grade Eight class of “at risk” adolescents (“at risk” as defined by the Principal of XXXX Public School). The criteria for subject selection is pre-determined by the school principal. It is a pre-existing group of “at risk” adolescents. This class is considered to be “at risk,” by the Principal of XXXX Public School because the class has been experiencing social difficulties within the classroom and at recess. These social difficulties include exclusion of classmates, bullying, name-calling, and belittling. These social difficulties are affecting the learning atmosphere and environment within the classroom. The teacher of this class has recommended to the principal of XXXX West Public School that the social issues within the class be addressed.
F. Procedure to ensure confidentiality and anonymity: Students will not be referred to by their given names in written and oral components of the research. Work in the actual drama workshops will be kept confidential. All work will be done in a comfortable, safe space. Written records, questionnaires, subject journals, and field notes will be kept in the office at my home until their final disposal, which will involve them being shredded. Only I will have access to the data kept in the office of my home. Student journals will be returned to students at the completion of my research.

G. Instruments/Forms/Questionnaires/etc. to be used (attached): Please find attached a copy of the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale which will be the instrument for this study and a copy of the University of Windsor permission form which will be used to obtain parental consent. Please also find attached copies of letter from the Graduate Committee, Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor and the Review Ethics Board at the University of Windsor.

H. Proposed Data Analysis: There are two portions to the research design: a quantitative survey, “Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale” which will be administered at the beginning and end of the study; and a qualitative, “Action Research” and “Grounded Theory” portion where the researcher-practitioner must also act as a reflective observer to gain deeper insight to the processes of change within the study through subject and researcher journal observations (Burnaford, 2001; Woods, 1986). The Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale is an eighty-item self-report instrument designed to assess how children and adolescents 7-18 years of age feel about themselves in areas of physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, intellectual and school status, behaviour, happiness and satisfaction, and popularity. Items are composed of simple descriptive statements. Children indicate whether each item applies to them by selecting a yes or no response. Summary scores give an overall measure of self-concept, whereas subscale scores give a more detailed interpretation in each of the six sub-categories. The study group at the researcher’s school is a separate group from which the researcher teaches. As an action researcher, and qualitative participant, as mentioned above, it is necessary for the researcher to be the practitioner, not simply a passive observer of the group, to gain greater reflective insight into the social dynamics involved in any perceived change.

I. Dates for Beginning Data Collection: Monday, March 18, 2002
Ending Data Collection: Friday, June 21, 2002

III REQUIREMENTS FROM THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

A. School/Record Information Required: No student record information is required.
B. School Facilities Required: The drama will occur in a large, safe space appropriate for dramatic activities. The gym or large theatre at XXXX Public School will be appropriate.

C. School Personnel Assistance Required: No personnel are required. The teacher of the Grade Eight class will be present at the times of all drama workshops.

D. Subjects/Participants Required: The drama is to occur with a Grade Eight class at XXXX Public School. These students are one class (which will not be separated) without any previous sociodrama curriculum experience. The class, which I do not teach and am not familiar with, has been pre-identified by school officials as having "at risk, social difficulties." The Drama curriculum proposed for the group (which falls under the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines) focuses on Moreno and Boal role-play and sociodrama in particular.

E. When/Time Required: The proposed drama workshops will occur once a week with the Grade Eight class, for a forty minute period. The workshops will occur for twelve consecutive weeks.

F. Schools/Grades Required: One class of Grade Eight students is required. The proposed class attends XXXX Public School.

G. Preferred Schools/Grades Required: One class of Grade Eight students is required. The preferred class attends XXXX Public School.

IV PROCEDURES FOR INFORMING SCHOOLS AND PARENTS AND PROVIDING FEEDBACK

A. Provisions for preparing and debriefing participants: Students will be informed of the purpose of the study at the beginning of the twelve week workshops and will be informed of the results of the study at the end of the workshops. Each drama session will include a dramatic warm-up to prepare students for the dramatic work and a cool-down, which will allow students to reflect on their work in the drama session. At the end of each drama session, students will be given time to write thoughts and ideas in a reflective personal journal.

B. Method of Obtaining Informed Consent (Form attached?): A letter of consent to participants and parents/guardians will be obtained from students before the workshops and the collection of data begins. This consent form is the recommended form according to the Review Ethics Board of the University of Windsor. The researcher has already obtained the permission for commencement of this research from the Graduate Research Committee, Faculty of Education and the Review Ethics Board at the University of Windsor. Please find the enclosed letters of consent.

C. Procedures for Providing Feedback to Participating Schools: The principal, Grade Eight teacher, Grade Eight students, and parents of XXXX Public School will be informed of the results of this study. The researcher will ensure that
results are provided in written form to the principal and teacher. Any parents requesting information will be invited to contact the researcher, who is also a teacher at XXXX Public School.

D. Expected Date for Submission of Completed Research Report to the Research Review Committee of the XXXX School Board: The twelve week drama workshops and the collection of data are expected to be completed by June 21, 2002. The researcher expects to have this thesis completed by August 31, 2002.

V. STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

I agree that this research will be conducted in accordance with the current policy of The XXXX School Board (attached) regarding the Conduct of Research and any particular directives given by the Research Review Committee of the Board.

__________________________________________________________
Signature of the Principal Researcher

__________________________________________________________
Date
Appendix D

January 14, 2002

Mr. XXXX
Principal
XXXX Public School

Dear Mr. XXXXXX,

As a graduate student at the Faculty of Education, I am requesting permission from the XXXX School Board to conduct a research study on the self-concept scores of grade seven and grade eight students who have drama workshops three times a week. This proposal is in partial requirement of the requirements of my degree of Master in Education.

The study will be conducted at XXXX Public School, XXXX School Board. Subjects will be male and female grade seven and eight students pre-selected by the principal of XXXX Public School. Subjects will have a pre and post-test of the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale.

Participation is completely voluntary and participants may withdraw at any point. No foreseen harm will come to the students in the study. Parental consent will be sought before any testing takes place and all data collected and results obtained will be confidential and accessed by the researcher and people involved in the study only. All participants will remain anonymous.

Please find an enclosed copy of the proposed research plan and description of the instruments. The results will be available upon request.

If you have further questions, please contact me at XXXX or my advisor, Dr. K. Smith, at XXXX ext XXXX.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deanna Marie McLennan
Enc.
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

"Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal and Moreno be Used to Change Student Outlook on Life?"

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Deanna Marie McLennan, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Dr. Kara Smith, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor. 519-253-4232 extension 3826.

• PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The sociodramatic theories of Boal and Moreno have been used to promote self-discovery, self-limitation, and personal attitudes in order to create controlled social change. This study seeks to discover whether the basic dramatic theories of Boal and Moreno can be transferred into an educational setting with the same success as they have had in a social setting.

• PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Students will participate in twelve drama classes, which will be forty minutes in length. Activities in these drama workshops are based on the sociodramatic theories of Boal and Moreno. Students will participate in a number of drama games and activities for the first six drama sessions. The last six drama sessions will focus on roleplaying and forum theatre activities, which will allow students to explore current social and personal issues.

Students will be asked to complete a pre- and post-test of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. The pre-test will occur before the drama workshops begin and the post-test will occur at the conclusion of the drama workshops. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale is an eighty-item self-report instrument designed to assess how children and adolescents 7-18 years of age feel about themselves in areas of physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, intellectual and school status, behaviour, happiness and satisfaction, and popularity. Items are composed of simple descriptive statements. Children indicate whether each item applies to them by selecting a yes or no response. Summary scores give an overall measure of self-concept, whereas subscale scores give a more detailed interpretation in each of the six subcategories.

Students will be asked to record observations and ideas regarding their participation in each drama session in a journal. Journals will be returned to students at the conclusion of the study. Any suspicion of illegal activity and sexual and/or physical abuse must be reported to the principal and the Children's Aid Society.

This study will take place at XXXX Public School. Participation is completely voluntary and participants may withdraw if necessary. The results of the study will be available from the principal of XXXX Public School and the researcher. The results of the study will also be posted by the Principal's Office.

• POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no known or anticipated risks of the proposed study.

• POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The potential direct benefits to the subjects involved in this project might be a change in their personal outlook on life. The benefits to society might be that adolescent students can change their outlook on life through the sociodramatic education unit of activities. Additional benefits from this study might be a
discovery of whether or not the basic dramatic theories of Boal and Moreno can be transferred into an educational setting with the same success as they have had in a social setting.

• **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There is no compensation for subjects involved in this study.

• **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Subjects will not be referred to by their given names in written and oral components of the research. Work in the drama workshops will be kept confidential. All work will be done in a comfortable, safe space. Written records, questionnaires, subject journals, and field notes will be kept in the office of my home until their final disposal which will involve them being shredded. Student journals will be returned at the conclusion of the research. Only the researcher will have access to records, questionnaires, journals, and field notes.

• **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don’t want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

• **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Co-ordinator
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4
Telephone: 519-253-3000, # 3916
E-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

• **SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE**

I understand the information provided for the study “Can the Sociodramatic Theories of Social Change of Boal and Moreno be Used to Change Student Outlook on Life?” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

__________________________________________________________________________
Name of Student

__________________________________________________________________________
Signature of Student  Date

__________________________________________________________________________
Signature of Parent/Guardian  Date

• **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

In my judgement, the subject is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent to participate in this research study.

__________________________________________________________________________
Signature of Investigator  Date
Please put these activities in order of how much you enjoyed the activity. Use the number 1 – 11. Rate your favourite activity as #1 and then put the rest of the activities in order until your least favourite activity is #11.

1. Unique Name Game ______

2. Small Group Circle of Knots ______

3. Large Group Circle of Knots ______

4. The Big Chief ______

5. Getting into Groups (of different attributes) ______

6. The Object Transformed ______

7. Handshake (Complete the Image) ______

8. The Fighting Chickens ______

9. Image Theatre Small Groups (Clay and Sculptor) ______

10. Image Theatre Large Group (Clay and Sculptor) ______

11. Image Theatre with an Improvisation/acted Conclusion ______
Appendix G

1. What did you get most out of these drama classes?

2. What did you like about the drama classes?

3. Did you like working with a teacher different than your regular homeroom teacher?

4. Did you like having a female teacher?

5. Did you like having a younger teacher?

6. Did you like having Mr. XXXX in the room when we did drama or did you prefer him not in the room? Which was more comfortable?

7. Did you like working in large or small groups? Why?

8. Make a list of things you liked most about the drama classes.

9. Which drama activity was your favourite? Why?

10. Which activity did you dislike the most? Why?

Other comments?
VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Deanna Marie Pecaski McLennan
PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, Ontario, Canada
YEAR OF BIRTH: 1977
EDUCATION:

General Amherst High School, Amherstburg, Ontario, Canada 1990-1995

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada 1995-1999 Bachelor of Arts, Drama in Education

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada 1999-2000 Bachelor of Education, Primary/Junior

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada 2000-2003 Master of Education, Curriculum Studies