

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

**THE PROCESS AND PRODUCT OF A COLLABORATIVE
PLAYWRITING PROJECT WITH STUDENTS
FROM TWO DISTINCT CULTURES**

by

Kayla Gordon-Maister

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree Master of Education

Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences

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KAYLA GORDON-MAISTER

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MASTER OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

The Process and Product of a collaborative playwriting project involving students from two distinct cultures.

Playwriting can provide students with experiences in creativity that lead to play creation, writing, and production on issues that are relevant and important to their personal growth and development. Creating a play from an experience can encourage students to take ownership, feel a part of something they have created themselves, and provide an opportunity for them to develop an understanding of themselves in relation to others.

The study described the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project which involved students from two distinct cultures from October 1991 - June 1992. In November, students from a Winnipeg high school traveled to the town and reserve of Norway House for five days. In January, the Norway House students came to the city. The study was based on the uniting of these two cultures and the experience they shared creating and performing a play.

The purpose of the study was to identify the nature and significance of the project, to document the playwriting process used in this project, and to assess the impact of the project for the participants from both cultures.

This project took the collaborative playwriting form further by bringing about an interaction between students from two communities, north and south, native and non-native, rural and urban. The exchange generated limitless creative writing opportunities central to students' exploration of themselves and others. Through this experiential approach, the culturally diverse students related to, reflected upon, and became absorbed in the playwriting experience shared in the process which evolves into theatre.

The information and data were collected through original project proposals, teacher correspondence, student journals, and original student writing. In addition, other reactions included media clips, letters, audience response, and participants' videod reflections on the process.

The results of the data indicated that the process of a collaborative playwriting experience between two distinct cultures can:

- 1) break down barriers that exist between students in order to increase students' knowledge of other communities;
- 2) help to develop an understanding of the individual in relation to others;
- 3) help to develop language skills, creative thinking skills, and problem solving skills;
- 4) help students learn the concepts and techniques necessary for playwriting;
- 5) help increase self-confidence.

The interviews that were conducted on video-tape and the journals indicated that the students had experienced personal growth while working on this process. Through their responses they indicated that most of their personal growth was positive. They learned to work together, become more tolerant of each other, recognize their differences, and listen and respond. They learned the importance of self-discipline, concentration, and flexibility of thought. They began to develop a stronger self-image and a deeper sense of worth, and more importantly an understanding of themselves in relation to others.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Every drama teacher knows that feeling at the very first staff meeting at the beginning of the school year when the principal pulls out the school calendar and announces the week marked off - School Play.

What shall we do this year - some of the same old material from previous years, another musical perhaps, or maybe a bit of Shakespeare or Shaw? The easy solution is to choose a play which has been done before; however, a production which may have been successful in the past may no longer motivate the students.

Suitable plays at the high school level are limited. Many of the available plays or scripts contain subject matter which is not suitable for high school students. The scripts may contain too many male roles, too few female roles, inappropriate themes, unacceptable language, or impossible technical demands. Choosing the play can become an angry and frustrating task for many drama teachers or those expected to produce the school production. As Scanlan (1982) points out, high schools as a group are the single largest producer of plays in the country, "yet the availability of scripts which are challenging, appropriate, honest and about the needs and concerns of teenagers is meager." (p. 28) The demand to produce high school productions is great but the supply is limited.

What production can we do this year that is suitable for our students? A play or musical written by someone else may satisfy the needs of the teacher, but that does not always satisfy the needs of the students. In all fairness, we should ask the students what they want to do and take into account their suggestions and ideas.

In this century much educational thought has concentrated on a child-centered approach to learning and has led to the concept of the student

participating in the educational experience. One way the student might participate is by means of developing plays or play activities natural to children. John Dewey (1900), endorses such an approach by stating that:

The primary root of all educative activity is in the instinctive, impulsive attitudes and activities of the child, and not in the presentation and application of external material, whether through the ideas of others or through the senses; and that accordingly numberless spontaneous activities of children plays, games, mimic efforts... are capable of educational use, nay, are the foundation stones of educational methods.
(p. 143)

Schools developed in which these ideas were explored and experienced and a whole new direction took shape linking dramatic activity with spontaneous play and playmaking.

Playmaking, playwriting, collective playmaking, docudrama, and collective creation are terms used synonymously to describe a process of teaching which has gained wide popularity both in the drama curriculum and as an extra curricular activity. Playwriting, the term referred to most frequently in this research paper, based on the student's spontaneous play, is designed to allow the student to develop and grow through the playwriting process.

Playwriting is a vehicle for exploring the problems and solutions of real life. The course, "Playwriting," developed at a select Winnipeg high school was implemented into the Creative Arts Program as an option for students. This is its fourth successful year with 35 students enrolled in three levels 105, 205, and 305. In one semester (5 months) students learn to develop critical thinking through the

process of writing and workshopping a complete play. The course, "Theatre Arts Practicum," was also developed, which combines advanced playwriting students with advanced drama students. The objective of this course was for students to work collaboratively on a cross-cultural writing project to help build a cultural dialogue between students from two distinct communities. A Winnipeg high school and a northern, predominantly native, high school in Norway House, Manitoba, joined together to collaborate on a play dealing with the problems that native and non-native groups encounter. This descriptive study will highlight the process and product of this project.

Playwriting can be an alternative way of unlocking the students' creative potential. Those who educate young adults have a tremendous responsibility not only to offer significant opportunities to young people, but also to foster educational objectives that emphasize total growth. What is total growth? What is a good strong intellectual base? In answer to her question "What are the basic attributes of a contributive citizen in today's democratic society, besides a good foundation of factual knowledge?" Isabel B. Burger (1966) suggests that:

The well-rounded boy and girl should possess:

- (1) A healthy and well-coordinated body;
- (2) flexibility and fluency in oral communication of ideas;
- (3) a deep and sympathetic understanding of his fellow man;
- (4) an active creative imagination;
- (5) resourcefulness and independence;
- (6) initiative;
- (7) controlled and balanced emotions;

- (8) ability to cooperate with the group;
- (9) sound attitudes of behavior toward home, church, school and community;
- (10) aesthetic sensitivity- a real appreciation for beauty of form, color, sound, and line. (p. 3)

Playwriting can contribute to the achievement of many of the above goals. Although playwriting is often perceived as a highly specialized and isolated discipline within the present high school curriculum, outside the classroom one can see that theatre is a vibrant, pervasive, and integral part of our culture. Like other aspects of our culture in Canada, theatre acts as a bridge that connects us with the lives of others around us. In order to build theatre, one must start with the basics, the tools of writing. Playwriting helps students to find ways to put their voices on paper so that theatre becomes something of value in their lives.

There is a very strong link between culture and education. Edward de Bono (1970) poses this connection by saying that culture is concerned with the establishment of ideas. He believes that education must be concerned with communicating those ideas. (p. 9)

It is crucial that drama educators are able to encourage students to cherish the theatre culture of the past, and to promote attitudes and skills that will enable students to make contributions to culture in the future. Through playwriting, students may be a part of an exciting development if culture and education can come together. Playwriting encourages the creative impulses of teenagers, stimulating students to release their own ideas, and to discover the most effective way of communicating them.

With so much of today's generation, motivation and innovation clicks off as the television clicks on. Creativity and imagination appear stifled as many

secondary students become skeptical about the relevance of any area of study that does not yield practical results in "dollars and cents." Students' creativity is stifled because in many cases there is little opportunity to think creatively. Modern life, with its inventions like Nintendo, tends to smother the love for creative play and initiative that children have.

Winnifred Ward (1957) expresses her view by saying:

Elaborate toys that offer no chance for ingenuity, comic books that have light reading text, television programs that require little thinking take the place of all manner of activities requiring imagination. (p. 1)

Motivation is difficult, however, if subject matter is irrelevant to the lives of the students. Caroline Benn faces the problem of irrelevancy. She justifies the students' reactions and suggests catering, to a degree, to their interests. She believes that, "What they need is help in saying what they want in the way they want, fostering natural communicative talents." (P. 126)

Playwriting can provide students with fresh experiences in creativity that lead to play creation, writing, and production on issues that are relevant and important to their personal growth and development. Creating theatre from the first expression of an original idea can encourage students to take ownership. They can feel a part of something they have created themselves.

To build excitement and challenge into a program that will increase motivation, commitment, and growth for the students and the teacher, there must be risks. The risk is in making the playwriting experience available to students' and giving them the freedom and opportunity to express themselves in areas that interest them. A teacher of playwriting contributes enormously to the students

thinking through the encouragement she gives and the attitudes she fosters. In a classroom, learning is information absorbed, but in a playwriting class, the teacher works primarily with what the students bring to class and the extent to which they give themselves. Material brought in is discussed and critiqued by all and it is this interaction that adds to the risks. The results, however, should contribute to a more independent, productive individual. Through his/her own experimentation he/she may discover the strength of their own ideas and concepts.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project that involved students from two distinct cultures.

To accomplish this the researcher will:

- 1) identify the nature and significance of the project;
- 2) document the playwriting process used in this project;
- 3) assess the impact the project had on the participants from both cultures.

Significance

In 1988 Manitoba educators received the report of the High School Review committee, entitled "Answering the Challenge," that included recommendations for changes to the existing high school programs. The committee on the review recognized the great social and economic changes taking place in today's society and they saw that high schools are required to develop a more practical approach in order to dealing with some very complex realities. As a result the panel recommended, in "Answering the Challenge", a course, "Aesthetics," to be incorporated into the program of studies. The review states that a compulsory credit in the arts should appear on every high school graduate's diploma. Little has been done to implement this recommendation.

The Winnipeg school division was concerned about costly recommendations (i.e., writing of new provincial curriculum documents), but it also encouraged high schools in the division to embark on staff development programs within budget guidelines that would lead to new and exciting programming. High schools in the school division have studied the recommendations of the High School Review Panel and have determined the direction each school would take in initiating some of these changes even before they were mandated by the province.

After hearing the interest of the school division to initiate programs that would enhance the present drama program, the researcher began to explore possible avenues for change in the drama curriculum at the Winnipeg school to make the program more innovative and challenging to her students. Drama education in the last twenty years has developed two styles of student productions. The most common is the performance of a play chosen by the teacher from a

catalogue of scripts. More recently, teachers have called upon students to collaborate on the creation of original plays.

The drama and music departments were already collaborating on many projects. Original productions had been written by students and teachers and performed by the drama students but there was little expertise in the area. What seemed to be missing was a course to develop the students' writing abilities in order to encourage individual as well as collaborative scripts. The course, Playwriting, taught by the researcher and a playwright-in-residence, was introduced to help bring together all the arts courses at the Winnipeg school. It was out of this course that the cross-cultural writing exchange was developed.

Delimitations

- 1) The study was limited to the teaching of the playwriting process involving chosen students from two schools in grades eleven and twelve from the existing drama programs. Only ten students were involved in the writing exchange, four initially from the Winnipeg school, plus two who joined the project later, and four from the Norway House school.

Definitions

Playwriting - is defined as the creative act of writing a play either individually or collaboratively.

Playwright - a person who creates a play. The word "wright" means worker. It used to connect with a variety of crafts, for example: wheelwright (a person who makes wheels). The wright is the person who works the play, not just writes it.

Playwright-in-residence - A person who is hired to instruct students on how to write a play.

Piece - A part of something larger. Artists use the term "piece" to indicate the work they are currently creating, such as a dance, a mime, a musical segment.

Script - the text or words of the play.

Workshopping - to work together as a group to develop a script.

Improvisation - refers to extemporaneous drama, where general plans are made, but detailed action and dialogue are left to the participants.

Collective Creation - collectively writing a play together with a group of people. The play is generally a collection of various forms of theatre tied together by the thread of a theme.

Culture - is the sum total of ways of living, including values, beliefs, expression, behavior, and styles of communication that a group of people has developed in its own environment.

Multi-cultural education - a process designed to foster understanding and acceptance among people of different cultures.

Cross-cultural education - the process of combining two or more groups of different cultural backgrounds to gain an understanding and an appreciation of each other.

Prejudice - describes hostile and unreasonable feelings, opinions or attitudes based on fear, mistrust and ignorance.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

The review of the literature includes books, papers and reference material written by a variety of arts specialists and educators. Within the literature reviewed, four questions emerged as the major concern of the researcher.

- 1) What is the value of playwriting with students ?
- 2) What playwriting strategies can be used in the schools?
- 3) How can playwriting enhance cross-cultural education?
- 4) How can cross-cultural playwriting motivate students?

The Value of Playwriting

The common thread most educational theorists have on the discipline of playwriting with students is the development of the individual and the freeing of creative potential. When used in education, the main purpose of playwriting is to encourage the personal and intellectual growth of the student rather than to train actors or professional playwrights.

Kline (1970) suggests to teachers instructing playwriting that developing professional playwrights should not be the teacher's prime motivation. Playwriting class could become a place in which the anguish and frustration of growth can be transferred into creative energy. In the writing process students learn basic literary concepts, not by being told about them, but by experiencing them. At the same

time those students will become more critical of their own lives and more conscious of what is happening in them. (p. 13)

The kind of growth that is possible in student playwrights is exemplified by the following comment of one of Kline's students who said:

I think the main problem is that I started to write a very sarcastic play, and I started growing out of my sarcastic stage while I was writing it. Therefore it's much stronger in some places than others. Maybe in a few months I'll be totally grown out of the sarcasm -- then I'll be able to look more objectively at it. (p. 13)

Playwriting, like drama, as Courtney (1980) explains, is concerned with "inner imaginative thought and the spontaneous dramatic action which results. It is the basis of human life and, it is an essential component of all genuine education". (p. 2)

Courtney (1980) describes Caldwell Cook's philosophy of teaching English based on three principles:

1. Proficiency and learning come not from reading and listening but from action from doing, and from experience.
2. Good work is more often the result of spontaneous effort and free interest rather than of compulsion and forced application.
3. The natural means of study in youth is play.

This is very near to John Dewey's (1900) "learning by doing":

...the primary root of all educative activity is in the instinctive, impulsive attitudes and activities of the child, and not in the presentation and application of external material, whether through the ideas of others or through the senses; and that, accordingly, numberless spontaneous activities of children, plays, games, mimic efforts. . . are capable of educational use, nay, are the foundation - stones of educational methods.
(p. 25)

Cook, Dewey, and Courtney all considered that 'experience', 'doing', and 'play' are the keys to learning. Brian Way (1967), also says the purpose of education, in particular in drama, is the development of the child/student.

Yet playwriting or the development of student written plays has grown very slowly throughout this century as an approach to learning. Courtney (1974) believes that this is primarily because teachers have to take a risk. In the traditional classroom, the teacher is a "god-like figure who dispenses knowledge and the students listen quietly and subsequently, regurgitate facts." (p. 3) In the drama/playwriting classroom the students make decisions; they are active . The teacher is in indirect rather than direct control -- leading rather than instructing. Further, the students are happy, enthusiastic and excited. "They are having 'fun' - and the Puritan ethic (which we all inherit) equates work with boredom and hard grind." (p. 3) For some teachers, therefore, it does not seem quite right that students enjoy work.

Goldberg (1990) refers to the benefit of the experience and sums up the advantage of writing by saying:

. . . that the artist and the alcoholic have parallel paths. They both go into the darkness, but the alcoholic gets stuck there. The artist if she is not also addicted goes into the darkness and is transformed by the experience and comes out alive. I picture the artist as someone deep sea-diving, holding her breath and bursting out of the water into the air, six minutes later 100 feet from where she began, with sun catching the water spray. The alcoholic dives down and gets caught in the sludge. The good thing is the artist can move through experience, learn from it and not be caught by it. Writing can give us this. (p. 160)

Ward (1957) believes that children are endowed with wonderful imaginations and must be encouraged to use their imaginative minds. "Like the muscles, it must have exercise if the individual is to become a creative thinker." (p. 6)

"Most adults lose their creativeness and only a few can save it," writes Lowenfeld. (1952) Adults today have gone through school in an environment where creativity and imagination have been largely ignored. It is imperative that when considering the whole child and the individual that the curriculum take time to develop creative imagination before they reach adulthood and it is too late. As Ward (1957) reiterates, "Childhood, when imagination is fresh and strong, is the time to begin cultivating it; and there is no school experience which gives better opportunity for creativity than playmaking." (p. 7)

In order to allow students the freedom to create and express themselves openly and honestly in their writing it is important to develop an environment where they feel trust. Whichever writing strategy is used to develop the drama, the group or individual must feel comfortable accepting criticism in order to allow the

work to develop. Positive encouragement is also essential. Byers (1968) believes that self confidence and initiative spring from the student who receives sincere compliments rather than negative criticism, but the teacher must be selective in both instances. (p. 6)

Students need assistance in preparing their mind and spirit for creative thinking. They need constant encouragement to express their ideas, and guidance to take these ideas and put them on paper. They need to learn how to select, combine and integrate their work. "The teacher can provide the encouragement and guidance so necessary during this time", says Byers, "if she leads the student to experience the total creative process. She must believe in the creative potential of every student. She must respect his world, his abilities, his viewpoints: more over, she must be deeply interested in his creative efforts" (Byers, 1968, p. 5)

Byers concludes by saying that creative playwriting is more than a means of writing a play for students to perform on stage. It can become a gateway to imagination, dreams, feelings and knowledge of oneself. The student's growth begins with personal involvement with an idea. By working objectively and subjectively, alone and within a group, students develop an original play from idea through performance. This can be a challenge to their mind and energies, for although they may not be consciously aware of their creative powers at work, the student will catch a glimpse of the excitement and satisfaction that comes from inspired work and will be enriched by the experience. As a result creative playwriting can make a student more aware of his/her own ideas and how these ideas can be used to bring about a theatre experience that is both fresh and original. Then the student will have discovered that theatre does not begin with a play but with an idea; for this is how it began.

If we agree that playwriting can and should be taught, we need some vantage point from which to teach it. What are the rules? Fortunately or

unfortunately as the case may be, the most frequently uttered statement about playwriting by those who have studied the art is that there are no rules for writing good plays.

One cannot give instruction in playwriting the way one gives instruction in tennis or playing a musical instrument. Kline (1970) affirms this by saying:

Choose any general statement you like about plays and you will find some good play that has been written in defiance of it. Plot, character, conflict, theme, dialogue, scenery-all are considered more or less naturally to be ingredients for good drama, and all have been effectively done without. (p. 21)

Learning how to play a game of tennis requires a set of rules; playing a musical instrument requires a specific set of instructions. Playwriting requires no instruction and there are no rules. "Every good play is good in a different way", says Kline, "following rules for writing plays only leads one to write bad plays." (p. 21)

There are guidelines of course, important things to consider, problems to solve to make a play better but basically as Patrick (1986) states: "Playwriting can be considered one of the easiest jobs in the arts", because it requires little preparation. (p. 31)

Patrick goes on to say that:

...other artists must prepare long and hard before they can start to work. A dancer must exercise daily to build a body that is a machine for dancing. A singer must transform lungs, throat, diaphragm, lips, tongue, and teeth into an instrument for singing. Musicians must run scales and practice all their lives.

Painters must learn the chemistry of paint, color theory, composition. Sculptors must learn it all, in three dimensions, and the complexities of architecture and composing are staggering. But a playwright's first job is one that you not only do not have to learn, it's something you have been doing since the moment you were born, are doing right now, and will be doing for the rest of your life. A playwright has a fantasy.

(p. 31)

"Anyone can write because everyone has ideas stored inside them all the time. If you have an imagination or ideas you have a fantasy." writes Scanlan. (P. 31) It is these fantasies that are the makings of a play. What prevents most students from writing down these "fantasies" is that they don't think they can write or that their ideas are any good.

Byers (1968) compares the writer to a child. A child without thinking can surround himself in a world of fantasy.

At the snap of a finger he can become a tree, a rabbit, a spotlight, a raindrop, or a bird. It never seems to matter that others do not know what he is, for the observer may see a bird from only his viewpoint, while the child sees something entirely different. (p. 1)

Undeveloped, the activity is recognized as playmaking but under the teacher's able assistance this fantasy or idea can be extended further into the development of a play. It is best described by Golberg (1990) who said:

I told my students, you can't plant a grass seed and then stick

your finger in the seed and yank out a blade of grass. It doesn't work like that. We have to be patient and let the blade of grass grow. (p. 151)

The play's idea is the most important part of it, the part people are most likely to ask about and remember. Above all, it is the main motivator. Whether the initial stimulus is external (a social issue, a book or an article) or whether it is more personal (an image from the past or a feeling about something), there is something that the writer wants to say.

Relevant Literature Pertaining to Group Playwriting Strategies

The best response to a lack of scripts available to high school students is the creation of new plays by students themselves. Students know what they like and what their peers like writes Scanlan (1984):

Teenagers know that there is an enormous difference between what adults perceive as 'the problems of adolescence' and the realities of the difficulties, dreams, hopes and passions of youth. And even when they can't clearly articulate it, kids show what they need and want. They need a voice and they want to be heard. It's time for those of us who work with kids to help them find their voice. (P. 28)

Scanlan believes that any method used to facilitate group playwriting must take into consideration the goals, philosophy, strengths, and weaknesses of the individuals involved. Plays that are written collectively or collaboratively by a group or by an individual student, must be under the direction of someone who has

a knowledge of dramatic structure and a familiarity with the technique of creative drama and one who will guide the process and direct the resulting play. As well it is important to have a group of enthusiastic students who are willing to commit themselves to creating a play. This, combined with good leadership and enthusiasm, can be an exciting experience for both the writers and audience.

Whether a collaborative approach or an individual approach to playwriting, the problems that come with unsuitable plays are alleviated. The students become the artists. They can create whatever they like, a theme that is important to them, the size of the cast, the appropriate age for the characters, and a setting that requires minimal expense. Thus the process of playwriting begins.

Many terms are used to describe the process of creating an original play. Some of the terms used are playmaking, collective creation, collaborative work, and documentary play. The variation in these terms is related to the strategies or process of the creative writing.

Playwriting

In order to define playwriting, Cassady (1984) first defines drama and theatre. He says that theatre is defined in part by saying that it "is a presentation which is pre-planned". The pre-planning is the drama, which can be a detailed script or a bare outline. "Drama could be defined by saying it is action and dialogue, portraying conflict in the form of a story presented by actors on a stage for the entertainment and/or enlightenment of an audience." (p. 3) The drama, as defined by Cassady, is the play and the script and how it involves itself in theatre and production.

According to Cecily O'Neil and Alan Lambert (1982), drama in education is a mode of learning. Through the pupils' active identification with imagined roles

and situations in drama, they can learn to explore issues, events and relationships. (p. 11) During these explorations students can be involved in focused discussions that lead to playwriting.

O'Neil and Lambert go on to say that drama is social and involves contact, communication, and the negotiation of meaning. This negotiation of meaning can lead to creative playwriting. As Richard Courtney (1980) states, in reference to holistic educational philosophy, "knowledge occurs when inner creates a relationship with the outer."

In the drama and playwriting environment students are involved in the delicate process of connecting their "inner" (what they know from past experience) with the world around them. It would seem that drama curriculum and playwriting will be most effective in the long term in cases where the teacher provides a learning environment where this process can occur. Meaningful playwriting is concerned with the working through of situations and problems that concern those in its process. (Bolton, 1979)

Drama in this context is creating through experience and past experience. The overall goal of drama as the Alberta Drama Curriculum (1989) describes:

... is to foster a positive self-concept in students by encouraging them to explore life by the assumption of dramatic skills. The imaginative exploration involves setting up a dramatic situation, "acting out" that situation, communicating within that situation and reflection that provides the knowledge for self-development. (p. 3)

As students progress through the dramatic forms of expression at the secondary level, greater emphasis is placed upon the development of individuals as

playwrights. The self-development and socialization processes of the students are extended by developing an appreciation of theatre as a traditional form. It is not, however, the theatre or performance that is the focus in playwriting in the high school. The writer is concerned again with the process. It is through the dramatic process that various strategies for playwriting take place. The plays can be developed collaboratively or by individual students but in all cases playwriting requires " a discussion leader, not a lecturer who motivates rather than directs and one who inspires self-discipline in her students."

Playwriting, as Byers (1968) states, " is more than a means of writing plays for students to perform on stage. It can become a gateway to imagination, dreams, emotions, and knowledge of oneself. Growth begins with a personal involvement with an idea by working objectively and subjectively, alone and within a group." (p. 7)

Creative Playwriting

Byers (1968) defines creative playwriting as the process of developing student's creative experience under the teacher's able guidance. The activity starts out as dramatic play which Byers defines as the spontaneous activity of students who imagine themselves to be make-believe characters completely unrelated to a story and with no thought of an audience.

Creative playwriting is first discovering and developing the ideas, then building those ideas into the creation of plays. The process involves the use of many forms of drama as a means to create; it also involves exploration of different art mediums in experimenting with ideas leading to the production.

Byers elaborates by saying:

The words 'creative' and 'playwriting' may seem to have obvious connections because of a general assumption that all endeavors in playwriting are the product of creative work. However, the term is used here to describe a method of writing that grows out of improvisation, spontaneous response and exercises designed to first motivate creative thinking. (p. 2)

Byers' (1968) emphasis is on the experience of playwriting rather than the end product. The writing, although important, is secondary to the creative process that encourages students to "imagine, invent, and to pretend as points of departure for more expansive activities. (p. 2)

The basic approach to creative playwriting as defined by Byers is for the students to engage first in discussions or projects designed to stimulate original thought and personal reflection. Students then work in various art mediums such as movement, drawing, writing, sound and improvisation both individually and as a group. The final effort is documented in manuscript form.

Here we see that creative playwriting is mainly developed through dramatic play and the process puts some emphasis, although not all, on the final presentation of the work. It seems that an audience is still part of the process whether it be an audience made up of those in the class or an outside audience. The process may or may not be written down in script form.

Playmaking

Playmaking is a term used interchangeably with creative drama, not to be confused with playwriting, which for purposes of this thesis is defined by Carol Kory as "The creative act of writing a play". Playmaking and creative drama are similar as defined by Ward (1957). Creative drama like dramatic play occurs when a child imitates life or pretends to be someone else. The role play is spontaneous and the play becomes a form of improvised drama. The result of the creative play is what leads to playmaking.

Ward (1957) defines playmaking as:

an inclusive expression designating all forms of improvised drama: dramatic play, story dramatization, impromptu work in pantomime, shadow and puppet plays, and all other extemporaneous drama. It is the acidity in which informal drama is created by the players themselves. Such drama may be organized as to idea, plot, and character, or it may be based on a story written by someone else. Indeed, in dramatic play it is often as simple as one child's reliving of a situation from past experience or a fragment from a current event, motion picture, or television program. (p. 3)

Playmaking, as emphasized here, gives priority to the term 'play' that comes out of creative thinking and 'impromptu work'. The dramatic process is accentuated and the goals of playmaking are based on the creative process.

The objectives outlined by Ward are as follows:

- 1) to provide for a controlled emotional outlet,
- 2) to provide each student with an avenue of self-expression,
- 3) to encourage and guide the child's creative imagination,
- 4) to give young people opportunities to grow in social understanding and co-operation,
- 5) to give children experience in thinking on their feet and expressing ideas fearlessly.

Here we see that playmaking is make-believe-play. With older students the 'playing' can be polished to become performance but a script is not developed or written down. The end result could be an informal presentation or play which was based on the improvisation and creative play. Playwriting takes on a more formal approach. Playwriting can be developed out of creative play or improvisation but is inevitably written down into some form of a play. If a dramatization is written, the students who were collaborating have an experience in playwriting. The process becomes formal drama when it is given to an audience as a presentation, a written play, or a demonstration.

Way (1967) suggests that playmaking ranges from simple improvisation to more complex and detailed plays. The strategy for the drama is to work both in small and large groups on various themes, building scenarios or scenes as they progress.

Scenario is defined in the Alberta Curriculum (1989) as the narrative description of the play - "this happens and then this, and then this." The action always involves character, motivations and responses.

For example, Way (1967) begins one play-making session by developing a story about refugees. He starts his activity with concentration exercises, trying to develop characters who are physically in need, lost, without food and water. This is followed with discussion of the circumstances that developed from the improvisation. Then in pairs, he has the students create scenes from these developed incidents. The scenes lead to more discussion, with particular attention to the kind of people they are, or their characters. They continue the improvisational play-building process by trying different characters all based on a common theme. Having seen the different scenes, each group decides how its scene might be linked together with the rest of the class.

The strategy of playmaking, as Way describes it, is to involve the whole class either in small groups or as one entity to build a story based on a theme or incident. The scenes are created from the experience of the students and it is through improvisation that they are shaped and developed. There is no suggestion that any dialogue is written down.

Way is not concerned with scripting and producing school plays, except in so far as this is an element of sharing the work they have developed. His book Development through Drama suggests that, "practical playmaking helps the natural, organic development of each individual, exploring his own resources, and attaining a sensitive, confident relationship with his environment." (page 254)

The Collective Creation

The collective creation is a term used most widely in Manitoba to describe the process of developing a play improvisationally. The collective creation begins with a group of enthusiastic drama students who are willing to commit themselves to creating a play. Similar to Way's (1967) approach to playmaking, the goal is to

create a 'play', but the importance is on the development of the activity and not on "a final end product of dramatic work".

A collective creation as Scanlan (1984) points out, is a solution to the lack of scripts which give voice to the needs of high school students. The process he has developed is to combine a director/teacher with a knowledge of dramatic situation and a familiarity with creative drama who will guide the 'writing' process and direct the resulting play.

Scanlan's (1984) emphasis is on the completion of a stage-ready script. The process is developed through discussion, exploration of the students' experiences and improvisation based on the findings. The ideas are filtered and the results are a finished play.

The process Scanlan describes is summarized as follows:

- 1) assemble a group of five or six students;
- 2) explain what a play is, what the writing of a play demands, emphasizing commitment and hard work;
- 3) establish a schedule;
 - regular meetings in order to build ideas;
 - set up times to meet outside of school time, a minimum of 3 afternoons a week;
 - allow from six weeks to three months to build a script for a one-act play;
- 4) choose a record keeper;
 - the record keeper should be responsible for recording workable ideas;
 - the use of video and audio recording devices, as well as not talking, can prove invaluable;
- 5) explore possibilities;
 - things that concern teenagers, for example greatest fears, desires, joys and dreams;
 - what bothers you most;

- what do you like least about you age what do you like most;
 - another good source is the newspaper;
 - after gathering ideas, develop them through improvisation;
- 6) make decisions;
 - after exploring possibilities, choose three or four ideas and then choose the one idea from the group that you could develop into a script;
 - 7) make it active;
 - transform your idea into action by finding a verb that encompasses the idea. For example, "everybody's always trying to manipulate everyone else", becomes "to manipulate".
 - 8) explore the possibilities;
 - using a dictionary or thesaurus, explore all possibilities of the verb that you have chosen to be the action of the play; develop the action through improvisation;
 - 9) decide on formal structure;
 - by realism? fantasy? comedy? tragedy? by a well made 'slice of life'? by a collage of scenes and images held together by the action?
 - 10) build the collection;
 - if it is a more conventional play, start by creating a simple story line;
 - 11) weed the collection;
 - after considering all the possibilities, remove any scene, or character that does not illustrate the action of the play;
 - 12) organize the collection;
 - experiment with the order of the scenes;
 - chart a course of building action;
 - decide on the best sequence;
 - 13) rehearse the play;

- the play can be performed either by the creators or by a different group of actors;
 - during rehearsals, make script adjustments if necessary;
- 14) perform it for a preview audience;
 - choose a small select audience of unbiased observers;
 - after the performance discuss the play;
 - question the audience;
 - was it clear? did you enjoy it? how did it make you feel?
 - 15) keep working;
 - use what you have learned for the preview to make adjustments until it 'works';
 - 16) open the play;
 - when the play is a working, viable theatre piece, it is time to present it to the public. (p. 47)

Through this process the students have the opportunity to use their own imagination and experience for the content of the play. Scanlan works through the process of building an action. Other collectives can be developed thematically or through the story of a central character. Yet other original collectives can be developed from a newspaper article or historical event based on truth.

Susan Quinton, a drama teacher at Glenlawn High School in Winnipeg, developed a collective creation based on the theme 'The Future'. Her objective was to choose a topic and begin writing a script.

The process was as follows: The topic 'The Future' was chosen by the students through a brainstorming session. The initial activities ranged from library research to creative drama games. "We speculated on future conditions and problems", stated Quinton. Monologues about the future were written in a variety of attitudes (positive, negative, emotional, scientific, fantasy). Written work by poets, novelists, lyricists and short story writers were used as catalysts, i.e. Ray Bradbury, Alfred Tennyson, Orson Wells. The students dramatized the short story

"The Fun Times They Had', in story theatre style, narrator/actor style and scripted dialogue to learn different styles of storytelling. Students were asked to write two scenes about the future. The first scene was to illustrate a very positive outcome, the second was to be very negative. These scenes were read by the group and reactions were given. All work handed in or created in class was recorded on a large bulletin board until the time came to choose what material would be kept. By the end of term two, a rough framework or scenario was developed. The form of the play consisted of twelve scenes. Some of these scenes were submitted weeks ago and were ready for rehearsal and some of these scenes were ideas.

In term two each student was given a scene to work on. Some took the work home and returned with a typed script. Others returned with a rough outline and had the rest of the group improvise while someone recorded the results. In term three the final draft was completed, the play was cast, and the short rehearsal period began. The play which was titled "Agent Orange" was performed three times, at Prairie Theatre Exchange at the Drama Festival, at Glenlawn Collegiate and at the Gas Station Theatre.

The main intention behind the project at Glenlawn is not to train students to become playwrights, but to give them the opportunity and techniques to express themselves in a 'creative and cooperative environment'. "The objective", says Quinton, "is to write a play, not to find themselves. If self is revealed along the way fine, but this is not a psychology course. The 'plays the thing', to catch the enthusiasm and energies of the students".

Sharon Service, a drama teacher in Calahoo, Alberta, also gives priority to the 'play' as the outcome of her program. She includes playmaking, as opposed to playwriting in the formal sense, for a variety of reasons.

I did collectives years before the term was coined. Sometimes because I couldn't find a script I liked; sometimes because I wanted a challenge; sometimes because some kid had something to say. This year I did a play we titled Falls the Shadow based on seven of T.S. Eliot's works, featuring the entire text of The Wasteland combined with lines from Hollow Men, Portrait of a Lady, Prufrock, Preludes, and so on. The reason for this particular choice was primarily boredom with available scripts (mine) and interest in some heavy duty literature (mine and the kids). We wanted to include music, both original and published, dance, literary study, and felt the message written by Eliot 60 years ago this year was pertinent to today's society.

Service's aims and objectives are straight forward. She is interested in product not process. "I am committed ", states Service "to producing the best theatre I can produce, and the only pieces I will allow to be performed for an audience are good ones. If the process is right, good theatre will result, and the end product is truly all that holds my interest."

The process Service adopts starts with a theme. Students then collect material, research all possible background information, improvise, work technique (vocal, physical, musical, and technical). They then throw away material, get more, work material, cut again, add and criticize. Both students and teachers are involved actively in all areas.

The students learn to distinguish good from bad, sentimental favorites from material which will work, co-operation and

appreciation for the talents of others. They learn design of both costumes and sets, articulation is sharpened; tears are dried and work continues....I suppose the class is a benevolent dictatorship, but a dictatorship none-the-less. (June 19, 1992)

Again, the emphasis here is placed on the final product. Students are a part of the entire process, but in each different strategy the expectations of the students or the objectives of the teachers vary. Service will rely on the students' ability to create the play with her collaboratively. Her expectations of the students is extremely high. She expects them to produce good theatre and that is where she puts the pressure.

Leach (1970) on the other hand builds plays with students primarily to promote personal initiative. He states that:

One strong reason for advocating the constant practice of drama in schools is that it puts a high premium on personal response, creativity and initiative. When we come to put on a play, a certain amount is lost if we merely ask an actor to pick up a printed book and speak printed lines, following a predetermined path through to the conclusion of the scene or act. ...but where each individual actor, in co-operation with other members of the group, has to find both what needs to be conveyed to the audience and how to convey it most effectively, we capitalize again on the initiative which young people particularly thrive on being given. (p. 10)

The type of strategy used by Leach is to involve the students to build their own play so that they can make sure that there is nothing in it which will be beyond the competence of the performers, but there will be as full a utilization of available talents as possible. He calls his strategy of playwriting documentary plays. Documentary plays comprise a particular genre of plays whose distinctive feature is that their content has some grounding in fact. An example of the type of play he is defining is "Richard III" because it does rely on recorded history, chronicles, and documents for a large part of its content.

Part of the making of a documentary play as Leach describes it is the researching and collecting of material. The material collected becomes the fundamental core of the play or the main subject material. In the process, Leach describes four ways to initiate a story or subject matter:

1. a story based on the life of a central figure;
2. a play based around a theme or social problem;
3. an episode of local interest, rooted in the area of performance;
4. an historical event of some intrinsic interest.

Once a subject or story has been chosen, the students begin to create the play. The first step is gathering material. This is done by collecting poetry, books, stories, newspaper articles and other relevant source material. Next, the material is brought together and shaped into a form. Or as he calls it, a "theatrical image" which is the picture you are trying to get across to the audience. Some examples are a courtroom, a room in which a chess championship is taking place, a traditional Chinese theatre. All the action for the documentary play takes place within the framework that has been created.

The next step is to "fix the play", add technical considerations, and then, finally, to present the finished product.

The above remarks imply an abundance of intrinsic gains through the implementation of a playwriting program. Here is a list of some of this program's more concrete benefits:

- i) An opportunity for students to complete a challenging Playwriting Practicum 305 credit,
- ii) the use of resulting materials such as student journals, photos, videos, audio recordings, drafts, minutes and/or scripts as resources in other language or drama courses,
- iii) student career exploration;
- iv) public interest and/or public relation stories related to cross-cultural and problem solving.

When students work collaboratively on a play they are able to channel their thoughts towards the task at hand.

Cross-Cultural Learning and Playwriting

Cross-cultural research concerns itself with a broad variety of human differences and spans numerous academic fields including psychology, sociology, linguistics, non-verbal communications. Only a fraction of the research which has been or is being carried out relates directly to the process of teaching and even less to the process of playwriting.

As defined by Katz (1982), cross-cultural learning or multiculturalism (the terms are used interchangeably) is:

Preparation for the social, political and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters. . . Multicultural education could include, but not be limited to, experiences which (i) promote analytical and evaluative abilities to confront issues such as participatory democracy, racism, and sexism, and the parity of power; (ii) develop skills for values clarification including the study of the manifest and latent transmission of values; (iii) examine the dynamics of diverse cultures and the implications for developing teaching strategies; and (iv) examine linguistic variations and diverse learning styles as a basis for the development of appropriate teaching strategies. (pp. 16-17)

Developing cultural awareness is a process of looking inward. Cross-cultural learning is a similar and parallel process but its focus is outward on the learning of other cultural groups. In experiencing other cultures, students are able to view the world from a different perspective.

Cross-cultural education is a structured process designed to foster acceptance, understanding, and constructive relations among people of different cultures. Its goal is to encourage students to see different cultures as a source of learning and to respect the diversities that exist. Cross-cultural education or multicultural education as presented by Pusch (1979) refers first to "building an awareness of one's own cultural heritage, and understanding that no one culture is intrinsically superior to another; secondly, to acquiring those skills in analysis and

communication that help one function effectively in multicultural environments."
(p. 4)

Stress is placed on experiencing cultural differences in the classroom and in the society rather than simply studying about them in books. Exploration and discovery are associated with the playwriting process. The concept of exploring other cultures helps to underline that playwriting is a process of finding out through experience. Through direct experiential learning students gain an awareness of others and learn more about themselves. In the collaborative playwriting process, students can investigate and share their culture. The teaching and learning styles in educational drama and playwriting can encourage and enhance this type of cross-cultural experience.

Plays on cultural differences or social issues are essential in developing a playwriting program. Vancouver's Headline Theatre uses an approach of Popular Theatre techniques to address issues such as cross-cultural awareness. Popular Theatre is theatre that is intended to effect social change. In order to do this effectively, Popular Theatre is created by and performed for the people involved in a particular struggle. A Popular Theatre group creates a play to explore its own reality, and to discover ways of changing this reality with an audience. Issues in this form of theatre are shared and examined in contrast to the individual viewpoint expressed in most mainstream theatre.

Winnipeg's Popular Theatre Alliance Company, under the Artistic Direction of Margo Charlton, trained facilitators at Vancouver's Headline Theatre on Power Plays. Power plays are a form of participatory theatre developed by the Brazilian director and playwright Augusto Boal, as part of his "Theatre of the Oppressed". It is a "theatre that attempts to influence reality and not merely reflect it - even if correctly." (Boal, 1974) His method comes from practical experience with each technique developed to dramatize real situations. Power Plays, as described by

Charlton are, "a way to use theatre to address power imbalance in society, whether it be issues of gender, culture, race, economics, or sexuality."

Winnipeg's Popular Theatre Alliance has recently developed two Power Play projects. One was a play on Aids awareness developed by a group of professional actors which toured Manitoba schools. The other was a workshop on racism, which was developed for students in The Winnipeg School Division.

Power Plays begin from the basic premise that people provide the expertise from their own lives and that they can find the answers themselves. The facilitator assists people on a topic that concerns their lives. "It's not about people coming together to write a play that has nothing to do with themselves," states Charlton, "They learn to see themselves in relation to the issue and how the issue impacts on their lives."

Charlton uses a variety of techniques when working on an issue with a group. She begins the process of introducing theatre games, drawing exercises, and writing exercises. Her goal is to stimulate discussions and build the group towards a dramatic structure using their ideas and experience.

Sometimes we bring in a playwright to script the development. The playwright gets the ideas from the group and then builds it into a thirty to forty-five minute play. The other approach is to have a facilitator work with a group to improvise scenes which would be loosely scripted. The next step would be to find a form for the development. There are two forms: 1) a Forum Theatre piece which is an open ended play that is not complete; in other words there is no resolution. The audience decides on the outcome of the play, or there may be an open discussion.

2) a form that is more like the standard type of play which has a beginning, middle and end.

Forum Theatre as defined by David Diamond of Headlines Theatre is "theatre of activation". A play is structured to build to present a problem but has no solutions. The play is performed all the way through so the audience can see it. It is performed a second time and the audience members can stop the action and replace the characters.

The audience member then comes into the playing area and replaces the character that s/he thinks is being oppressed and tries out his/her idea to break the oppression. In Forum, the audience gets to use the cultural event as a real tool to investigate what the problems related to any given issues are - everyone will see them from a different perspective - and tries to discover real ways to deal with these problems that are relevant to their lives. They are then able to leave the theatre with new knowledge that they can use in the real world to change their lives. (Diamond p. 22)

Forum Theatre is a method of presenting Power Plays that has been adapted by Manitoba's Theatre for Young Audiences. The Manitoba Theatre for Young Audience program, under the direction of Ellen Peterson, developed a play with students on the issue of drinking and driving. Peterson's work was developed in two ways:

First, the group creating the play gains a thorough understanding of the issues as they perceive it, by deciding

what it is they want to share and change with their audience. By having an opportunity to say exactly what they want to say, the group gains power in other areas of their lives. Second, when this collective viewpoint is presented to an audience of people who share the struggle, strategies for changing the status quo can be explored in a way that is both challenging and non-threatening. Because the play is presented by members of the audience's peer group, the audience knows its concerns are fully understood.

Forum Theatre has been shown to be a highly effective form of Popular Theatre. In Forum Theatre, a play is presented in which the central characters try to do what they want and fail when their actions are blocked by others who pressure them to conform or act contrary to their best interests.

After watching the play, the audience is asked to participate. Key scenes are replayed, and this time, audience members are free to stop the action, replace the central character, and improvise their ideas for more successful solutions. In this way, the audience discovers that there are positive, practical alternatives to the dangerous choices, and that other solutions can be more effective.

Jane Deluzio, who is Head of Drama at Albert Campbell Collegiate in Scarborough, Ontario was working with a group of students on the topic of "racism". In this model, similar to August Boal's approach, the students worked through a series of improvisation and role-play based on a theme. These themes, as Boal describes under the category of "Political Theatre", often explore areas such as: empowerment, abuse, teenage pregnancy, and substance abuse. Writing may be a component of the exploration; however what is emphasized is the

process. If scripting the experience is important to the group, then it may become an option. Deluzio describes one of her exercises as follow:

I asked the students to divide themselves into those who felt they belonged to the "majority" culture and those who felt they belonged to the "minority" culture. Two girls were in real conflict about where to go: one had a black father and white mother and the other was from South Africa and was designated as "colored" in that society.. In the end the first girl joined the minority group and the second the majority group.

The students in each group expressed their concerns on the problems of racism and victimization of their friends through this experience. Each session began with similar exercises. "We role-played real, sometimes painful events that had happened in our school or to individuals in the class", said Deluzio, "Role-playing truly became a rehearsal for life".

The improvisational work was scripted and shared with an audience. "The experience was very moving and empowering for the students, wrote Deluzio. The students took their experience and wrote a play which helped them deal with the issues of racism. One of the students commented:

We believe that racism is an emotional, not an intellectual issue. We believe that any program which is actually going to initiate a change in people's ideas and behavior must allow for people to deal with their feelings. We feel that many of the current approaches in the system lean too heavily on cognitive learning. We spend our time discussing racism in an

intellectually distancing manner. While we learn a great deal about how to analyze racial issues, we seldom confront the racial problems we actually experience or learn to deal with the complex racial feelings we all have.

This type of dramatic experience places the students in a direct experience which can lead to playwriting. In the process, the students learn a great deal about relevant issues and they are able to relate the experience to their own lives.

Motivation and Playwriting

Richard Courtney who has observed the approach of Dorothy Heathcote to teaching and learning makes a connection between drama and native education. In her work, states Courtney (1986), she "reveals many commonalities with tribal ways of understanding the world, and we can use it as exemplary." Educational drama offers native and non-native students the opportunity to experience an alternative learning style which offers "bridges" to other learning styles and provides a challenging expressive learning environment. In this environment created by the students themselves, they are less likely to feel threatened and more likely to be self-motivated. A "dramatic explosion" (Foreman, 1990, p. 17) occurs when self-motivated learners enthusiastically and thoughtfully pursue their collective imaginary creation in order to learn more about themselves, others, relationships, and implications of actions in the real world".

Collaborative playwriting provides opportunities to experience the use of verbal expression in a variety of modes, including small group and whole group discussion, improvisation, dialogue in role, personal reflection and questioning. Playwriting is concerned with communication both with oneself and with others,

and evokes creative writing. This dramatic learning style offers native and non-native students opportunities to use verbal and non-verbal communication strengths in as Dorothy Heathcote calls a ". . . no-penalty area. . ." (Courtney, 1984, p. 129) where students are encouraged to experiment and develop their verbal communication skills. Role play, improvisation and group discussion groups are strategies which challenge and extend verbal and written expression while providing opportunities for cross-cultural education.

The majority of arguments for the effectiveness of collaborative learning and cross-cultural learning hinge on motivation, transfer, or both. Drama and role play, which are the fundamentals of playwriting, greatly motivate students to learn. By definition, play is what they want to do and this brings out a need to learn. Courtney (1989) believes that drama teachers are highly committed to the activity and their enthusiasm can "rub off" on the students. The climate of the drama classroom allows students to make choices on their own.

Drama and playwriting allow for transfers of ideas which promote long term learning because they provide high motivation and low anxiety. The experience becomes meaningful to the students when they have freedom of choice and immediate application of an activity which they have pulled together. The process stimulates insight and reflection, and can provide transfers which reflect and effect their everyday lives.

Playwriting is more than a means of writing a play for students to perform. Playwriting is a vehicle for self-expression, imagination, dreams, feelings, and knowledge of oneself and others. Students learn to accept those from other cultures and backgrounds by working objectively and subjectively within the group. This can be a challenge to his/her mind and energies. The students will catch a glimpse of the excitement and satisfaction that comes from inspired work and will be motivated and enriched by the experience.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to describe the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project involving students from two distinct cultures. In November of 1992, four students from a Winnipeg high school traveled to the town and reserve of Norway House for five days. In January four Norway House students came to the city. The study is based on the interaction between the students from two communities, north and south, native and non-native, rural and urban and the experience they shared creating a play.

This chapter will discuss how the project was initiated including the background of the project, a brief history of initiating the project, a statement of the project goals, collection of data, and a description of the participants.

Background:

The course, "Playwriting", developed at the Winnipeg high school, was implemented into the Creative Arts Program as an option to students in 1989. Students enrolled in the Arts Program received a Creative Arts certificate after successfully completing six credits in any of the arts disciplines. Since its inception, the course, " Playwriting" has expanded from one section a year with 15 students to 35 students enrolled in three levels: Playwriting 105, 205 and 305.

In the course of one semester (5 months), students learn to develop their creative imagination, build confidence and develop critical thinking through the process of writing and workshopping a one-act play. These plays have been developed with the students and some have been performed. In addition, a number

of the student scripts received professional performances through the assistance of the Manitoba Association of Playwrights.

In its first year, much time was devoted to telling students what they should write about. Questionnaires were set up to stimulate the students to think about their own lives as a source for writing material. Questions such as: "Did you ever take a stand on something? What is most important in your life? Least important? What books do you read? Has anyone ever treated you unjustly?" were asked.

The subjects for the plays tended to fall into a same narrow range: substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, relationships and other teenage issues. Even when the methodology of the course succeeded the teacher observed that the range of subjects could be expanded.

After attending the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival at Prairie Theatre Exchange in 1991, the Winnipeg teacher and the playwright-in-residence met with the drama teacher from Norway House to discuss ways of generating new and different subjects. The Norway House teacher wanted to involve his students in the writing process. Until then, he was producing his own original plays and students had not been involved in the writing process.

It became clear from the discussions that one way to explore other issues and involve the students would be to create a cross-cultural playwriting experience that could become the basis for a play. From this experiential base students would not only improve theatre performance skills, but also they would be guided to create a play that would reflect their own experience and extend the narrow range of subjects.

The teachers and playwright further believed that such exploration had the potential to transcend cultural differences, and lead students to a better understanding of themselves. A cultural exchange would provide an opportunity

for students to develop understandings through a mutual creative endeavor. That endeavor would take the form of a play based on youth experiences in the two cultures.

Following extended discussions with the English/Drama teacher of Norway House, the playwright-in-residence, and the drama teacher from the Winnipeg school, a cross-cultural collaborative playwriting exchange was developed with students from a Winnipeg high school and a high school from Norway House. A cross-cultural writing exchange was developed for students who had the ability to write but were limited in what they had experienced. The project would bring together students from two distinct cultures chosen from a select group of drama/playwriting students. It is this project and the data collected from the students involved in the project that is the focus of this study.

Brief History of Initiating the Playwriting Project:

1. May, 1991 Project Proposal:

The cooperating teachers and professional playwright met at The Manitoba Drama Youth Festival, an event where students from across the province join together to share their own performances and the performances of their peers. Both teachers agreed that it would be a challenging experience and ideas were generated to begin the process.

2. June, 1991 Arts Council Application:

To secure funding for the professional playwright, the project was submitted to the Manitoba Arts Council's Artists in the Schools Program as a long-term project.

3. October, 1991 Arts Council Contract:

Correspondence and contract were received and discussed with the administration of the two schools. Confirmation of funding for the hiring of the playwright was secured. Copies of the application were sent to the principals and superintendents of both school divisions.

4. October, 1991 A Plan of Action:

The cooperating teachers and professional playwright met to discuss a plan of action. Ideas were circulated to begin the process. It was decided that the project would begin in November with the students from Winnipeg traveling to the town and reserve of Norway House. Preliminary drama and writing activities would begin immediately.

5. October, 1991 Developing a Course Credit:

The value of a cross-cultural playwriting exchange was accepted by the administrations of both schools. It was discussed and agreed that students would acquire a high school credit either in playwriting or as part of the mandatory English 300 credit if they successfully completed the project.

The teachers noted the congruence of the project goals on page 46 of this thesis with the provincial general objectives in the English 300 Elective Course, Language and Drama. The original curriculum guide states that:

In its broadest sense, drama is the study of how people communicate and get along in the world. The objectives in teaching drama fall into a number of general categories related to skill development, personal and social development,

appreciation, and understanding. Skill development in drama takes many forms. Initially, attention may be paid to close observation of the immediate world and how it is perceived. Sensory awareness, observation, concentration, and relaxation exercises may be introduced to help promote the discipline of drama. As students move further into drama, the skills of mime and improvisation become more important. Students learn to listen and respond in an imaginative way, and to become more aware of how verbal and non-verbal communication may be enhanced or developed to achieve desired effects. Depending on the scope of drama and theatre study, a great many more skills may be called upon. The preparation of a script, for example, may call upon the skills of writing, editing, and adapting. The presentation of a play may call upon the skills of designing, directing, constructing, managing, and acting. Students will be expected to participate in reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities to a standard associated with English 300. The acquisition and employment of a variety of language arts skills should help the students to gain confidence in themselves to communicate effectively. As well, drama fosters personal and social skills related to group interaction and group dynamics. Each student should be expected to contribute to the total task of the group and to help make the group function effectively. Discussion, cooperation, and participation are part of the vocabulary of the drama process. (Spencer, 1985)

Statement of Project Goals:

- 1) To pilot a student/teacher exchange program for the purpose of developing a cooperative, cross cultural student script;
- 2) to initiate this writing process through intensive student interpersonal experiences, data collection and discussion;
- 3) to follow the script through to the rehearsal and staging of a performance;
- 4) to share the final production or stage-ready play at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival and at each of the cooperating schools;

- 5) to create an experience for students from two distinct cultures to break down barriers and to help build a cultural dialogue;
- 6) to increase students' knowledge of other communities and build a broader sensitivity toward ethnic cultural differences;
- 7) to help develop understanding of the individual in relationship to others;
- 8) to develop creative thinking and problem solving;
- 10) to develop language skills;
- 11) to learn the concepts and techniques necessary for playwriting;
- 12) to help students look at their own lives and experience and share it with others;
- 13) to increase self-confidence.

In accomplishing these goals the intrinsic value of the playwriting exchange will be abundantly clear to the students as well as to the teachers. The interacting of two communities, north and south, native and non-native, urban and rural, should generate limitless creative writing opportunities for the students.

Collection of Data:

To describe the process of the collaborative playwriting exchange the researcher will use data gathered from original proposals, correspondence between the two cooperating teachers, and the professional playwright, the participants' journal entries, and original student writings. The students maintained a writer's journal with written work suggested by the co-operating teachers and the professional playwright. The journal entries consisted of descriptions and reactions to the events of the exchange. Each student was responsible to hand in written pieces from his/her journals based on the exchange. The pieces took the form of short scenes of dialogue, monologues, poems and songs. Some of this material was incorporated in the final script.

To describe the final product, the researcher will use data from the participants' journal entries and project members' video reflection on the process and performance. The product-outcome will be illustrated by the final student script and performance. In addition other reactions include media clips, letters of support, and audience members' reactions to the performance.

A letter stating the intent of the study was circulated to all participants, school divisions, the cooperating teachers, and the professional playwright to grant permission for use of the material collected during the collaborative playwriting project. All data and findings from the study will be reported in an anonymous form.

Description of the Participants:

The project initially involved four students from a Winnipeg school and four from a school in Norway House. The student selection process varied slightly for each school. There was no formal application or audition process; the cooperating teachers chose selected students already known to them. The students were chosen from the Winnipeg school because of various strengths. Three of the students had been actively involved in the existing playwriting program; one of these three as well as the fourth student were active in the school drama program. The remaining two joined the project in the later stages. The students from Norway House had some drama and writing experience but no playwriting experience. Some members of each group had attended The Manitoba Drama Youth Festival. The student participants in this project will be referred to by letter and as native or Winnipeg student.

Presentation of Procedures and Results:

Chapter IV will document the playwriting strategy used to organize the project under the following headings:

1. Project timeline including objectives and activities
2. Preliminary activities
3. First group meeting - experiencing Native culture
4. Developing initial script material
5. Second group meeting - experiencing urban lifestyles
6. Working toward the first draft

7. Workshop and script revision - A writer's retreat
8. The final draft
9. The rehearsal process

Chapter V will take the form of an overall summary reflecting on the growth and development of the project divided into two parts. Part I will describe the initial reactions of the participants and the audience to the performance. Part II will be an overall summary assessing the reactions of the students to the experience. This will include a summary of audience and student anecdotes taken from responses in journal entries, media clips, letters of support, and project members' video reflection on the process.

Chapter IV
Implementing the Process

This chapter presents a general timeline of the project including the planned activities and objectives, followed by a detailed description of selected activities through the stages of the project.

Project Timeline:

Date	Activity	Objective
November 18 - 25	preliminary activities "shoe box exchange"	to illustrate personal values through choice of meaningful objects
November 24	a visit from a band member from Norway House	to provide an orientation
November 26 - 30	first group meeting - Winnipeg students visit Norway House	to investigate and discuss general aspects of native lifestyles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Objective</u>
December 1 - January 28	play development	to maintain a writer's journal and to complete individual assignments
January 29 - February 2	second group meeting - Norway House students visit Winnipeg	to investigate and discuss general aspects of urban lifestyles
February 3 - May 7	to work towards a first draft to choose and arrange material into a collective form	to develop student concepts and writing by using ideas, topics and themes generated in the improvisation setting.
May 6 - 9	workshop and script revision a writer's retreat	to workshop and edit the script and begin the rehearsal process
May 10 - May 18	the final draft to exchange copies of the proposed final script	to finalize the completed script
May 19 - 23	rehearsal and performance of the finished script	to perform at the annual High School Drama Festival at Prairie Theatre Exchange in Winnipeg.

This next section of the chapter will provide a detailed description of selected activities through the stages of the project.

Preliminary Activities - November 18 -25

Shoe box exchange:

Each student was asked to put ten objects of personal significance in a shoe box. The four shoe boxes from each community were exchanged and each student then selected a shoe box from the other community. The objective of the assignment was to hypothesize and write creatively about the lives of fellow exchange students. Students were asked to examine the box's contents, and to complete a writing assignment based on the following questions:

Project 1:

A) Develop a character description from the items in each box.
consider the following :

1. describe the character using poetic images
- color, shape, and musical instrument.
2. date of birth
3. background
4. age
5. home environment
6. family
7. grades at school
8. favorite subject
9. favorite books, stories, movies

10. work experience
11. favorite color
12. past experiences
13. ambitions
14. favorite pastime
16. strongest abilities

B) Select 3 objects from the box you have chosen. Once selected each student must complete three separate written reactions. Choose either a poem, a short story, a short scene with dialogue, or a monologue.

Write about:

- i) the object at rest in original place
- ii) the object in a new location, (i.e. Norway House)
- iii) what the object experienced on its journey (its metamorphosis)

As students prepared their boxes, discussions began about the different ways the boxes could be decorated. The Winnipeg teacher noted in correspondence to the Norway House teacher that one of the Winnipeg girls insisted on wrapping hers in a very soft lacy fabric. The Norway House teacher wrote back that the Native students wanted their boxes to be very simple. "Indian style", wrote native student D in her journal, who wanted her box to be very simple. "Maybe these guys down south might show you up or something" said native student B, as she too put the lid on her box and left it plain.

The exchange of the boxes sparked the beginning stages of writing. Native student D commented on how interesting it was to see the range of objects

collected and the distinct ways the boxes were decorated. She wrote, "They sent fancy looking shoe boxes that had linen inside and out or paint. I preferred it simple because that was me. I guess that was how the others felt."

The students began to write and through their writing expressed their apprehension about the differences. They had difficulty trying to find which objects were most important. Native student D, in reaction to the assignment, wrote:

I was hesitant about the whole thing because I didn't know what was most important to me other than my grandmother. I knew I couldn't fit her into the shoe-box and to find a picture of her was not good enough. So, I put in other stuff that came second to her like an empty Player's Light package and an empty can of Coke. When the shoe boxes arrived from Winnipeg, I could already see we were different people. While our boxes were plain and simple, theirs were not.

The following are two samples written by native student B:

The Bracelet

I am so tired,
from all the traveling I have done.
Being placed in a box,
so dark and yet so cold.
My feelings are mixed,
like my colors of silver, black and yellow.
Will my master ever know,

how I am lonely for her.
It has been a week now,
and sitting here in this strange new place.
A place I can't call home,
and a hand that is so different.
How long can I wait, a day or two,
maybe a month or so.
When will she come to find me
and my other friends in the box.
But I'm here watching and listening,
to everything you do or say.
Wondering how long it will be,
until she will finally come.
For I am the bracelet,
who has been sent as an example.
For someone new to hold me,
and me to tell secrets to.

My Journey in a Box

First I am on a mirror
a piece of paper thrown in a pile,
For personal possession,
a piece of paper you might call me.
But I am a picture you fool!
A picture of his father,
Yah! That is me! A strict one maybe,
but a hard working one too.

Into the box I go,
it is starting to freeze
Hey don't toss so hard you moron!
I am getting trampled by other junk in here.
I feel like I'm crushed,
what is this other rumbling sound beneath me.
I wish I knew and could see.
But whoever is driving is lousy.
Some vacation this is, its so dark and cold,
not knowing where I am.
This drive is long, hey are we there yet?
Ow, for pete's sake watch where you are falling.
Now its warm but it's still dark in here.
Close the lid you nut, you're blinding me.
Where the heck am I?
Hey let go of me, don't wrinkle me,. Hey!
We're being selected guys!
Oh, I see I get a female eh?
Let's see what she can do.
Should I sing to her, nah she'll tear me to pieces.
Well, tomorrow I'll be in the box again
getting ready for another week in there.
I'll be dammed if I'll be in that box for a year!
Where's my fur coat?

In anticipation for the two groups meeting for the first time Winnipeg student 'A' summed up her anxiety through her shoe box activity. She wrote;

A Shoe Box

Anticipation,
 waiting,
 imagining...
 the arrival
 a moments hesitation
 sitting waiting in a box
 a new character...
 the discovery of a person
 in a
 box.

A Visit from a Band Member - November 24:

The Winnipeg students had anxieties about the trip to Norway House. All kinds of questions came up. "What to bring?" "What to wear?" "How cold does it get?" "Do we eat only bannock?" "Do they have a McDonalds Restaurant?" Concerns were brought up by the Winnipeg students and the administration as to where the group would stay. The principal was concerned about the students' staying in unfamiliar homes especially those homes which were very different from what they were used to. It was decided that it would be less of a risk if the Winnipeg students stayed together in a hotel. During a discussion of the accommodations, one student questioned whether she should bring her portable microwave and freezer. Having no idea what to expect others joined in with: "What do we wear? Are there any stores? Should we bring food? Do they only have out-houses"?

A meeting was set up to ease the students' misconceptions about the North. One of the language consultants from the Norway House School Division was asked to speak to the Winnipeg students, to share questions and observations which they had about the Native people and their culture. Following these meetings there were still a lot of unanswered questions. Winnipeg student A reacted in her writing:

Norway House.....Winnipeg. Phooey. Too cold. Bare. What the hell to do? In Winnipeg I can go out, play pool, drink beer. In Norway House, I can..... Hmmm. But in Winnipeg there's hundreds of restaurants, and murder and rapes... Well, in Norway House there'swell. I could cook. Yeah, I'm a cool cook. Of course I might still get raped or murdered. In Winnipeg I can see movies or plays or go to socials and stuff. There's stuff in Norway House too. Winnipeg's bigger...Don't suppose that's any point. Well what are we going to do there? Are there any restaurants... What do we do? Hmmm....Guess we should take some games and....food! Yes. O.K. I wonder...will there be TV? I guess I should take my books. Homework. I'll catch up on my homework. Clothes. Warm clothes. I have to worry about catching a cold. Boots? Nah, I'll avoid going outside as much as possible. Maybe I should take a sleeping bag. We're staying in a cabin. Oh...I hope there's plumbing. She didn't say... Oh man could you imagine using an outhouse in -30. Nah, not me. I'll hold it in. It's only a week. I'll just avoid bumps. Well I hope there's electricity, cause I'm taking my ghetto. Can't go without that. They have to have electricity, I remember, vaguely very vaguely a refrigerator they couldn't have that without electricity. It would take too many batteries. O.K. Cool.

First Group Meeting - November 26 - 30

Experiencing Native Culture:

The students traveled to Norway House to begin the first exchange. The purpose of the trip was to investigate and discuss general aspects of Indian culture. At 8:00 A.M. on November 26 the Winnipeg students, the teacher and playwright left for Norway House by van. In the evening they arrived at Ken's Cabins and were greeted by the Norway house students with streamers and balloons and a big banner which read 'Welcome Winnipeg'. The apprehension between the two groups was apparent as reflected by native student A that evening in his journal:

I felt inadequate and out of place with the group. Times were a very solid build up of fear, tension, and antisocialism (sic).

The first time we met I felt extremely intimidated by the Winnipeg students, perhaps the cause was I personally didn't have the experience of being around non-Natives at my age.

The only exposure that I had to non-natives was the classroom which only consisted of teachers.

The shoe boxes were brought out to "break the ice". The students paired off and began to read their writings about the objects. Native student A wrote:

We were scared of each other. Well, I wouldn't say scared but I guess a bit shy. We sat in our own side of the room separated from each other almost like we didn't want to interact at first.

We talked because we had to know how they were really like.

For example, attitudes and feelings towards us. We learned that we were from two different cultures and we decided we wanted to change our world around us using drama as the view point or as a vehicle to getting our message straight.

Following the readings of the "shoe box" activity, the agenda for the next four days was outlined. A variety of activities had been planned for the week by the Norway House group. The objective for the week was to investigate and discuss general aspects of Indian culture and Norway House lifestyles. The group would begin to generate playwriting ideas based on the information gathered in collective discussions and writing workshops. The group would meet in the evening to improvise scenes based on the interaction with the people they met in the community during the day. Also, it was their responsibility to keep a journal of the days activities including what they did and how they felt. It would also be the students responsibility to write at least one reaction to something they experienced each day in the form of a monologue or story. At the opening of each meeting the students would be asked to read one of their journal entries or stories to the group for feedback.

November 27:

The students arose early the next morning to meet at the cabins where the Winnipeg students stayed. The first speaker on the agenda was a long-time member of the community. The speaker talked for over three hours about his life. He spoke of living in a residential boarding school in Rossville, Manitoba where Indians weren't allowed to speak their own language or follow the "traditional ways". He spoke of his life as an alcoholic, in and out of prison for drinking and

substance abuse, and how he managed to gain sobriety and become involved with NASAP (Native alcohol and drug abuse program). He spoke at length about the Indian culture and the meaning of certain traditions, in particular, the sweat lodge.

In her journal Winnipeg student A responded by writing:

. . . nothing could have prepared me for the intensity of our discussion. He was just an ordinary man to look at but there was something phenomenal about speaking with him and hearing him speak about his experience. He carries the pipe which bears a great significance and he has been an interpreter for the spirits. In grade nine he left his hometown to attend residential school where he began to rebel because of the oppression he was subjected to, an understandable but unfortunate reaction. It was at this point he turned to alcohol. And he was totally and pitifully human. An alcoholic. He was married for two years and he'd work but purposefully get fired to collect U.I.C. for drinking. This man has come such a long way. I know I can see it, in his strength. Just an ordinary guy sharing so much with us. How many others are there like this. He stopped drinking.

At the end of the discussion, the group thanked him by making an offering of tobacco. He responded by offering to perform a sweat lodge ceremony.

The speaker shared with the group his experiences as a young boy. His stories brought about discussions on the various issues such as oppression, being

forced to abandon the culture one is raised with, racism and other topics which later were reflected in the students' writing.

The Winnipeg teacher in her journal reflected on the experience by writing:

The elder's stories of his life were dark and depressing yet his determination and strength to gain back his spirit and identity were momentous. The students were exhausted by this experience, but at the same time invigorated and inspired. Their questions were real and their interest fascinating. Could this be captured in a history text?

The next event on the agenda was a tour of the town including a visit to the hospital, the elementary and high schools, followed by a wild meat dinner at the Norway House high school vice-principal's home.

After dinner both groups went back to the cabins to begin the first playwriting session.

First writing session:

The purpose of the first writing session was to introduce the students to various writing techniques and to initiate group work and sharing of stories and journal entries. The playwright introduced the group to the technique of time writings as described by Natalie Goldberg. (1986) The students were to write non-stop for various timed periods from two to ten minutes. In some cases the playwright chose a theme such as "I remember", "I hate it when", or "the events of the day". In other writings the students were asked to associate freely. The

purpose of this technique as Goldberg describes, is "to burn through the first thoughts, to the place where energy is unobstructed by social politeness or the internal censor, to the place where you are writing what your mind actually sees and feels, not what it thinks it should see or feel."

The Norway House teacher commented in his journal on how the writing of native student C had changed as a result of the timed writings. He wrote that:

After the timed writing he found that he was allowed to say his own thing and not what the teacher wanted. He found his confidence. In his own voice he realized that his ideas were important. I don't think he's ever written this much period. He would do a lot of report writing that was robotic so he never wrote this much or this creatively before.

For the second writing assignment each student took his/her shoe box and paired up with a student from the other community. In these pairs, each student explained the significance of the items in the shoe box. The whole group came together again and each student introduced his or her partner to the group by retelling three stories that had been told about the items from the partner's shoe box.

At this point, the students were asked to create their first character voice in a written monologue. They were asked to write using the voice of a person they knew well. From that character's point of view, they were to write a speech incorporating three of the stories they had heard so far this evening from the shoe box stories.

A Panel Discussion - November 28:

The panel discussion consisted of members of the Norway House community including a hospital administrator, a social worker, a mother who was a member of the band council, and a former student who had moved to the city. The panel was created to give the students various viewpoints on the following question: What factors do you need to understand in order to deal constructively and successfully with the realities of our two cultures?

The panel prepared a brief statement on each of the following points:

1. A brief background on themselves,
2. their experience with living in two cultures,
3. their opinion on the above question,
4. and their advice to young people of both cultures.

One of the members of the panel, the mother, said:

The way I was brought up we were taught to respect each other regardless of color...I respected my parents and they respected me. We had that security. We had certain responsibilities, we had to do our homework. How you treat your children. It wasn't easy going to school, a lot of loneliness. ... You had to respect your elders and you don't talk. I used to get a headache at school, they'd talk and talk. That's where the stereotype comes in. You have to think and translate. People think you're stupid when you don't answer right away.....You have to learn to work together no matter what you race is. There is a lot of

research. You have to talk to people to understand you have misconceptions.

The Winnipeg teacher expressed her thoughts in her journal:

The panel discussion sparked a great deal of discussion. The students began to see the differences that existed between the two cultures. Actually talking and questioning the panel gave the non-native students a new understanding of what their life was like. It made them look at their own culture or lack of culture and see it from a different perspective.

"I was forced to look at myself", wrote one of the Winnipeg girls,

. . .and how the little things I say and do may be of great impact on someone else even though I don't think about them. Also, the social and political issues involving aboriginal people were brought to my attention more than they otherwise would have been.

A Sweat Lodge - November 29:

Invited by the speaker from the first day, the group traveled into the woods down a gravel road to an area in the bush where a garage-like structure was situated. In anticipation of the experience non-native student B described his misconception of the sweat lodge in a monologue which later became part of the play. He wrote:

What are we gonna have to do there? Like, do we have to dance around or prick ourselves with hot needles? Well, I don't know what goes on in there! No one told me anything yet! . . . I heard that there was one native ceremony in which a boy had a board of wood shoved through his skin and out again in his back and they nailed him to a tree so he was hanging there by the skin on his back. . . . So, its like a steam room, eh? What are we supposed to wear to this? What? We have to go naked? The boys can't wear anything? What do the girls wear? Blankets! How come they get blankets? . . . No way! I'm not going in naked . . . Why are you laughing? Oh thanks! They should sacrifice you to the hot coals. I know they don't do sacrifices. What, do you think I'm stupid?

When the group arrived they were instructed to enter the structure and wait for the first ceremony, smoking the pipe. This was followed by a traditional sweat ceremony inside the tarp-like tent. The group experienced four rounds of chanting traditional native songs while sitting around an open pit filled with hot rocks. Each round lasted about twenty minutes, and after the final round a bowl of a fruit mixture and beverages was passed around the circle. The Winnipeg teacher wrote in her journal:

"How thankful I was that they invited us into the sweat lodge and they made us feel so welcome. I really enjoyed experiencing a ritual from a different culture. I didn't have any spiritual visions or see any light shadows but I did enjoy the

steam and the feeling of cleansing my whole body. The only thing that made me feel uncomfortable was having to sit there practically naked with only a housecoat."

Following the sweat lodge ceremony the group returned to the cabins and wrote about the experience in their journals.

Other activities in Norway house following the sweat lodge included a visit to the elementary school where the students talked directly to the children about their families, and what it was like growing up in Norway House. A visit to an artist's home, a pow-wow practice, ski-doo rides on the river and a trip to a trap line where a trapper demonstrated how to skin a fox were just some of the activities on the last day.

On November 29 in the evening the group met to begin the process of brainstorming and generating ideas for the play.

Choosing A Subject

An idea for a play may come from anywhere at anytime. It can grow out of an observation, a memory, or an experience. Plays can be developed based around a theme or a social problem, a character, an event or an experience. Much work in drama education today is structured around a theme or an issue relevant to students. Often these plays are pulled together in a collective or collage form. The main idea or issue can be developed and presented in a series of scenes or vignettes tied together by the thread of the theme chosen by either the students or the teacher such as alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, loneliness, etc...

It has been said early in the research paper that the subject for the play should emerge from the concerns of the students who are involved. In practice this

is not always easy, particularly because students don't always have the range of possibilities to choose from. In this case, however, the subject for the play evolved directly from the experience. There was an abundance of material to stimulate ideas. The difficulty was how to attempt to narrow down the theme.

The teachers and playwright intended to begin the collaborative playwriting project by devoting the evening workshop to selecting a theme. The group began by discussing the whole week's events and then brainstormed a list of areas it was interested in pursuing. By consensus this list was narrowed to half a dozen themes. The students were asked to choose one theme from the six as the topic for the play, and the teachers and playwright then left the room.

After a ninety-minute discussion, the students invited the teachers and playwright back into the room to hear their decision. They refused to choose a narrow theme. Instead they argued that they could not choose which was the strongest theme until they had a chance to explore all the possibilities through their writing. The students demanded that they be allowed to explore freely before narrowing the topic and they presented a list of areas they were interested in.

Narrowing down all the ideas expressed by the group was difficult. Native student C wrote:

Trying to find a common theme was the longest process because of the many concepts that both groups had. Some considerations were direct and indirect with respect to aboriginal issues, and urban essence. Some of our early ideas included: lifestyles, environment, government and daily living. Throughout these workshop sessions I realized that I must polish up on many things such as: writing, speaking skills, diction.

The following is a list of the ideas generated:

- understanding of ignorance
- how we are fed the ignorance
- give the audience a jolt
- everyone is affected - oppressed
- look what people have to offer
- Canada's break up
- the Canadian - a total assimilation
- the glorified name of a country
- personal identity
- who the hell am I as an individual, in my own culture (if I have one)
- a celebration of what we have to offer
- no one thinks better than anyone else
- people always judge
- space
- the struggle against the bullshit
- the human race - the spirits
- no society is going to change
- and we have to accept this
- vision of HOPE

The teachers and playwright agreed with the process of not choosing a specific theme. The decision was to generate as much play material as possible based on the experience so far and reactions to the first exchange.

Developing Script Material - December - January 28

During this time, the students maintained a writer's journal with written work suggested by the co-operating teachers and the playwright. Each student was responsible to hand in written pieces based on the first exchange. The pieces took the form of short scenes of dialogue, monologues, poems, and songs. This material was sent to the playwright for editing and suggestions. In addition each group created a choreographed dance/movement piece that expressed something about their culture.

During this period there were lapses in student motivation. "From the beginning of this part of the course I knew that I had problems with putting my ideas into words", wrote native student C. "Some apparent reasons for my writing problems were: writer's block, relevant topics, and not always interested." Despite the difficulties the students were constantly encouraged to continue writing.

Second Group Meeting - January 29 - February 2

Experiencing Urban Lifestyle:

In January the Norway House students came to the city for three days. Trying to plan cultural activities in the city was difficult for the Winnipeg students. "We experienced a sweat lodge, a pow-wow practice, and met so many interesting people with such incredible stories. We have nothing to match that," stated one of the Winnipeg students. "Well we gotta plan something for them to do, something fun, something cultural," answered the others.

The students had difficulty finding something from their own culture that they could share with the native students. Student A and student C; in reaction wrote:

Look we gotta do something that means something, something that we look forward to. . . there has to be something. . . they took us to a sweat, a pow wow. It was amazing. Some thing cultural. . . but what?

The Winnipeg students, the Winnipeg teacher and the playwright planned to expose the native students to a variety of events that would fit into all city lifestyles and cultures. The days were divided up into field trips and workshops. Each day had a different theme, all related to urban lifestyles. The workshops were devoted to individual writing exercises, collaborative writing and scene building, improvisation, and reflective discussions.

In anticipation of the trip to Winnipeg native student B wrote, "We could not wait to see what they had in store for us, besides workshops and more writing. The workshops are not bad, they're actually fun, from my point of view anyway."

On January 29, the native students arrived and a pot-luck dinner was served. Ethnic foods were offered to give the native students a taste of different cultures in the city. Following dinner the group had its first writing workshop. Much of the time was spent discussing how to begin narrowing down the theme of the play. Over thirty pieces of written work had been collected. All the work was divided into three categories: "fitting in when you're different", "the social space", and "culture". All the pieces were read out loud to the group and then students discussed how they could be incorporated into the script. It was agreed that most of the material could be used but there would have to be some editing.

The biggest concerns were: Where does the group go from here? How can all this material be used? How is this going to be a play? The teachers assured the students to have patience and rely on the process and in time everything would come together.

Urban Lifestyles:

The events planned for the Winnipeg visit were divided into urban lifestyle themes for each of the three days. The first day's events, (January 30) explored "mainstream lifestyles" - visits to a management consultant firm, a tour of a potato chip factory, a shopping mall, a grocery store, a pizza dinner followed by a play at Prairie Theatre Exchange.

The next day (January 31), was " alternative day". The group visited a dance rehearsal by a contemporary dance group and a rehearsal by an experimental theatre group, toured two artists' studios, shopped at a second hand store, and concluded the evening with a vaudeville show and a viewing of "Rocky Horror Picture Show". February 1 was "multi-cultural day" which consisted of a tour of a synagogue, a walk down an old north-end street, and lunch at a Ukrainian restaurant.

Student B wrote:

We got to billet with them, so we would get to know them more better. The next few days we toured the city, we got to see a potato chip factory, where Old Dutch chips were made. We met the laborer in the plant and discovered that some of the workers even worked there for ten years! I know for one thing I wouldn't survive working there for that amount of time,

probably just get fat!. Next we toured a fancy office building. It amazed the hell out of me! I always wondered how they felt walking into one in real life and I finally found out. The surprising part of our Winnipeg visit was that they planned to take us to their cultural event. It turned out to be the "Rocky Horror Picture Show". Some of us actually found it to be fun. I know I did. Others thought it was boring.

Workshop sessions and Warm-up:

On the last day the group gathered to continue the writing activities. In this session drama activities were set up to encourage more writing and to build the confidence of the students. Although both groups had some stage experience, the teachers thought it would be valuable to build the group dynamics. Warm-up activities were held at the beginning of each workshop to relax the participants and to help them feel more comfortable and at ease with each other. The following are some of the instructions given by the Winnipeg teacher for the drama activities which were introduced:

Group Building Exercises :

Adam:

The first activity was a game called 'Adam'. Students were instructed to walk around the room and when the instructor calls out 'Adam 2', then two students embrace, 'Adam 4', four students etc. If a number is called and the players do not become part of a group they are out. The game is played until

there is only one person left. The remaining person is the winner.

Objective: To warm up physically and to build group trust.

Face to Face:

The group pairs off facing each other, a couple of feet apart.

The leader calls out commands such as "hand to shoulder".

One person puts a hand on the other's shoulder and keeps it there. The leader continues calling out physical commands, such as "head to back", "foot to knee". When the leader calls out "face to face", each participant finds another partner. Each person moves on and finds a new partner.

Objective - to build group cooperation and help the group feel comfortable with each other.

Trust Circle:

The group stands in a tight circle, facing into the center. One member of the group stands in the center, eyes closed, and slowly begins to lean out toward the others. The group uses hands to gently push him/her or his/her away, to another person in the circle. It is important the person in the center keep the body straight at all times. As he/she becomes more comfortable, he/she will be able to lean further and further out, and the group will be able to pass he/she around the circle fairly quickly.

Objective - Trust exercise are a physical way to develop reliance and caring in the group.

Social space:

Walk around the room taking up as much space as possible. Change your level, change your pace, change your rhythm. Freeze. Repeat making yourself as small as possible. Avoid eye contact when you come in contact with someone. Now switch; when you come in contact with someone stare at him/her for three seconds.

Close yourself in an imaginary confined space. Imagine the walls are closing in, getting smaller and smaller around you until you can't move. How does that feel? Do you ever feel that way?

Now, escape from the box and expand your body until you can take up lots of space again.

Objective - To understand the meaning of space, to explore movement.

Knots:

Knots is a game that brings people together by putting them apart. To form the knot, the players stand in a circle, shoulder - to - shoulder, and place their hands in the center. Next everyone grabs someone else's hand until a human knot is formed. The object of the game is to untangle the whole group.

Objective - To help build problem solving and group dynamics.

Machines 1:

In groups of four create a machine. Each player becomes a working part of the machine. Base the machines on those you have seen on the exchange trips.

For example: a machine at the Old Dutch Chip Factory, a cash register at The Bay Northern Store.

Objective - To use sound and motion to create an image.

Machines 2:

Decide on a place or a building. Once decided one person enters the circle and creates a part of that place by using an action combined with a sound. As soon as that person has established an action another person joins in with a different connecting part of the place or building. For example: A factory, a desk in an office, a busy street, The Forks, a sweat lodge.

Objective: To create an environment which the students have been to in order to stimulate writing.

Rattlers:

Form a circle with the group. Choose a hunter (the chaser) and a snake (the chasee), blindfold each and give each a "rattle".

Within the confines of the circle the hunter must try to find the snake. At anytime he/she chooses, the hunter shakes the rattle and the snake must respond with a shake of his own rattle (but not necessarily immediately). If the snake hears the hunter close by he/she may move before responding. The hunter may

shake his/her rattle a maximum of three times in an effort to locate the snake. If the hunter is successful or the snake is successful successors are chosen by each.

Objective - To build listening skills and concentration.

Working with the environment:

Find something representational outside or in the school that will symbolize a setting in the city or in Norway House. For example, a long branch from a tree, a piece of heavy rope.

Find ways to use that object/material to create an environment.

Objective - To use various elements to create a setting.

Music:

Listen to a native chant or song. Analyze the meaning of the words, the mood and the tone of the music. Create a new chant or poem. Present it to the group. Use an instrument such as a drum to provide the rhythm.

Objective - To become aware of different styles of music, rhythm and tempo.

After the warm-up sessions were complete more intensive focus was brought to the writing process. Ideas and discussions of the day's events were shared and under the leadership of the playwright more writing was assigned. This time the assignments were geared to the experience in the city including reactions to a boardroom in the consulting firm, and life in the factory.

Work Toward a First Draft - February 3 - May 5

Between February and May the written work continued. Another student was added to the project to provide the music for the play. The groups continued to meet separately to keep up the momentum. One of the Winnipeg members, student D, ironically the most enthusiastic, decided to drop out of the project. She made a decision to spend her next year overseas attending a college and she needed to work to raise the tuition.

Frustrations and anger developed during this period. Native student D wrote:

During these months the pressure had started to build up between us but no fights broke out. I was glad about that part. I guess whatever we may have said about each others backs stayed in the room or at home as the teacher would say, "keep your anger away from the room and during rehearsals". Sometimes I wanted to scalp him; instead of doing that I would put him into one of my writings if I was mad. That is where I would torture him.

Most of the stress came from within the group. Native student C was concerned with articulation and when he realized and learned about the power of imagery and began to incorporate a more poetic style he gained more confidence. He found the verbosity of the Winnipeg students to be threatening but he quickly realized that he could write too. "I think I can accomplish what they can accomplish maybe even more because they've shown weaknesses."

Material was collected by the cooperating teachers and sent through the mail and faxed to the playwright and to the other school. The musician began to work with the Winnipeg teacher to find areas where music could be incorporated and the playwright began the process of arranging the material into the collective form. The pieces the students wrote fit into various categories or themes, the most popular ones being cultural naiveté, stereotypes, racism, discovering differences, denial of culture, and fitting in. All material was divided into three piles. The first pile had the strongest theatrical pieces, the second pile had material that did not seem readily to fit into the play or was of poor writing quality, and the third pile had material that was rejected. The cooperating teachers went through this process of selection as well, and then decided to involve the students to repeat the process. In all three selection processes, virtually all the same material was chosen. The playwright then arranged the material from the first pile into a script form supplementing it with a few scenes from the second pile. He then asked for further editing and revising and some additional scenes to enlarge and clarify various themes and plot structure. Material that needed editing or revising was sent back to the students for re-writes.

In early May, the plan was for the students from both groups to meet at a neutral point, half way between Norway House and Winnipeg, at a farm in Hilbre, Manitoba. The retreat would allow the groups to spend time revising, editing and rehearsing the completed script. Weather conditions did not allow this to happen. The late ice breakup of the Nelson River made it impossible for the Norway students to travel.

The first draft had to be completed by May 10 to allow enough time for the students to memorize the script for rehearsal and performance at the Drama Festival. It was agreed by the cooperating teachers that the Winnipeg students and

the playwright could still meet to begin the final script revisions. A writing retreat was set up at West Hawk Lake to revise and begin rehearsing the script without the Norway House students. The Norway House students meanwhile began revisions and rehearsals on their own.

Workshop and Script Revision - A Writer's Retreat - May 6 - 9

Although it may seem that much of the work of writing a play is finished with the completion of the preliminary draft, the work is just beginning. It is not unlikely that a writer might have to do four or five drafts before completing a play. A play does not always have to follow a chronological order but there is a process of rearranging, and rewriting that is required.

The Winnipeg teacher, the playwright, the Winnipeg students and the musician traveled to West Hawk Lake to make final revisions. Three days were spent working through the script. Using an improvisational approach, the Winnipeg teacher had the students try different ways of approaching the material. Some suggestions were combining part of one piece with another, changing the order, adding music, and movement to begin to give a story or shape to the whole play.

In the final stages of the script development, the story or theme is often the most important aspect. What the play is about is the part that the audience is most likely to understand. Quite often the idea for a story comes from the development of a particular character, a period of history, or an event. In this situation, however, the group finished with over ninety pieces of written material, including monologues, scenes, poems, and songs. The difficulty was how to put it all together. Decisions had to be made as to what form the play should take. Most of the writing dealt with cultural naiveté, a sharing of differences and an

understanding of oneself in relation to others. The task was to take that material and somehow build it into a story with some form of common thread.

All the material had one thing in common: it was developed as a result of the actual experience. It made sense, therefore, to follow the actual progression of the exchange to build the story for the play.

The final result was a collective play omit this together with a story that reflected the actual exchange. The play was divided into the rural and urban experience. The scenes and monologues followed the progression of the experience and reflected on the misconceptions, realizations, and attitudes of each group. The final draft of the play was a combination of scenes, monologues, songs, and music, and a dance in the collective or collage form. The music played on an acoustic guitar provided the link for the scenes.

The play began with the stereotypes and misconceptions the students had about each other. The first scene was a ritual with students being wrapped in blankets to represent each culture, followed by a stylized reading of a poem about dreams, and a story about a misunderstanding between a Jesuit priest and a native hunter. This was followed by a scene about a teacher arriving at a northern store revealing her misconceptions about the north. A sweat lodge ceremony, and a ride on a ski-doo, were among some of the pieces incorporated into the play. Various other scenes were interspersed to show the anticipation, anxieties, and misconceptions of two "white babes" from the city.

The second act or second part of the play revealed the native experience in the city. The Winnipeg students had difficulty trying to find a parallel experience to the Sweat Lodge. The movie "Rocky Horror Picture Show" became the Winnipeg students' equivalent experience. Monologues about the native anxieties in the city were included in this act as well as the negative attitude of a janitor in the Winnipeg high school.

The play concluded with the students' reactions to each other and reactions about their own culture or lack of culture, expressed in monologues, music and a dance. One of the songs, "Tangled Souls", written by Winnipeg student E, became the title of the play.

The Final Draft - May 10 - May 18

The final version of the play put together at the writer's retreat, was sent to Norway House for final approval and some minor editing. A list of all the scenes was included along with casting suggestions.

The play and casting suggestions were approved. The Norway House group began the process of memorizing parts and staged sections of the play that did not involve the Winnipeg students. Final editing was done by both groups and the production script was finalized.

The Rehearsal Process - May 19 - 21

Three days prior to the Manitoba Drama Festival, on May 19, the Norway House students arrived in Winnipeg to join the Winnipeg students to rehearse the completed play. Over the next three days the group, under the direction of the cooperating teachers, would ready itself for performance.

An additional student from the Winnipeg school was added to the group because of the number of actors needed in some of the larger scenes. He would also serve as stage manager for the performances.

Some of the pieces had a lot of detail and had to be carefully choreographed. Many of the scenes were based on rituals and had to be accurate.

To assist the group with authenticity, a native writer was brought in to help set the accuracy, clarity and tone of the play. Music and dance were incorporated and had to be rehearsed. All of this required a disciplined rehearsal process in a very tight rehearsal schedule.

The tension was building but the excitement of the performance kept the enthusiasm going. "Of course there were times I wanted to quit." Wrote one of the native students. "I kept hearing my mother's voice saying, 'If you can't do it, try and try again'."

Another native student wrote,

Then came the exciting part where we only had four days from nine in the morning until four or five in the evening of rehearsals in Winnipeg . The feeling of tiredness and anger would pop up every now and then, but we had our own ways of coping with each one and keeping it to ourselves.

On the third day the play was staged and ready for an audience. Two performances were scheduled at the Winnipeg school to prepare the group for the performance at the Manitoba High School Drama Festival at Prairie Theatre Exchange.

As was stated earlier in this research paper, the performance was the least important reason for choosing a cross-cultural playwrighting experience. In the end, however, the final validity of the play is the audience's response to it. If the play speaks clearly to the audience, it has been successful.

In the next chapter the researcher will describe the initial reactions of the participants and the audience to the performance, and assess the reactions of the students to the experience.

Chapter V

Summary and Conclusion

Nothing quite equals the thrill and excitement of a first performance. The performances were the students' final way of communicating what they had worked so hard to create. Three performances were scheduled, one at the Winnipeg school, one at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival and one at the school in Norway House.

Reactions to the Performance

The recognition, approval and acceptance at their first performance at the Winnipeg school, gave the students a sense of pride in their accomplishments. After the performance native student D said in her journal that, "Our first school performance for the students did not turn out as bad as I thought it would. The audience really liked it, and they were surprised at how real the play was, especially about how honest we were about our stereotypes of each other."

At the school performance a Winnipeg student in the audience later wrote in response to the play:

The play greatly showed how segregation can lead to misunderstandings. The natives didn't get much chance to visit the city and knew little of how people in the city spent their time. Likewise the city people knew little of native rituals and customs. Also, how racist people can become basing their opinions on stereotypes. How we tend to think of all Natives being alike and losing our opinions on what we most often see,

the people who hang around the streets of downtown, drinking. Showing us how ignorant we can be of others and if we tried to understand other cultures we could lessen the differences between us. I really loved this play, I thought it was an ingenious way to show how easily your mind can be changed about something when you begin to understand it.

Following the school performances, the group prepared for its performance at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival. The festival is a forum for students to perform their work for other high school students, and an opportunity for them to benefit from the comments of professional adjudicators.

Despite the apprehensions of the students, they were anxious and excited to perform. "I was nervous to perform at the festival" wrote student D, finally it was our performance day, Friday! My nerves were shot, but I didn't want to show it. The way things looked backstage it was more like a team playing their hearts out for everyone."

The performance went well. The opportunity to perform the play in a professional theatre with music, lights, and sound effects, added to the whole atmosphere of the play. The students' communicated their scenes with ease to the audience and the audience listened and responded.

Following the performance, Winnipeg student A reacted to the response from the audience:

During our actual performance I remember many reactions from the audience like a thunder of laughing, whistling, hooting in many of the scenes we did. Finally the last scene where we did the dance, some cried.

Native Student D wrote:

After we were done the show, I didn't know what was going on because I couldn't see at all so I asked the person next to me he said 'Standing ovation, bow', he then said to do it again, so I did. It was the greatest feeling I've ever had. I was proud I didn't quit. All of us ran back stage and jumped around in joy saying 'We got an ovation' and hugged each other! Following the performance, people came to me saying how much they loved the show especially certain scenes.

"In the final phase", wrote native student B, "came the performance where we performed at the Prairie Theatre Exchange in Winnipeg, and surprised many people who thought natives and non-natives would never work on a project like this at any time."

A student audience member, following the production commented on the play. She said, " In my opinion the play was very interesting, a real eye-opener. All in all, if given equal choice, we are all the same basically, except for our culture, religion and traditions."

"I found this a very meaningful play", said another student audience member in a reaction to the play. "I admit that I have some negative stereotypes against Natives but this helps to break them. It showed me the pride and shame of both peoples".

"It was good", wrote another student audience member, "people have to break down the barrier between natives and whites. People stereotype natives the wrong way. Your play shows natives in the way they usually are".

After the performance the students were able to discuss the play with the adjudicators. Their comments were positive and encouraging. They were very impressed with the "imagination, courage, and curiosity" it took to build the play. One of the adjudicators in a letter to "The Manitoba Arts Council" in September following the performance wrote:

The actors/writers, aboriginal and white, were sharing with us their impressions and struggles with the other culture. It was fresh. The experiences were honest and the conflicts were brutally real. The emotional impact of the piece lifted the entire theatre to its feet in appreciation. (Broderick, 1992)

A reporter impressed with the performance wrote a review in a Winnipeg Free Press on May 23, 1992.

No one is quite sure where eight students from high schools in Norway House and Winnipeg bridged their cultural gap to co-write and perform a play together. Perhaps it was in a northern reserve sweat lodge, or maybe it was here in town at a screening of the Rocky Horror Picture Show. Wherever it occurred, the result for the youths is a new respect for each other's culture and a new play called Tangled Souls. It's one of the most intriguing productions at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival.

Following the Winnipeg performances, one month later, the Winnipeg students traveled to Norway House, this time to perform. The play was presented

to the school and the whole community. Over four hundred people attended and once again the show was well received. "I am so proud of our kids", said one of the native audience members. "This took a lot of guts, and I admire them for that. Well done. I hope you do it again."

After the final performance, the group said the final good-byes, tears were shed and addresses and phone numbers exchange.

After returning to Winnipeg, the group was notified by the Department of Education that it had been nominated for the Governor General's Award and in September, the students received the "Governor General's Award for Excellence" in the Theater Arts category. Selections from the play were included in a book commemorating 'The Canada 125' celebrations.

Reactions to the Experience

The playwriting experience contributed in innumerable ways to the growth and learning experiences of the students involved. The immersion of the participants in a direct experience gave them a base from which to take what they learned and apply it to their own lives. Unlike conventional learning, based on reading, recitation, lecturing and testing, this type of experiential learning is difficult to measure. What can be measured is the enthusiastic reactions of the students as recorded on video-taped interviews and in their journals.

The students were motivated because the experience was meaningful, and they had freedom of choice. Winnipeg student C wrote in her journal:

In some English classes, you write essays on things that have no personal meaning to you. In this project, you get to explore your own opinions and feelings and write about whatever you

want. The personal aspects cause students to care more about what they're writing.

"Also, in terms of motivation", wrote the Norway House teacher. "Never anywhere else have I seen that kind of energy and commitment from students. This is meaningful education."

John Dewey, as noted earlier in this research paper, states that all genuine education comes about through experience and that the experience must be meaningful. He was quick to point out that not all experience is of equal educational value. What determines this factor is the quality of the experience. Dewey states that there must be two dimensions to an experience for it to be genuinely educational: it must be enjoyable and interesting to the students, and it must "live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences." That is, it must have some lasting and positive impact. The playwriting exchange met these two criteria. It was fun, and it had an impact on the students.

"Playwriting should be everywhere for those who are interested", wrote Winnipeg student A. "It's fun because rather than sitting in perfect little square rows and having to raise our hands we have freedom of speech. "

Winnipeg student C commented on the impact of her experience working on the project, "Through the experience of "Tangled Souls" I was forced to look at myself and how the little things I say and do may be of great impact on someone else even though I don't think about them. I won't be able to forget about this experience for a long time. "

Not only were the students able to foster an acceptance of each other, but they were able to learn from each other's culture. Developing cultural awareness is a process of looking inward. As stated earlier in the research paper, cross-cultural education is a structured process designed to foster acceptance, understanding, and

constructive relations among people of different cultures. Winnipeg student B said:

I've learned a little more tolerance I mean I have friends of all different social and racial groups but you learn to look a little more into the person and not so much the outside. I mean I'm not going to say that I'm never going to look at anybody again and say "look at what they're wearing" or "what color they are" because everybody does that. But, I think maybe I learned to look beyond the outside. I look at you guys as friends now.

The process helped stimulate the students to look at the lives of others and, and in doing so, learn more about themselves. Winnipeg student B discovered that natives are a very misunderstood people struggling with themselves, their surroundings and society. She was also surprised to learn her cultural ties were not as obvious or deep as those of her native counterparts. She said, "I don't feel I have much of a culture. What is white culture? I am a mix of everything. They have such a rich culture". Her discovery of this was expressed in a piece she wrote in the play entitled "Puzzle Piece".

Native student A also learned something about himself:

I greatly enjoyed this project, because it had a lot say about our feelings. It helped us to get in touch with our feelings and work together as a group. Before, I wanted to be noticed. Now, I realize that I don't have to fool around and be obnoxious to get attention. I've learned to express myself as myself and not somebody else.

The students realized that there were personality problems. They could like or dislike a person based on their personality differences rather than their cultural differences, and they were still able to tolerate each other and work productively together. The teacher from Norway House said, "There were a lot of points of conflict; they knew why they didn't like each other at times, but the dislike was personality differences not racial differences."

Native student C in response to the project said:

We learned to take a closer look to find out that we are all just people, and in doing so we learned a lot about ourselves. I realized that some of the problems I had with the other students was a personality thing, not a cultural thing. At first we were strangers to each others eyes and now we are friends that seem to grow up in different places and different ways but have the same heart.

Through direct experiential learning, the students gained an awareness of themselves and others. The project was created up to allow students to reflect on their own experience and then write about it. When the project began, both groups had stereotypes or misconceptions about each other. As they got to know each other, they began to realize that many of these misconceptions were not true. Native student A told Winnipeg student E about his first impression of him. He said:

When you sent your 'shoe box' here I thought , oh no what if I ever run into him, and that was my first impression. A heavy metal, biker guy and then all this time , talking to you you're

just another person. I felt scared at the beginning. I thought, here's some guy who's going to beat me up .

"The purpose was to explore, not change," said the Norway House teacher. "The hope was that in the exploration the students would learn tolerance."

According to native student A, they learned far more.

When we met, I didn't think they really wanted to know about our culture. But they were really interested in learning about the way we live. One of them said to me when they came, 'I thought we were from two different worlds.' We discovered we were the same kind of people with different skins and we didn't let that get in our way.

In order to write truthfully the students also were required to discuss and reflect upon their own lives. It was this reflection which made them analyze and discuss their own strengths and weaknesses. "I think I can accomplish what they (the Winnipeg students) can accomplish , maybe even more because they've shown weaknesses", wrote native student C.

When the students' work was praised they came to realize that what they had in their own culture was something to be valued by others. They never realized others would be interested in their culture. The Norway House teacher described his excitement and enthusiasm about the interacting of the two cultures:

I was happy to see that the general public shared an interest in this kind of project - the sharing of cross-cultural stories. After the performance my beliefs were all reaffirmed - my beliefs in

the abilities and humanities of students to make a better world. My energy level was topped right up and I'd do it again. When students write their own work the experience develops ownership which makes the level of performance much richer. Writing from experience is second to no other form of writing whether it's research , creative writing, or report writing.

One month after the production, native student C sent this poem to all the participants which sums up a great deal of how all the participant felt after the project was complete.

Final Day

Distance that parts us all.
 But friendships that may never be forgotten.
 Hard feelings broken along the way
 Forlorn maybe we won't ever see each other again.
 Mortal we are, immortal our work, caught in rhyme
 by modern technology.

Truly "our" Odyssey was a sonnet.
 Our hearts and minds opened with grace;
 eager to learn and understand what lay ahead.
 For what we have attained remains frozen within
 the blood, never again to blind our judgment.

As you and I travel further on the road of life
 remember internally the experience,

that was ours, and ours only, no one else's.
and the mentors that assisted.

Listen my friends
it is time to say good-by.
A time to remember
the time spent together.
Leanings we taught to one another
Hardships followed by diversity.

"Life is a vicious game" (June 30, 1992)

Conclusion:

From the data that has been gathered and analyzed, it is now possible to describe the benefits of the process used in the playwriting project.

Drama education in the last twenty years has developed two styles of student productions. The most common is the performance of a play chosen by the teacher from a catalogue of scripts. More recently, teachers have called upon students to collaborate on the creation of original plays. This project took the collaborative form further by bringing about an interaction between students from two communities, north and south, native and non-native, rural and urban. The exchange generated limitless creative writing opportunities central to students' exploration of themselves and others. Through this experiential approach, the culturally diverse students related to, reflected upon, and became absorbed in the playwriting experience and began to share in the process which evolved into theatre. The collective or collage form rather than the plot driven play was used in

this process because of the distance between the two groups. In other words, the play did not follow the traditional format of a play with a beginning, middle, and end. A loose story-line was developed based on the experience itself, which was connected by music and scenes that had common characters. The ideas and themes in the play were strongly conveyed through monologues, small scenes, poetry and songs. Both styles of play are equally valid. In this case the latter seemed more feasible because of the nature of the group, the broadness of the subject matter, and the limited time the group was together.

The role of the teachers in this playwriting process was to lead or guide the students in their work, and to facilitate the creative process. In the beginning stages most, or all, of the direction came from the teachers who assisted in the coordination of the project and supplied beginning ideas. Gradually, as the students progressed, the teachers relinquished much of the direction, allowing the students freedom to guide and plan their own writing. In withdrawing, the teachers became mentors of the process and were able to step in if necessary. As stated in the research, the students needed assistance and constant encouragement to express their ideas, and guidance in expressing these ideas.

The cross-cultural playwriting exchange was truly a dialectic process which involved sharing and discovery of oneself and others. Through the process the students learned to work together, became more tolerant, recognized their differences, and learned to listen and respond. They learned the importance of self-discipline, concentration, and flexibility of thought. They began to develop a stronger self-image and a deeper sense of worth and more importantly an understanding of themselves in relation to others.

One key strength native student A excelled at was his ability to participate in, carry and frequently lead group discussions and problem solving activities. He became very discursive and able to quickly shape and re-shape ideas and opinions

verbally. He began to think and express himself metaphorically and subtly in his writing. In the beginning he had a difficulty in this area and showed some reluctance to active risk-taking "on-paper". At times during the processing of his and other students' writing he demonstrated impatience and, at times withdrawal from the activity. As his confidence in writing grew, so did his risk-taking.

Winnipeg student C began the project with a great deal of confidence and commitment. Her level of competence in performance was her strength. She had little writing experience and what she did write had little depth. In her writing she began to explore deeper into her own experience and reflected upon that experience. Her animated personality and enthusiasm came through in the process and she showed effective leadership abilities in the final stages.

Native student C showed impressive growth and development in his written expression as well as the way in which he conducted himself during the various phases of the playwriting process. He showed tolerance for criticisms and suggestions for improvement. He had respect for the participants and this helped him to feel comfortable verbalizing his feelings and ideas clearly and articulately. While willing to experiment with new ideas and vocabulary, native student C at times experienced grammatical problems in his writing which were rectified in the editing stages. He seemed to be self conscious about this "difficulty", as he has expressed his desire to write as well as his Winnipeg colleagues. He became however, one of the most prolific writers.

Native student D showed a variety of methods in expressing sophisticated imagery and subtle irony in her writing. When motivated and knowledgeable about her topic she would write strong prose, verse and script material. On the other hand, any material that was foreign to her made her become defensive and confused. This was one major area of significant growth. Being constantly battered with new materials and unfamiliar situations, she had to learn to become

more adaptable and receptive to different learning situations. Through the process, her willingness to accept new ideas and try new things grew to the point where her writing became more experimental.

Winnipeg student A began the process with little confidence. Through mutual and frank exploration of her fear, skepticism, and her reluctance to fully commit to this project, she began to discover that these feelings were best confronted and dealt with as a matter of pride and self-worth. From this acceptance of her fears and anxieties, she began to feel more confident about herself. This was a major turning point for Winnipeg student A in this project, as it was upon this realization and consensus that she refused to allow these inhibitions to distract her from her purpose. As she became more committed to the process, she became more motivated to carry the project to the final stages.

Winnipeg student A, who at the beginning of the project appeared to have low self-esteem and difficulty expressing herself in front of others, said:

Performing at the drama festival definitely did something for my self-confidence. There were a lot of people there! But I had to do it anyway. And it felt really good. I had to be loud and fairly assertive. Working on writing and rehearsals brought us all pretty close and we all got to know each other fairly well and know each others insecurities. I think just talking about them helped.

The process was more than a means of writing a play for students to perform on stage. It became a way to explore the students' imaginations, feelings, and knowledge of themselves and others. The growth of each student began as soon as he/she became personally involved in the exchange. By working

objectively and subjectively, alone and within the group, the students developed an original play from an idea through to a performance. It was a challenging experience and the satisfaction came when they were able to take their hard work and share it with an audience. As a result the playwriting exchange made the students more aware of their own ideas and how these ideas could be used to bring about a theatre experience that was their own creation.

The playwriting exchange contributed in many ways to the creative writing abilities of the students. Through the writing process the students learned to free their imagination and stimulate their powers of observation. The students came to believe that they were capable of producing ideas which were both imaginative and useful, becoming critical thinkers and problem solvers.

"The students did not learn how to be great playwrights", wrote the teacher from Norway House, "but they can write monologues, poetry, and express their feelings. The goal was eclipsed by the affective growth of the students. What became important was them developing as people, not as playwrights."

Native student B was very withdrawn when she began the project. She hardly spoke and if she did, it was only to respond to a question. With constant praise and acceptance of her work she began to realize that what she had to say was valid and once she began to respond more openly, her strength was her willingness to work as a team player. In discussions she proved herself as a thoughtful, reflective listener and thinker. often providing valuable questions, clarifications, and opinions. She showed extreme patience under stress and displayed a mature, controlled demeanor.

In group activity, the students learned to work with each other and became more tolerant. They also learned to listen and respect each other's viewpoints. "I learned tolerance", wrote Winnipeg student D. "I've learned to take more time and to listen to people to hear their stories."

While creating the play, the students brought their own ideas, feelings and experiences into focus. This provided an emotional outlet for them and at the same time brought them to a point where they could analyze a thought or idea objectively. Eventually they arrived at a critical evaluation of their own work, an evaluation which often required problem solving and critical thinking.

On a video tape following the last performance, the students commented on how they have changed or grown as a result of the experience.

Native student C, who became one of the most prolific writers of the group said:

I always used to control my emotions and keep them in , but now I tend to yell more to get a point across. I found out what my defenses were. I had to withdraw, have sour grapes, or was just nervous. I was enclosed. I wouldn't talk. A lot was inside me. I used to listen to other people with their problems. I would just listen. But I've learned from the Winnipeg students.

Native student A learned to set higher expectations for himself. He stated that:

I thought that I don't express myself really good and I can't write powerfully. You've told me that I express myself really good. I have higher expectations of myself now. Before when I was taking Language Arts, I would write what I was supposed to write but now I analyze things differently. I've learned to take both sides of an argument and from that gain a better conclusion. Before I used to do everything, now I'll question it.

"Tangled Souls", the play developed from the experience was a play about Native students from a reserve and white city students, trying to bridge a cultural gap and ultimately understand one another better. In the end there was an understanding and an appreciation for each other.

"We shed some tears and laughter through our experience", wrote native student D.

We put a lot of effort into what we did as a group. At first we were strangers to each other and now we are friends that just seem to grow up in different places and different ways. But we have the same heart. We as a group gave each other experiences that many could not understand. The Winnipeg students taught me not to give up and be afraid of who you are, what you are as a person and that you are never alone. There is always a friend in strangers.

Implications Beyond This Study:

This process has limitless possibilities beyond this study. Exchanges between different cultures often exist within the curriculum. This project took the exchange idea much further. The students were able to gain insight into another culture and in that process write and produce a play about their experience. This project only involved ten students but it could be extended to a much larger group. The possibility of combining more than two schools in this type of an exchange is certainly possible. The themes developed in this process would vary depending on the nature of the experience, the participants, the size of the group, and the teachers leading the process.

The description of the process of the cross-cultural playwriting exchange reveals that playwriting is a substantial activity with a diversity of approaches. As stated in the review of the literature, playwriting in the high school level can take many forms, but whichever process is used, the benefits to the students' growth and development is critical. At the same time it is a process that allows for new approaches and techniques, and there is no single way of approaching the creative process. It is possible to identify techniques used in playwriting, but at the same time one should realize that these techniques may and do change in different situations with different teachers and different students.

The students involved in the exchange took positive action by creating a play about issues such as stereotyping, racism, and misconceptions of other cultures. The play "Tangled Souls" which developed out of the exchange was a positive way to solve some of the problems that exist between different cultures.

Theatre is an effective tool to highlight this issue and by sharing the final play, both the participants and the audience began to find ways to face and look for solutions. As in Popular Theatre, the playwriting developed in this exchange addressed issues that affected social change. The students created theatre which explored their own realities, and in the process they discovered ways of changing this reality.

The best response to the lack of scripts as emphasized at the beginning of this thesis is the creation of new plays by students themselves. Theatre in this form can address the issues and concerns of the students, and as Scanlan (1984) states, "It is time for those of us who work with kids to help them find their voice."

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Appendix A

"Tangled Souls", First Draft

Tangled Souls

A cross-cultural writing exchange

Directed by:

Dramaturge:

Written by:

Tangled Souls

a collaborative writing project

written by the students from

- 1) Blanket/Costume opener
- 2) Jesuit Story
- 3) It Will Take Time Full Cast
- 4) Before and After
- 5) White Babes from Hell
- 6) The Fort Translator-
Bedelia-
Kita-
Eagle Feather-
- 7) It Happens
- 8) Worshipping Buck Naked Part 1
- 9) White Babes go shopping
- 10) Buck Naked 2
- 11) Winter Scene
- 12) Buck Naked 3
- 13) White Babes at Sweat with Buck
Naked guy.
- 14) The Sweat Lodge 3 Grandfathers-
2 white women-
1 white guy-
2 Native women-
- 15) Steve 1
- 16) Tangled Souls

Act 2

- 17) Life (includes music by) Full Cast
- 18) The Janitor Part 1
- 19) Do you like the city?
- 20) Fitting In
- 21) Dream House
- 22) Janitor Part 2
- 23) White Babes in the City
- 24) Janitor Part 3
- 25) Steve Part 2
- 26) It Hurts
- 27) Puzzle piece
- 28) Janitor Part 4
- 29) Rocky Full Cast
- 30) Truth Reopened
- 31) Silent
- 32) Thoughts from the city
- 33) What am I

It Will Take Time

There are many dreams
that I have when I'm alone.
Dreams I wish were real
to people's heart and mind.

The world I live in
is so cold and damp.
It is not so nice
to much hate and other things.

Too many machines
that kill and destroy.
The noise they make fill the air
with screeches and tears.

I wish I could change it
to the way it was once.
Where people and the land
was once beautiful and pure.

Maybe someday I will leave
to live in a world
A world is happy, loving and more,
but that will take time.

This world could change,
but it will take time.
I know I must start with mine,
and you with yours.

Could you help too?

Misunderstandings

The hunter stopped in his tracks. He didn't know what to make of this pale, black-robed man who lay on the ground before him. He was dead, of that the hunter could be sure. The man had no possessions other than a small, square object. The hunter didn't know what it was, but he thought it must be important for the man to have died with it, so he took it with him. It didn't taste very good, so it wasn't food, and it wouldn't carry water worth a damn. But, he discovered that it would burn very well. He decided that he should save it and cherish it, burning only one piece at a time.

Months later this same hunter came across another of these men. A black-robed Jesuit Priest calling for help. He had caught his leg in some rocks and without the help of this dark-skinned stranger he surely would have been stuck there and starved to death.

Neither of them had tongues to speak the same language. In an effort to find words, the Jesuit pulled out his bible. The hunter's eyes lit up. He knew what this man was trying to say.

He pulled out his bible. The Jesuit smiled. Communication! Wanting to share with his new-found friend, the hunter gathered wood, tore two pages from his fire start and lit the fire--The first big misunderstanding.

I don't have to tell you what happened next. The rest is in your history books.

Before and After

I wonder why some people have negative images about the people down south? I mean there's nothing wrong with the, if you get to know them. It's like some people just think that they steal your money and run off leaving you with nothing. I mean I don't look at it that way, I look at it like we're both trying to interact with each other and they're trying so hard to listen to us. Only there's something blocking us from getting together..close. Oh well..

I still believe the old days and how people used to do things back when, but things have changed. We have to get used to it I guess.

White Babes from Hell

girl Aren't you exited

gal I don't know...

girl Where exactly is Norway House?

gal North, on the tip of one of those lakes.... you know.

girlsooo it's mostly Native, right?

gal yeah, I guess. Look we'll have to wait and see.

girl better pack the condoms.

gal what?

girl you heard me. besides, all those gorgeous Indian me, the dark complexion, chiseled faces, muscular..... and hey we ain't so bad.

gal You're way off base.

girl hot. I've been watching movies and pictures of Indians and the men are really hot. The muscles.. I guess that's from all the trapping and hard work they do.

gal Yeah. It's really hard to play bingo.

girl That's just the women.

gal ooh! so... the men go trapping, while the women play bingo.

girl yeah, I guess so.

gal Well, what about the kids?

girl Oh they play in the bushes I guess.

gal ooh, O.K. it all makes sense now.

girl no problem.

gal soo, how do you know all this

girl Like I said, I watch a lot of television . Oh and were taking Native Art right now in art class.

- gal Sure. Do you believe everything you see?
- girl Well, if it's believable.
- gal You should pay more attention to what's real, like on Main St. Now that's real.
- girl There are some cute guys there.
- gal sure the pimps, dealers and drunks
- girl Yeah, but that's the city
- gal The Indians in Norway House can't be that different from the ones passed out on Main. They're all Indians.
- girl So what's your point...they're still gorgeous.
- gal as far as I know they're slobs, they're gross. Look I don't even know if I want to go. You shouldn't be worried about getting pregnant.. more like getting expelled when we get drunk with them.
- girl Oh yeah! That'll be fun too.. We can have like a bush party
- gal At -40 Wake up dead?
- girl nooo, but... come on this is supposed to be fun.

They exit.

The Fort

NARR: The York Boats have just arrived at the Northern Fur trading company the bring goods from Winnepeg.

BEDELIA: Oh my! where am I?

KITA: You are at the Northern Fort here in Norway House, you like what you see?

BEDELIA: What a grand place! Yes I do, nice very nice!! I think I'll like teaching here.

EXIT: Eagle feather

EAGLE FEATHER: Tansi Mikisew Miquan nina. Awena ma gina ki tepwe tuckaquesquewin, ni nothde muswan.

BEDELIA: Excuse me? What did he just say?

KITA: He says his name is Eagle feather and that you are very pretty like the moon that hangs high in the night's sky. Oh! he asked for your name.

BEDELIA: Oh my, well thank you, I'm Bedelia...it's so flattering...Eagle feather, well hi! Nice name.

EAGLE FEATHER: Ke tepwe muki todoosiman tanti wekian.

KITA: He says that your smile warms his heart gladly that you came here to teach.

BEDELIA: Why, thank you very much...I know I'll enjoy it here...

EAGLE FEATHER: Gigon todaman dipeskaki na bidothdan kikwa akwa nabitan iskwatewapow.

KITA: He says that he would dream a thousand stars for you and you alone to walk with him in the beautiful sunset.

BEDELIA: Oh thank you! thank you how flattering, well I must go, I must, tell him I'll...see him tonight..

WALKS AWAY, TURNS BACK

BEDELIA: It would be better if we got to know each other a bit more....How about a stroll by the shore.

EAGLE FEATHER:(grins) Akwa ma! ka moskonow wi nowwa.

tonight with some whiskey.

KITA: He says that he would dream a thousand stars for you and you alone to walk with him in the beautiful sunset.

BEDELIA: Oh thank you! Thank you how flattering, well I must go, I must, tell him I would love to see him tonight....

WALKS AWAY, TURNS BACK

BEDELIA: It would be better if we got to know each other a bit more....How about a stroll by the shore.

EAGLE FEATHER:(grins) Akwa ma! ka moskonow wi nowwa.

TRANSLATER: Let's go then. Na! You don't want to know about that.

KITA: He said he would be glad to escort you on your small tour enough to know you and how you will love it.

BEDELIA: Well, why sure I'd love that! Well is he ready? tell him I'm ready for his guidance.

They both leave and disappear through the doorway smiling all of a sudden she screams and slaps Eaglefeather off stage and translater squints and Bedelia runs out.

It Happens...

Walking up the front stairs to the door I feel very uneasy and nervous. How will they be? How will they react. I feel like an alien.

Faces, left and right up and down all smiling, why? Who are they? I want to fall to the ground and laugh. I think their really over doing it, may as well throw a parade together to this point. I just give myself a mental slap and think let's get right down dirty serious. Who knows they could have been all this time having a conversation all about me, maybe even studying us Natives.

I quietly walk in. Casually everyone says hello, how are you? I just respond mannerly trying to be one of those lousy politicians I seen everyday on the news, ass kissing. They probably think every Native is the same.

Worshipping Buck-Naked Part 1

This is going to be hela. A friend of mine went to a sweat lodge once. Yeah, in Saskatchewan. You see, his mom's part Native, so they were at some gathering: a conference I think. He didn't actually go inside, though. His mom did. I can't remember it all, but she said this lodge thing has a pit with tons of hot coals.. or rocks.. whatever and ther are guys and girls on different sides around the pit, like a campfire, but it was completely dark, eh? My friend said the thing looked like a tent... a dome tent, you know what I mean? How did they all fit into It? She said it was hot. Scaldingly hot! Ooh, I wonder how hot this one is? What are we gonna have to do there?

Norway House The White Babes are going Shopping at the Bay Northern Store

girl so what are we supposed to buy?

gal I think bread, maybe they only sell that banoc stuff.

girl everyone is going to stare

gal I know , that's what that girl at the school said.

girl Isn't it going to bug you.

gal Why

girl Well, I know I feel very awkward with the whole situation.

gal people stare at me anyway.

girl That's because you're always behaving ridiculously.

gal So this'll be just the same.

girl No it won't! Don't you understand they're going to stare at you just because you're white.

gal It's the same

girl No it's not. Because everyone in the city is white. So no one cares. Here you're a minority. We've never been the minority before.

gal You're getting hysterical over this.. and it's nothing... so they stare.. make faces or stare back!

girl That's just inviting trouble.

gal then ignore it.

girl It makes me uncomfortable.

gal Holy shit you'd think you've never been looked at before.

girl this is different.

gal Is it? I mean is it really. they could be starring at you cause you're pretty-just like at home.. I mean it's not like they've never seen white people before. I mean we are not a phenomenon But We are weird and obnoxious.

Worshipping Buck Naked Part 2

What are we gonna have to do at this Sweat Lodge? Like, do we have to dance along or prick ourselves with hot needles? Well, I don't know what goes on it there! No one told me anything yet! I heard that there was one Native ceremony in which a boy has a piece of wood shoved through the skin on his back and then it would be nailed to a tree so he would be hanging.. dangling...in the air. Yeah, painful, eh? Well supposedly he'd be a man when his skin rips off and he falls to the ground. Ugh! It was something like that. Maybe it was ropes tied to the wood, cause I really can't see how.. anyways, I would never do that! No, I'm not a wimp, why ? Would you do that?!

Winter

The water is frozen over and I can hear the ice cracking as I step across. I'm scared, admittedly. It's a leap of faith for me. It takes faith to walk on the water.

(getting on) and (enter) I sat on the back of the skidoo my face was numb. We were going so fast over the ice of the lakes. I could see Orion and the Northern lights and that's what direction we were going. The ice under us, Orion up ahead and the trees and rocks all around. (getting off skidoo)

You drive.

Me? How do I do this?

This is the gas, this is the breaks.

Where 's the clutch? Where's park? Where's drive. Where are the seat belts?

(pointing) gas, brake, got it?

(embarrassed) O.K., I got it. Here goes. Two experts behind me, They don't know me or my driving record but they encourage. Drive... go... go ahead.

Ouch, dammit, I wish the driver, who ever she is would take it easy.

I drive around and around, Two Native girls with the courage to let me. I don't know where I'm going. The lake is so huge.

Suddenly, I see the clear sky. There are stars shinning brightly. I'm riding along this bump lake. I see the clear patches of ice.. Who is this person driving? Where is she going? Where are we going?

Where are we going?

Back to the cabin?

We passed it!

Where is it?

(pointing) Over there!

Damn, I'm lost in the dark in my own home town and it's freezing.

They know, they direct me back. (... and ... leave)
(... getting off skidoo, inspecting the tracks- it is the next morning)

In the Morning, I walk on the lake. Much less intimidating in daylight. I follow the tracks, mine I think. Then theirs... tracks they laid when they first came to meet us. Then back to the cabin. I reach the hill that meets the lake, heading up towards the steps. I see their skidoo tracks, I see my own. Each coming from different directions, but perfectly sumetrical. They meet and head up the hill together.

Worshipping Buck Naked Part 3

So it's like a steam room eh! What are we supposed to wear to this? He was saying we wear blankets or robes or something. No, it was towels over your underwear, right? What? We have to go naked? The boys can't wear anything? What do the girls wear? Blankets? How come they get blankets and we... I'm not going in naked! No way. Uh uh. I have to? Why? Look, I'm not going if I have to be buck nude in front of all of you!! , are you going naked? Yes? I don't care if it's going to be dark in there! I said I', not... Why are you laughing?... Oh, thanks.. Nice joke on me. Ha ha. Whatta knee slapper. Go ahead. Laugh. Oh shut up. They should sacrifice you to the hot coals. I know they don't do sacrifices, what, do you think I'm stupid.

White Babes at the Sweat with Buck Naked Guy

(two girls enter wrapped in a blanket, to give the effect that they have no clothes on)

Hey girls, come here...psst..over here!

Uh-uh, no way (both girls shake their heads)

Come on guys, everyone will see me! I'm in my underwear!

So, we have to be naked under here.

Yeah, tough shit.

I'm not sure if I want to do this, I've heard a lot of weird things about Native ceremonies.

One of the guys said it isn't that bad, you just have to cover your mouth.

(puzzled) Cover your mouth?

So you can breath, you know.. all the steam.

They're signaling me to come over...is that a hot poker he's got? Oh my God, what do I do?

(The Natives enter the stage and start to set up the sweat)

Go on stupid, they're opening the flap and men have to go in first.
enters sweat)

Isn't that kind of sexist?

That's the way their culture works.

Just like the drum practice we went to, I felt so bad. I wanted to play too.
It's not fair that only the men get to do all the neat stuff.

I don't know about this, I mean come on we're buck naked! All those guys in there.. are there going to be lights on?

Oh shit, they're calling us over!

(they follow the others into the sweat lodge)

The Sweat

(LIGHTS UP ON 3 OLD MEN SLEEPING ON RAFTERS. ONE WAKES UP AND LOOKS DOWN)

Grandfather 1 The Sweat Lodge is starting! Wake up you old farts.(no answer so he shakes them.) Come on get up! (cree_____)

(Grandfathers slowly wake up as sweat lodge participants enter. 2 white babes, the buck naked guy, and 2 native women.)

Grandfather 2 What's that?

Grandfather 3 Ah! Whiteman. What are they doing here? Who brought them?

Grandfather 1 It doesn't matter a sweat lodge is for everyone. It always has been.

Grandfather 3 Yeah well, when I was young, the sweat lodge was done with greater respect and...

Grandfather 2 Oh, I'm tired of hearing about when you were young. Things change. Live in the now!

Grandfather 3 Listen you old windbag..

Grandfather 1 Stop it (cree_____) Their about to begin. The flap is closing.

(Light Change)

Girl This is scary. What are we supposed to do anyway?

Gal I don't know. Just watch what everybody else does.

Girl- I can't believe they didn't have any where for us to change into these blankets. How embarrassing.

Gal At least we had that extra blanket from the guys. Oh! Look how all the guys are sitting. I guess we should do that.

(they sit cross-legged)

Girl 1 Native Don't do that! The fire! Close your legs and put your feet to the side.

Girl To distracting huh?(both girls snicker)

(light change -back on sweat- very dark)

(Natives are chanting silently, quietly mouthing the words so that dialogue can be heard)

White guy This is creepy, I feel so naked. If it wasn't for my Fruit of the Looms.

girl My father would absolutely kill me if she knew I was doing this.

Gal Its' too hot. It's hotter than when I went to the Bahamas last year. I think I'm going to pass out I, ...Oh...God...I (she drops over)

(Light change on Grandfathers)

Grandfather 3 Ha! White folks can't handle a sweat lodge. Too whimpy, that's what I say.. Now did I ever tell you guys about the time I got a hot rock from the fire under my but and I didn't flinch?

(other 2 grandfathers sneak away slowly)

Now that was strong willed let me tell you. Boy were we tough in those days (looks around. Hey guys! Oh come back, I was just getting to the good part. Guys.(exit

(BLACKOUT)

Levels of Thought

One of these days I'm going to drive a spike through this guys brain. He has great bright ideas his head glows like a light bulb that is maybe why he has great ideas. This guy has great diction, 'nor does he procrastinate. He speaks his mind. Guess who this is? A whiteman.

I recall, I report, I make comparisons and I re-create what am I but levels of thought. It's almost like "To be or not to be" What does that mean? Why am I asking? I should know... I'm levels of thought. How could have I stoop down to that level? What can I do but think?...level by level.

Opposites always happen, maybe that's a way of living. Paradox and Irony. Unexpected tragedies and humor always happening. When do we accomplish anything?

March 1992

Steve : PART 1

PART 1: STEVE

ACT II

Quietly sitting I think to myself whether or not to call Steve. Why? I ask myself. There isn't any apparent reason....

....So I call anyway, and he's doing nothing but playing the Nintendo. "Super Mario Brothers."

I think tomorrow is Friday. Should I go and visit Steve tomorrow after school? Will it be okay for me to go there? Something tells me the answer is going to be no. Why no? maybe because lately he's been having problems. What kind of problems? I wonder.

Tangled souls

*Voices retire to their silence
echoes plead to be heard
separation of need from our violence
leaves tangled souls to relearn.*

*Scathed by the edges of prdjudgement
scars left from the knives in our backs
shamed to a shame on shameful verdicts
breeds tangled souls to retract.*

chorus:

*I want to know why we sentence
ourselves to this hell.
I want to know why we start
these fires as well.
I want to know why we inflict
our pain onto others.
I want to know if you know
what I know.
That we are all in this together
now tell me how our tangled souls
will unwind.
When the gavel crashes blindly
to confine.
I want to know if we will ever try.*

*Defenses starve hungers inside
No one gets in but no one gets out to breathe.
Resolvemets, in only ourselves we will confide
Leave tangled souls in silent need.*

(repeat chorus)

Life

What is the purpose of life for billions?

who owns this world?

Walking, working, and war we still live on Earth together

Where will it take us?

Surrounded by billions

Who? is Who?

having my own life, and future to look forward to

only one in a billion.

Education to thrive on only

one in a billion who has the same education

stepping on anyone and everyone to get to the top

why? money...Power.

What era are we in?

Scientific, Space age, religious

billions of minds we have no idea

minds cover the face of the Earth.

Light, sound, and speed is what this world needs

light to see each other, where dark wars killed millions,

sound to hear each others needs, not ignoring,

and speed to educate the thought of people

young and old that the Earth is crumbling.

A Janitor at a High School

Y' know ya put a cat and a dog in the same room together... hope they'll get along.. doesn't always happen. They're different, y'know? Not unless ya raise 'em t'gether from birth.. then they dunno the difference. A cat's a cat, dog's a dog- can't live together... Tell Ya... ya never see the eggs with the potadoes at the grocery store- oil and wadder.. don't mix.. don' t add up, y'know, No use pretending it does.

Do You Like the City

Most people in the North don't like the city, they are tied up in their ways, it's respectable but hey this is the 90's.

Sure I believe in my ways and have great respect for who I am and love my culture and heritage, but I like the 90's too.

The city is a great place to be, the lights, the action, the fun, the whole shebang. Oh, I can't wait to go there again, Just being on the street makes me feel good, you know it's ...um... well.. It's just makes me feel good.

Fitting In

It was really strange you know? I didn't know any one and they didn't know me either. I felt like I was different, like everyone was starring at me. There was this group of girls in the corner and I really wanted to go talk to them. I was all by myself. One of the girls looked at me and said something to her friends. Then they all giggled. I think they were laughing at my clothes, I'm not sure. If this was what it would be like the entire time then I didn't want to be here at all.

Then someone tapped my shoulder. I turned around and he was smiling at me.

" c'mon," he said, " come over here with us." I stopped shaking and I think I actually started to enjoy myself.

When I think about is now, maybe people weren't starring at me. All I needed was that one smile. Just that one little boy to take my hand and let me play with him. I'll never forger that day: My first day of Kindergarten

Dream House

(Melinda sitting on a Mime box)

Hello? Oh shit.. hi James.. What are you drunk or something? Guess what? I'm sitting in this teacher's house... Na, it doesn't look like any of the teacherages back home.

I mean this house is filled with all this fancy furniture. And the walls have these really antique looking pictures nailed to em. It almost looks like, you know the show Dallas? The South Fork Mansion. Don't change the subject James, listen you can't even find a single piece of garbage anywhere or a faint piece of dust. She is so neat and tidy.

Yea, yea, James not now, I don't want to hear about Metallica. Her Kids rooms are so cute! Avril, that's her daughter. She has like walls with wallpaper on them. And her furniture is all white. She has all these dolls sitting on her dresser. All the little drawings that she drew are hanging beside her bed.

Quit that! I'm not in Elvis Presley's Castle... very funny.. ha ha.. Elvis Presley was not a teacher. Well you haven't got a clue...

Damn it.. I thought you would at least care.. Okay fine... Goodbye...

Janitor part 2

Y'know, they try an' put this Native kid in our school...it's like cats an dogs, ...did I mention that before... why can't they leave 'em at their own schools? they got no respect for property, I heard of a school.. got a whole bus load O' those Native kids...Pretty soon.. stuff started to disappear... Right out of the wall! Broken windows, dented lockers..drop out rate...Ppheew...and they hadda call in the cops for problems.alls I can say is ..I don't wanna be responsible for that kind a crap...Natives in a white school..Next thing y'know they'll try an' cross breed an ape with an elephant.

White Babes in the City

(Two girls sitting watching t.v. phone rings)

- girl Hello?.....uh-huh.....when?.....oh! sure, we'll think of something...yeah,
No, she's here....yeah, I will, o.k. bye
(hangs up)
- gal Who was that?
- girl Miss M.
- gal Yeah? What'd she want?
- girl The Norway House gang is coming next week.
- gal So?
- girl Well we gotta plan something for them to do.
- gal We'll go to the Forks.
- girl Nah!
- gal Museum?
- girl Nah!
- gal Bowling?
- girl Bowling!
- gal I was think about something fun, something cultural.
- girl How about a church?
- gal That's cultural, but it's not us...something that really shows us in the city.
- girl Yeah, yeah....think...think....fun!
- (Pause- girl stares blankly at gal)
- gal Oh, c'mon, there has to be something.
(they start to pace room)
- girl I know a social.

- gal Well.....I don't want them to see how lame it is here, for us and besides we shouldn't get drunk. I wouldn't want to be responsible for that.
- girl To bad we couldn't go skidding.
- gal Yeah. Look we gotta do something that means something, something that we look forward to...There has to be something.. They took us to a sweat, a Pow Wow. It was amazing.
- girl Look, I'm going to shoot myself if we can't think of anything to that's important.
- gal Exciting
- girl something cultural
- gal spiritual
- girl orgasmic
- gal Yeah something that says something about us.

Janitor Part 3

Now what did I tell ya? One month he been here an I'm already scrapin' more from the walls than I have in a year. Geez.. one bad apple spoils a pie...Y'know what I mean? They ain't caught 'em yet, but they will...or I will...I know these Native kids... I've had to get hoodlums before.. At the school before this I was lookin' for some who kept tearin' out the garden in front..I got a good eye an' I knew e'd get em. My mother had good eyes, she could spot the ice cream truck a mile of...tut...too bad she wasn't blind. I would have got a hell of a lot more ice cream.

Anyway, the hoodlum? turned our to be some mangy poodle from the other side of the tracks.. Man I hate dogs! Stupid animals! I kept 'im for a while tho'...gus...turned out he know a few tricks... then the damn thing went out an' gor flattened by a bus! What can ya' do?

part 2 Tuth Re-opened

Nothing to say, nothing to do.

I live in a paradoxical North. A place that is filled with sceneries of sapphire blue skies, emerald green grasses, aquamarine lakes and rivers. To enhance it's beauty are the neatly arrayed trees, dominating the mute and breathtaking picture.

There is another picture of the north you know, I see human dignity erased from ones soul. It is the foul dismal atmosphere of the bar room. This other picture is humiliating me for what I stand for.

The frail man slowly approaches with his hand held out to greet me. His slurred speech torments my patience. I refuse to listen to this monotone. "Give me a smoke", it only poisons his deteriorating body. "But me a beer", it only drowns his shame. "Give me a dollar", it robs him of his humanity.

I am continually proplexed by the nature of my people and what they are doing to themselves. Is there anything to justify all this? I don't think so. It is too deep, it is too strong. My status and race haunt me daily, as I search endlessly for my identity.

Like the beauty of nature, our lives slowly fade away.

It Hurts

In my culture, the mouse represents the Native people. Humble, but sometimes too humble. It's a painful feeling because I see my people are dying spiritually, the new way pushing out the old way. This happens to everyone.

I see us as the buffalo gone from the plains. I read somewhere that once the buffalo stood for their land. They were the most abundant animals, they were one with nature and the Earth.

We are like the fox trapped in a cage, waiting to be hunted down, running wildly with no place to hide. Scared to be destroyed.

I see us as the mouse, humble, sometimes we think too low of ourselves. We run away when faced with an enemy. But, we do survive and pick the crumbs of those above us and more powerful. We do become stronger somehow, strong enough to break all stereotypes. Stand for our rights.

As one big race we grow day by day aware of the changes that must be made.

Coming back to the mouse, I read somewhere that Ghandi said " What you do may seem insignificant but it is very important that you do it."

Nothing is so strong as our determination and nothing is as powerful as our pride.

Puzzle Piece

Ok., So I'm white, But what does that mean? I am an individual, but I feel like a single piece that doesn't fit the rest of the puzzle. I'm a mix of too many backgrounds. A major cross-breed.

I know you feel like you're losing your culture, but I've never had any to begin with. You've danced the Pow-Wow for hundreds of years, I dance to whatever is popular today; but tomorrow it will be a new song. That's how deep my culture runs.

You are also a single piece. You can be an individual. But when you want to you can fit into the rest of your puzzle. It's always there and it's nailed down for you. I don't have that option. Because whenever I think I've found my puzzle, the table get knocked over and the pieces scatter. I can't fit in with my people, because I don't know who my people are.

Janitor part 4

I know.. you're wondering why the walls are so clean, eh? Well, I caught hem..some white punk, Imagine that! His father's my sister's lawyer even! He was at his locker and I saw a bunch of paint cans...I couldn't believe my eyes..I mean...kids are brought up not to do this...our kids that is.. so I spied on 'im an sure enough... He did his dirty work before he went to class I coulda sworn it was a Native Kid! I almost had 'im.. I thought.. ah, who's thinking anyway. but I still don't trust 'im, y'know. That lawyer's kid's rare.. Never woulda guessed.. But the Native? Well if it's not graffiti in'll be something else.. the atmosphere. just not the same y'know? It's like a stain on a white sock. Only one slip up an he won't come back.. tha't jes how it works. I mean, I told that stupid mutt not to run across the street. I screamed at him an 'ee did it anyway, dumb animal

Rocky Horror Pix Show Scene

(are seated in one row in a movie theatre)

- I don't think I want to stay.

- Come on. You have to.

Why?

Look, your sweat was... well we really got to experience something incredible from your culture. Give us a chance.

Well, it sounds great.

- Did you bring the toast?

Yeah, newspaper, water pistols.

- I've got the rice and... toilet paper. Shit, I forgot the rubber gloves.

The what?

You'll see. (She lets out a maniacal giggle)

- Did you waterproof your leather jacket? Jeez, we should have warned you.

- What?

So, are you ready for this?

- I...guess so. (She laughs nervously)

(starts to draw a V on 's face)

What are you doing?

You're a virgin, aren't you?

- That's none of your business.

No, no, you see a virgin is a person who hasn't seen *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*... oh, it's starting now!

- ONE, TWO, THREE START THE MOVIE!
FOUR, FIVE, SIX; FORGET THE MOVIE, START THE

- What the..?

(All of the native attendees are in shock at this. Al squirms in his seat. and both look at each other, Roy after a few seconds gives a nervous laugh that becomes joyous

✓

after a bit)

1- Now, you have to throw this when I tell you. Anyways, I know you guys won't know what to say after each line but... oh, here we go!

2- SLUT!!!!...ASSHOLE!!!

1- Slut!

2- ^{or - Awright} A little late...! but you're catching on!

3- I can't believe the whole theatre's doing this!

4- (sinking into his seat) Oh my god.

5- The story doesn't matter that much, just listen for the jokes. How do you like it so far?

6- I...

7- I don't think...

8- It's okaaayyy!

9- Loosen up. Take those sicks out of your butts!

10- Ready with the water? Remember, into the air.

11- Okay! (Mel shifts in his seat. Mel notices this and immediately gets up and starts shooting his gun into the air. The white attendees look at him in surprise and Mel grabs his arm and sits him down)

12- (chanting) DOESN'T RAIN IN CARS AND CASTLES!!

(The native attendees look around in shock that everybody has chanted the same thing)

13- (laughing) Don't worry. They're not angry. It's all part of the fun.

14- Whoa! The newspapers!

(The W.A. put the newspaper they have over their heads. The N.A. look at them in bewilderment. Mel gets up with him and they start shooting water into the air. The N.A. quickly put the papers over their heads in reaction to this. After a bit, T and R sit back down, laughing. Mel looks at the soaked condition of her jacket and starts wiping it off. Mel helps. Mel looks a bit pissed off but retains her cool attitude)

15- Oh, that wuz great! You guys o-tay?

(Lilli continues to wipe off her jacket. Roy smiles at her. Alfred shakes head; lets out a silent 'oh god' and puts the paper back over his head)

Roy- This is cool?!

Alfred- Is this what the movie's like the whole way through?

Roy- Well... something like that... you never know what to expect. (She lets out another maniacal giggle)

Alfred- (giggles) oh dear.

Roy- What's next?

Alfred- Time warp. Where we all get up and dance up on the front of the stage.

Roy- How does it go?

Alfred- It's just a jump to the left...oh. well the story tells you.

Roy- , are you ready to do this?

(no response from behind the newspaper. Music starts. Roy joins in willingly as the W.A. run up to dance, but hesitates lookin back at N.A. N and M try at first. Roy fumbles but gets it. Alfred is still under the paper in his seat)

Roy- I feel like a retard.

Alfred- Come on, lets go. I gotta use the bathroom.

(As N and M exit, Roy takes a step to join them but then comes back. Song ends Roy looks around; wanders back to sit with Alfred)

Roy- So, what did you think of it?

Alfred- It was boring.

Roy- (looking at who's left) What does it take? I mean we've tried everything.

Alfred- Oh well. No wonder they got bored. The quality of the film sucked. You couldn't really follow the story.

Roy- They didn't try.

(Exeunt except)

Voices in the dark

Trying very hard to speak, I have many ideas there's don't make sense, they only bring destruction to this groups roots, and failure in front of many eyes.

Why do they do this to there selves when I know as a fact they can do better by a millenium. Why do we fail so many times? Planned in the roots of confederation it began scatter the natives, block their communication, and still to the very day it is effective scattered over the nation. Has these whites completely dominated this world that was once ours. Little are we allowed to say what happens on our own land, that only in our eyes can bring destruction and defeat. Why does this happen? Were our ancestors too trusting?, or is it now, are we too patient?

The mouth of the whites are loud, and clear. Concise to the point where the native gets confused and agrees only hearing the good and not the bad. When the natives speak to the government it is only through the means of words not voice, this is where the natives lack their concise point, then the government fails to see the point, and we are again ignored.

<Monologue>

Silent

*I See you a flower
bold in your beauty
silent in will*

*The winds come in torrents
tear you from rooted freedom
your silent still*

(chorus)

*But I
in all my wondering
can't seem to catch words
that spill from my heart
and I
feel for your injustice
but it's hard to hold your hand
so far from the place
where you stand*

*I see you a wild fowl
caged in a map of buildings
and metal trees*

*I hear you a white owl
speaking of alienation
how can this be...*

(chorus)

City Culture

Culture is great. Culture gives you a sense of belonging that quells the overpowering fear of insecurity, but you have to adopt its sets of values. I need individuality. The city life gives it to me. In the city I can mold myself into any thing I want without conforming. That's freedom, pure in essence.

Where's the Beef

Remember those Wendy's commercials, Where's the Beef?
What's the point of eating a hamburger if its not really there?
Is that what culture is? Look at teenagers wearing Madonna, reading teen magazines, listening to Right said Fred and then, you're expected to marry some putz, have a few brats, buy a car and start worrying about a mortgage?! And my sheets should match my wallpaper.

Where's the beef in that? If I can't know myself because of all the people around me treating me the way I'm "supposed" to be. If that's what culture is I don't want it!

Canadian Eh!

I am a Canadian, I'm free. Oh so they tell me. At least I'm not an American. Then I'd be patriotic, probably. There is no patriotism in me. I'm not a country, nationality or anything like that. I'm upset about a lot of things in this country, like the way they run it. The poor die and the rich thrive. And in Winnipeg nobody's doing well. Because everybody's killing somebody. We have a reputation for that all across the country. Wanna scare somebody away? Mention you're from here. I never knew these things before, I never knew how ignorant I was. You think you watch the news and that's enough. Well, I guess I forgot that it was censored.

Why is everyone in such a rut. Remember when everyone was searching for themselves? I guess they didn't find anything!

WHO AM I?
FIRST TIME IN SWEAT.
BY

STANDING OUTSIDE THE LODGE.

NIK: (Thinking to myself)

Great? I'm wearing a nightgown and I got this dumb towel. I'm freezing and blind as a bat. I feel naked, utterly naked!

GRANDFATHERS: Come in. Sit with us.

NIK: (Sitting inside the lodge.)

It's hot in here? Alright, my late and great grandfathers if you are listening. Please forgive me for not understanding the old ways. It will take time. So I will talk to you, here and now. Everything feels different and hot, yet interesting. I feel like I am in my mother's womb where it is hot and dark. I feel like I am underground.... But it is not cold. Talk to me, grandfathers, that I may understand.

ROUND ONE IS FINISHED AND DOORS OPEN.

NIK: Grandfathers, are we done?

GRANDFATHERS: No. There is still more.

DOORS CLOSE AND IT IS DARK AGAIN

NIK: Grandfathers I am frightened by this whole thing. It is very scary. I feel a chill on my right side. Is someone breathing on me? I don't like it. Get me out here please! I'm asking you. (Tears are coming down) Please!

ROUND TWO IS OVER. DOORS OPEN.

NIK: Grandfathers, are you there?

GRANDFATHERS: Don't be scared. Continue!

DOORS CLOSE AGAIN, IT IS DARK.

NIK: Grandfathers, I don't know if you are there. If you are real, you will know that I feel utterly lost. Grandfathers, Do you know who I am? What am I? Do I belong here? Please...give me the answers. (Fist clenched)

GRANDFATHERS: You are my grandchild, and Indian who has been leading a different life which you do not understand. You are not lost. You are with us. Now continue my child.

DOORS OPEN. THIRD ROUND IS OVER.

DOORS CLOSE AND DARKNESS IS SURROUNDING US.

NIK: Grandfathers, I think I know you love us all. You held your head up high long ago and still do today. I would love to know all your names, and what you did before. I need to know how it was like when you were a young man. Today I feel angry at the government for taking away our traditional customs such as the sundance and other ceremonies. I am an Indian I know that! But I am lost due to the stupid laws and policies. Changes in technology and in society frighten me. I need answers. I need your guidance to help me, please! (putting my head on my knees.)

GRANDFATHERS: We cannot tell you our names. We cannot tell you where you are heading. You, alone, have to make that decision for yourself.

FOURTH ROUND IS OVER AND THE DOORS OPEN.
(getting out of the lodge and breathing the cool air.)
TALKING TO MY GRANDFATHERS OUTSIDE THE SWEAT LODGE.

NIK: (Talking to myself.)

Grandfathers, are you still there? Somehow I feel you near me, YOU know what? I feel new! Born again! More Indian! Free! Like I am riding on a spirit horse and flying across the beautiful sky and never coming back!
(I lift my hands towards the sky sensing that someone is holding them.)

GRANDFATHERS: Grandchild, I know how you feel. You feel like the wind that blows across these endless skies. My child I will always hold your hand so whenever you fall, you will not fall so hard. You will not see me see me until the day is right to join us. For now, feel proud of who you are ... inside and around you.

I LOOK AT THE SKY FOR A FEW MOMENTS. I CAN HEAR THEM SINGING
I SMILE AND WALK AWAY.

Appendix B

Letters of Permission

Winnipeg, Manitoba
R

February 8, 1993

Chief Superintendent
Frontier School Division
1402 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 3G5

Dear Mr. [redacted],

My thesis ethics committee requires written permission from you to use the various material gathered last year in order to assist me in the completion of my thesis.

The subject of the study for my thesis is "A descriptive study of the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project involving students from two distinct cultures". In other words the purpose of my thesis is to describe the playwriting exchange that took place from October - May, 1992 between students from [redacted] and [redacted] High School.

The materials I intend to use in order to describe the process include proposals, correspondence, journals, and original student writings. The product-outcome will be illustrated by the final student script and performance. In addition others reaction include media clips, letters, and project members videod reflection on the process. All video materials will be destroyed upon acceptance of the thesis. As the project has already been completed my only remaining tasks are to gain permission from Frontier School Division to use these materials to write the thesis.

All data and findings from the study will be reported in an anonymous form and the confidentiality of all responses is guaranteed, as names will not be used in the reporting of any results.

Once the study is completed, and the thesis written, I will be pleased to provide a summary of its result; the school library will also have a copy of the complete thesis.

Please forward a letter stating your approval for my use of data generated in the Frontier School division.

Anticipating your early response, I extend thanks in appreciation for your time and effort.

Yours truly,

Kayla Maister

Winnipeg, Manitoba
R

February 8, 1993

Teacher Participant

Norway House, Manitoba
ROB 1B0

Dear colleague,

Greetings! I hope that you are able to find sufficient time to act upon a small, yet important request from myself. My thesis ethics committee requires written permission from you to use various materials gathered last year in order to assist me in writing the thesis.

The subject of my thesis is "A descriptive study of the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project involving students from two distinct cultures". In other words the purpose of my thesis is to describe the playwriting exchange between [redacted] and Norway House students that you took part in last year.

The materials I intend to use to describe the process include proposals, correspondence, journals, and original student writings. The product-outcome will be illustrated by the final student script and performance. In addition other reactions include media clips, letters, and project members videoed reflection on the process.

As the playwriting exchange has already been completed my only tasks are to gain permission from all participants to use these materials to write the thesis.

All data and findings from the study will be reported in an anonymous form and the confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. All video materials will be destroyed upon acceptance of the study.

Once the study is complete, and the thesis written, I will be pleased to provide a summary of its result. If you are interested the [redacted] school library will have a copy of the complete thesis.

Thank you

Yours truly,

Winnipeg, Manitoba

R:

February 8, 1993

_____, Student Participant

Winnipeg, Manitoba

R:

Dear Toby,

I am working on completing my thesis project as partial fulfillment for my Masters Degree in Education. The subject of the study for my thesis is "A descriptive study of the process and product of a collaborative playwriting project involving students from two distinct cultures". In other words the purpose of my thesis is to describe the playwriting exchange between _____ and Norway House students that you took part in last year.

As a student participant in the above project, I need your permission in the form of a signature to use various material gathered last year in order to assist me in writing the thesis. The materials I intend to use in order to describe the process include proposals, correspondence, journals, and original student writings. The outcome will be illustrated by the final student script and performance. In addition other reactions include media clips, letters, and your videod reflection on the process.

All data and findings from the study will be reported in an anonymous form and the confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. All video materials will be destroyed upon acceptance of the thesis.

As the project has already been completed my only remaining tasks are to gain permission from all participant to use materials and to write the thesis. If you wish to withdraw any information from the project please contact me at _____ as soon as possible.

Once the study is complete, and the thesis written, I will provide a summary of its results. If you are interested the _____ school library will also have a copy of the complete thesis.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Kayla Maister

Signature of consent _____

Date _____

Appendix C

Proposals and Activities

SPECIAL PROJECT PROPOSAL
RE: CROSS-CULTURAL DRAMATURGE EXCHANGE
1991/92 SCHOOL YEAR

Principles: [redacted], Drama Teacher, [redacted] High School
Kayla Maister, Drama Teacher, [redacted]
[redacted], Dramaturge Manitoba Association Playwrites

4 grade 11/12 students from [redacted] High School
4 grade 11/12 students from [redacted]

Background:

Subsequent to four years of appearances at the High School Drama Festival the participating students of the [redacted] High School have displayed measurable development in their levels of personal confidence as well as performance competence. The program's director too has grown in his skill levels.

While many avenues in the theater have been explored, including recent expansions in stage technology. One area remains yet uncharted - namely student authorship related to stage ready scripting. This is a critical skill area since along with this student ability will emerge self-sufficiency and flexibility in drama programming. It is assumed that by developing student comfort and competence in script preparation one very critical element of drama production will be liberated into students hands.

This experiment has been successfully conducted by many high school drama departments. [redacted] Collegiate and [redacted] Collegiate are two such Winnipeg high schools. In both cases student writing is being supervised and brought to the stage under the nurturing of advanced (305 Drama) programming and instruction. In the latter case [redacted] students have the additional support of a professional Playwrite, [redacted] through the generosity of the Artists in the School Program. Needless to say the quality of such a Dramaturge has generated student work of superior quality and interest.

Being a small school, [redacted] High has neither the population to offer such an advanced 305 Drama Course nor do we have the direct and convenient access to the professional support and/or advise.

...../2

Page 2
Special Project Proposal

Following long discussions with _____ and _____ (the playwright) we believe that we can overcome these obstacles and deliver a top quality playwriting program to select _____ students at minimal costs. Also well within reasonable guidelines as suggested by existing Department of Education programming - namely the 300 English Transactional credit. This proposal is an attempt to show how this is possible.

Program Goals:

1. To pilot a student/teacher/dramaturge exchange program for the purpose of developing a cooperative, hopefully cross cultural student script and;
2. to initiate this writing process through intensive student interpersonal experiences, data collection and discussion and;
3. to facilitate the writing process through to the ideal stage of publication. Hopefully even performance and;
4. to share the final student product (writer script or stage ready play) at the 1992 School Drama Festival.

Rationale:

In accomplishing these goals the intrinsic value of the exchange process ought to be abundantly clear for the students as well as teachers. The interacting of two communities, north and south, native and non native, urban and rural, professional and amateur ought to generate limitless, creative writing opportunities as well.

The above remarks imply an abundance of intrinsic gains through the implementation of this program. Here is a list of some of this program's more concrete benefits:

- i) an opportunity for select.(_____) students to complete a challenging 300 level transactional English credit and;

Page 3
Special Project Proposal

- ii) the use of resulting materials such as student journals, photos, videos, audio recordings, drafts, minutes and/or scripts as resources in other language or drama courses and;
- iii) student career exploration and;
- iv) public interest and/or public relation stories related to cross-cultural and problem solving.

Suggested Timeline and Student Activities:

1. Initiation: September/91

Program to commence with student selection and student planning workshops to be held in home schools of High and in September 1991. This segment to be conducted by residence teachers.

Participating students and teachers can prepare autobiographical materials as well as community profiles to be exchanged prior to first meetings. Students will be encouraged to be creative in this initiation process. The materials generated and exchanged ought to be audio, visual, literally and perhaps even of the "curious-artifactual" variety, ie: pet rocks, feathers, etc.

2. First Meeting, October 1991: Visit to Norway House

..... students, and will drive up to Norway House and "move-in-with the school and community". Students twinned with fellow students and adults with other colleagues (where possible).

Recommend length of stay - 4 school days and perhaps one weekend. Part of this visit ought to include a whole group camping trip (perhaps two nights) to Molson Lake.

...../4

✓

Page 4
Special Project Proposal

During this stay visiting students will be encouraged to collect data using a variety of methods. Both conventional as well as creative data collection techniques will be encouraged.

Opportunities for group meetings as well community interfacing will be fostered (ie: visits to Pinaow Wachi- elders, meetings with Community leaders etc.) wherever and whenever possible.

3. Second Meeting, November 1991: Visit to _____

On this second gathering Norway House students and staff will travel to Winnipeg and become involved in "equivalent" community experiences. Rather than visiting the wilderness for example; a joint trip to the theater or ballet might be regarded as equivalent.

During this meeting more intensive focus will be brought to the writing process and task at hand. Ideas will be shared and/or discussed under the leadership of (_____). At the conclusion of this visit decisions will be made and/or directions planned for a rough script draft based upon the overlapping ideas, observations and/or concerns held by students.

From this point the on going writing tasks and deadlines will be suggested by the Dramaturge whose inputs will determine the precise times and activities leading towards a third and final group play writing conference to be held in some neutral location, ie: retreat in, perhaps, January.

4. Final Meeting, January 1992: A Writer's Retreat

Students, teachers and play write will meet in some neutral retreat situation for the purpose of script editing, articulating script ideas, improving scene possibilities and reaching consensus on final product.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION*Playwriting Program/Cross Cultural Dramaturge Exchange*1. CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

Student's age range from 15 - 17 year olds. Many of the students are non-attenders, often drop-outs who do not fit into the traditional streams of education. Some are enrolled in our Creative Arts Diploma Program. All students are multi-ethnic and from varying socio-economic backgrounds.

2. PURPOSE OF PROGRAM, PROCEDURE & METHOD

Playwriting is a vehicle for exploring the problems and solutions of real life. It helps the personality to self-realization by educating the emotions and stimulating the intellect. The course "Playwriting" developed at _____ has been implemented into our Creative Arts Program as an option for students. This is its third successful year with 34 students enrolled this year. In the course of one semester (5 months), students learn to develop their creative imagination, build confidence and develop critical thinking through the process of writing and workshopping a complete play. This year we have also developed a cross-cultural writing project for the advanced students. Students from _____ and _____ School will join together to collaborate on a play dealing with the problems that native and non-native groups have to deal with. The finished project will be performed at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival in May 1992. The interacting of two communities, North and South, native and non-native, urban and rural, will generate limitless creative writing opportunities, develop creative imagination, concentration and group cooperation.

3. METHODS and PROCEDURES FOR COLLABORATIVE WRITING PROJECT

1] Participating students will prepare autobiographical materials as well as community profiles to be exchanged prior to our first playwriting meetings. Students will be encouraged to be creative in this initiation process. Materials will be generated and exchanged.

2] November - First Meeting and Visit to Norway House

Students from West Kildonan Collegiate, myself, and Artist in the Schools' Playwright, Rick Chafe will travel to Norway House to join with Ed Braun, English Teacher, and his students to begin creative writing, develop relationships and learn about each other's culture.

December - Second Meeting - Visit to

Students from Norway House will travel to Winnipeg to become involved in "Equivalent Community" experiences. Writing continues.

January - Final Meeting - A Writer's Retreat

Students, teachers and playwright will meet for the purpose of script editing, articulating script ideas and improving scene possibilities.

March - Play Building Development Stage

Casting of script and collaborating with Creative Arts Department on music additions and multi-media input. Performances of the original script will take place in May in various schools and at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival.

THE DRAMA FESTIVAL: MAY 1992 PRESENTATION

Whatever product outcomes generated by this process ie: Stage ready play and/or cross-cultural workshop on playwriting will be shared with all participants at the Spring Drama Youth Festival in May 1992.

Workshops will also be set up with the Manitoba Drama Educators on the process of playwriting in the schools and the exchange program.

5. EVALUATION

It is assumed that since this project is being jointly run and involved the collaboration of a third party (professional) the evaluation procedure will be a three way consultation.

Judgements concerning technical quality and style will be largely left to the playwright dramaturge. Students however will have a high degree of involvement in content choices such as theme, settings, conflicts, etc. Playwriting credit component of the grading for the project will be done by myself and based on all levels of students performance throughout the duration of the course. Final grade will be determined in part by final product assessment conducted by myself as well as my colleagues and students.

PROGRAM MONITORING

Log books/journals are required by each student to record reactions and emotions.

Development stages and classroom activity will be videotaped for other interested teachers. The entire project will be documented in my Master's Thesis to be completed in May, 1993. A sample curriculum will be developed for the possibility of widespread application.

6. GENERAL COMMENTS

Writing and developing a play can be one of the most exciting and joyful activities a student can ever undertake. If you are a creative person (and most people find that they are, once their creativity has been stimulated) you have an inborn need to communicate, not facts and figures, but something of yourself. Writing a play give students an opportunity to show other people what their world is like, as they see it. It has been for me the most challenging and rewarding teaching experience. I have learned more from my students and they from each other than any other course I have taught at West Kildonan Collegiate.

7. IS THIS A NEW and INNOVATIVE IDEA?

A playwriting curriculum has not yet been developed in Manitoba. Other provinces have included playwriting as part of their English/Drama program and there is limited material available. Many students are interested in exploring their own lives and searching for answers. Through the process and techniques of playwriting, students succeed at completing a play but most importantly they can achieve personal growth and self awareness.

8. SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS

Available or suitable plays at the high school level are limited. Plays on social issues or subject matter relevant to teenagers is essential. In developing a playwriting course, students write plays which help them see the world through their own eyes. They learn to deal with problems they have to face. Through the writing process, students can be encouraged to share their values and views of the world. It is an alternative way of unlocking students creative potential via other vehicles than the traditional process.

PROGRAM GOALS*General Playwriting course*

- ◆ To develop an awareness and understanding of others
- ◆ To help further develop the individual through the understanding of her/himself in relationships with others
- ◆ To develop creative thinking and problem solving
- ◆ To increase knowledge of other cultures and societies
- ◆ To develop language skills
- ◆ To learn the concepts and techniques necessary for playwriting
- ◆ To develop personal growth and critical thinking
- ◆ To learn to become more sensitive to other people's problems
- ◆ To help students look at their own lives and experiences and share those with others

SPECIAL PROJECT - Cross Cultural Dramaturge Exchange
School/

- ◆ The interacting of two communities, native and non-native, will generate limitless creative writing opportunities
- ◆ The development and performance of the finished script will increase self-confidence, build sensitivity to the thoughts and feelings of others and encourage commitment and problem solving
- ◆ To further extend curriculum goals in the English/Drama Department at
- ◆ To help build a cultural dialogue between our students and students from Northern Manitoba
- ◆ To increase students knowledge of other communities and build a broader sensitivity towards other ethnic cultural differences
- ◆ To break down barriers that exist between students

ITINERARY

January 29th, 30th, 31st and February 1st

URBAN LIFESTYLES

- Wednesday, January 29th - Pot Luck Dinner -
- Thursday, January 30th - Mainstream Day
 9:00 - 11:30 - Workshop and Lunch
 12:00 - Management Consultant Tour/
 Peat, Warwick, Stevenson & Kellogg
 Tour
 1:00 - Old Dutch Tour
 2:00 - Forks - Uptown Gallery
 - Richardson Building
 - Winnipeg Square
 - Portage Place Mall
 3:30 - Super Value
 3:30 - Car Pool
 5:00 - Dinner at Kayla's
 8:30 - Prairie Theatre Exchange - "The Raft"
- Friday, January 31st - Alternative Day
 10:00 - 1:00 - Workshop
 1:00 - Mrs. Lipton's Restaurant
 2:00 - Sue's Studio
 - The Bolshevik Gallery
 - Theatre Project's Rehearsal of
 Job's wife
 - Exchange District - Card Reading
 - Shopping at Rag Pickers
 6:00 - Progressive Dinner (optional)
 8:00 - MTC - Not wanted on the Voyage
 or Al Simmon's Vandville Show
- Saturday, February 1st - Multi Cultural Day
 10:00 - 11:00 - Shaarey Zedek Synagogue
 11:00 - King Street Tour
 - Ellice Avenue Tour
 12:00 - Selkirk Avenue
 1:00 - Lunch at Alicia's
 Restaurant
 2:00 - 5:00 - Workshop at Toby's/Alana's
 6:00 - 8:00 - Free Time
 8:00 - Continue Workshop



STUDENT LANGUAGE PROJECT

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THANK-YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN
THE GRADE 12 INTER-SCHOOL PLAY-
WRITING OPTION PROJECT.

High School and High School in Winnipeg are involved in a grade 12 playwriting course that allows 5 students from each school to participate in a cultural exchange and joint writing program.

As part of the course they visit the partner community to learn as much as they can about the people, culture, beliefs, heritage and lifestyles of the people. The object is to understand as fully as possible where they are both coming from and then to collaborate on a play or scenes that express their feelings and develop what they have learned.

In order to help these young people realize their goals in this project we have asked for your help in participating in a panel discussion to try and give them various viewpoints on the following question:

"WHAT FACTORS DO YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND IN ORDER TO DEAL CONSTRUCTIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY WITH THE REALITIES OF OUR TWO CULTURES?"

We would appreciate it if you could prepare brief statements on each of the following points to present in the panel discussion:

1. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON YOURSELF
2. YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH LIVING IN 2 CULTURES
3. YOUR OPINIONS WITH REGARDS TO THE ABOVE QUESTION
4. YOUR ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE OF BOTH CULTURES

will moderate the panel. It will take place in the Publishing Centre at School at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 29.

If you have any questions, please direct them to at
or to

Thanks again for your help.

Appendix D

Letters of Support and Media Clips



PRESENTED TO

CERTIFICAT DÉCERNÉ À

by par
 His Excellency Son Excellence
 The Right Honourable le très honorable

RAMON JOHN HNATYSHYN

P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Q.C. C.P., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., C.R.

Governor General of Canada Gouverneur général du Canada

In recognition of the excellence of
 your original and imaginative work
 in the exploration of the theme

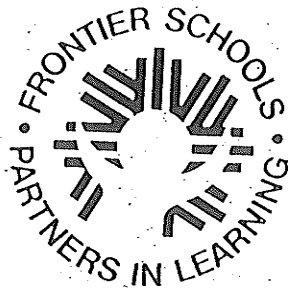
**“Who I am is Who we are -
 Growing up Canadian”**

to celebrate Canada's
 125th Anniversary.

En reconnaissance de l'originalité
 et de la créativité de son travail
 explorant le thème

**“Je suis ce que nous sommes -
 Grandir dans l'identité canadienne”**

à l'occasion du 125^e anniversaire
 du Canada.



FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 48

DIVISION OFFICE

1402 NOTRE DAME AVENUE

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R3E 3G5 (204) 775-9741 FAX (204) 775-9940

May 22, 1992

PLAYERS
PLAYERS

People:

I am finding it extremely difficult to put into words my thoughts and feelings about "Tangled Souls".

It is safe to say that it is one of the most powerful series of messages I have ever seen.

I am a non-native who has lived and worked in Northern Manitoba and in many other parts of northern Canada for twenty-five years. You have captured and portrayed, in under one hour, all of the "tangles" I have seen and felt in those years.

I want to commend you on your honesty and courage. It takes a great deal of fortitude to expose your own fears, confusion, biases, experiences, strengths, and weaknesses in such a frank manner.

Such a powerful presentation also requires significant talent, which was evident in all the players. But talent alone would not have carried the day. It must be mixed with a depth of feeling and passion for the messages. The mix that you put forward created the magic that all in that theatre were captured by this morning.

.../2



Printed on 100%
post-consumer recycled paper

Norway House Players, etc.

Page 2

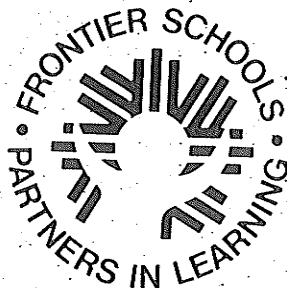
May 22, 1992

and , you make me proud to be a teacher.

Thank you all, very sincerely, for an incredible experience.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Superintendent



FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 48

DIVISION OFFICE

1402 NOTRE DAME AVENUE

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R3E 3G5 (204) 775-9741 FAX (204) 775-9940

June 11, 1992

Dear :

At this time I would like to commend you on your excellent performance at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival. The production "Tangled Souls", which you and your fellow actors created, transcended the emotional and cultural barriers to a plain of reflective and empathetic understanding of oneself and others within our global community. With this in mind, the Frontier School Division wishes to honor your efforts by presenting you with a video of the "Tangled Souls" production.

May your future be bright and your aspirations become realities.

Sincerely,

Chief Superintendent



September 20, 1992

Mr.
525-93 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear :

As an adjudicator for the Manitoba Youth Drama Festival ,92, I saw Tangled Soals as it was first presented. The actors/writers, aboriginal and white, were sharing with us their impressions and struggles with the other culture. It was fresh. The experiences were honest and the conflicts were brutally real. The emotional impact of the piece lifted the entire theatre to its feet in appreciation.

Even in this stage of its development, Tangled Soals connected with its audience. I saw on stage the raw material for a truly powerful piece of theatre. Both Michael Springate and myself encouraged Ms. Maister to continue working with the script. The opportunity she and her students had to experience first hand the situations in the play is rare indeed. The ground work is done. The next phase of development would give their work a tighter form and focus making the script accessable to professional companies.

The imagination, courage, and curiosity it took to initiate this project should be supported to see it through to a well deserved finish.

Sincerely,



September 22, 1992

Executive Producer
Colin Jackson

Artistic Director
Michael Springate

*Associate Artistic Director /
Education Director*
Barbara Poggemiller

Associate Artistic Director
Brian Drader

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Ted Paterson
Janice Penner
Judy Waytiuk

Manitoba Arts Council
525-93 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 3B1

To whom it may concern,

Please accept my letter of support for the project Tangled Souls.

I was fortunate to see a performance of the original production during the High School Drama Festival last spring, and was very impressed with the quality of the work and the challenging nature of the material. The process which brings these young people together from two very different social, economic, cultural and environmental points of reference and encourages a creative exchange of ideas, experiences and stories, is exciting on many levels. The play explores their two worlds and the effect the encounters have upon each.

Through working together and sharing certain customs and rituals (such as the Native Sweat Lodge ceremony), these young people came to know and understand each other differently -- not only did it bring them closer, it also made them aware of the distance between them.

The play presents the challenge of acknowledging the difficulty, and uses the experience as a first step towards new relationships based on understanding and personal experience.

The young actors were brave, funny, subtle and intensely honest, reflecting their commitment to the project and to the experiences they shared with us, the audience. The original music was extraordinary, powerfully expressing the heart and soul of the play.

I strongly encourage you to support the next stage of development which will allow its theatrical potentiality to be realized. I feel that Tangled Souls is a profound piece of theatre and should be seen by many more young people (and old ones too!). Prairie Theatre Exchange is very excited to be involved in presenting the next version of Tangled Souls on the mainstage during our Spring Break Festival.

Yours truly,

Associate Artistic Director/
Theatre for Young Audiences

Principal:

Principal:

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R2V 2E6
 Telephone: (204) Fax: (204)

December 4, 1991

Chief Superintendent
 Frontier School Division #48
 1402 Notre Dame Avenue
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 R3E 3G5

Dear Mr. . . .

On behalf of myself, . . . and the students from Seven Oaks School Division, I am writing to thank you for inviting us to participate in an extremely enriching and rewarding experience. . . . High School, . . . Elementary and the community welcomed us with warm hospitality and a sincere willingness to share. Our students immediately felt accepted and were eager and excited to communicate and become acquainted with your students.

The opportunity to build a cultural dialogue between the students of . . . Collegiate and Norway House will help break down barriers and develop communicative links. Bridging gaps and opening doors help all students and adults gain an understanding and appreciate of each other.

Our discussions delved into cultural issues and common experiences which encourage the students to write about in their lives. From their journals and creative writing portfolios, it is our hope to develop a play which helps unlock the fear of the differences which exist within our society. By sharing our finished script with other students through performances and workshops, we hope to make an impact on both communities. The project will help increase students' knowledge of other communities and build a broader sensitivity towards other ethnic cultural differences.

The process of writing and performing an original play by the students combines experience, expression and communication. Already the project has generated limitless creative writing opportunities, creative imagination, self discipline and group cooperation.

On behalf of the Seven Oaks School Division, myself and . . . I would like to thank . . . and . . . , and the administration for their involvement in the project and especially . . . for initiating the project with us and making it possible for us to feel so welcome.

We are looking forward to having your students join us at the end of January for the continuation of the project. The finished play will be performed at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival in May, 1992 and in our respective communities.

Sincerely

Kayla Maister
 Drama Teacher

KM:mj

May 6, 1990

Cheryl Cline Abrahams
 Arts Education Consultant
 515-93 Lombard Avenue
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 R3B 3B1

Dear Cheryl,

Again we come to the end of another school year and once more an extremely rewarding and enriching year thanks to the Artist in the School's Program. The students at [redacted] Collegiate have displayed measurable development in their levels of personal confidence as well as personal growth. The program's director too has grown in her skill development as a result of your program.

The courses Playwriting with [redacted] and the Dance with [redacted] have now become an important part of our Creative Arts Department and the success of these two programs has helped our program to expand.

The students went through the process with Rick and myself of creating individual plays on topics of their choice. Two of our students plays will be produced as part of Prairie Theater Exchange's Playblitz. Also, two large scale projects came out of this year's dance and playwriting class. The first was a collaboratively written play called Painted Snow that incorporated the dance, drama and playwriting classes. The second was a cross-cultural playwriting exchange with students from West Kildonan and students from Norway House. Student from [redacted] traveled to the town and reserve of Norway House for 5 days in November; in February the Norway House students came to the city. Together we experienced culture shock, found our differences and touched on our similarities. The play, Tangled Souls is base on those experiences and will be performed in the schools and at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival.

The program has cultivated limitless creative writing opportunities, developed the student's creative imagination, commitment, and a collaborative milieu which makes for a very exciting and challenging Creative Arts Program.

The success of the Playwriting course and the Dance classes are now a strong part of our school and we have offered them as part of next year's program. We hope for the continued support of the Artist in the School's long-term program next year.

Enclose please find a video tape of the production of Painted Snow and information and articles on the Norway House/[redacted] exchange.

Thank you gain for you support in making these programs happen.

Respectfully Yours

Kayla Maister

Play draws students closer together

By James Crampton
West Kildonan

Eight drama students from Collegiate and School are sharing more than a stage and script.

The two schools have joined to co-write and co-produce a play for the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival in May, but students have found the experience more than a getting-to-know-you session.

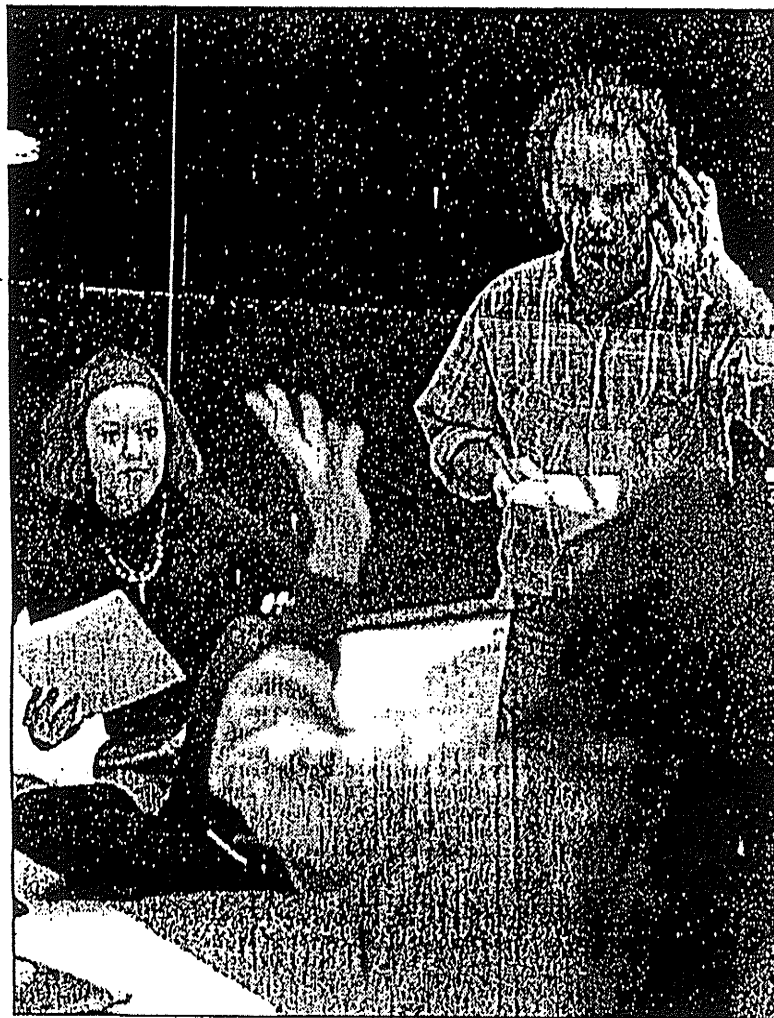
"They're long past the stage of this being one of those cute little cultural exchanges you read about," says Kayla Meister, an English and drama teacher at Norway House, a predominantly native high school 405 kilometres north of Winnipeg.

"This has become a personal development story. They've talked about the barriers that exist between them and how they could cut through all that. The kids are working toward a common goal, overcoming their inhibitions and friendships have developed."

The joint project is a collective play that will involve elements of drama, dance, music and poetry. Braun, outlining the theme of the production, says "it's about walking into someone else's space and learning not to judge before you explore."

"The play is basically telling you it's not always what you see, it's how you take a look," says Kayla Meister, drama teacher at

Meister and Braun first talked about the project at last year's Youth Festival. They both believe something like this has never been tried before in Manitoba. Meister says the kids first had to



KITTEE WONG

Students from Collegiate and Norway House are working together to produce a unique play for the Manitoba Drama Festival.

work at learning to understand each other and dispel the myths they had of one another.

"We knew we were taking some big risks here," Meister says, not-

ing that the production is on "a shoestring budget" and most of the expenses for the cultural exchange trips have come from the kids' own pockets.

"In many ways, we've found the kids have learned they are more similar than they first thought," Meister adds. "It's been a very enlightening collaborative effort."

Braun says the production will have some "light and funny moments" but warned that the subject matter will also have some hard-hitting moments of gritty drama.

"We didn't want another bit of fluff. This is a serious, meaningful work," says Meister, a teacher at Norway House since 1980.

The production involves

along with ... students

How- ever, the actual play may involve more than the eight students.

The cross-culture exchange began last November when the kids went to Norway House to experience the native culture, including the mysticism involved with a traditional sweat lodge. The Norway House kids were in Winnipeg last month to learn about urban living.

Their experiences served as research for much of the production, Meister says.

The kids and their teachers will meet again in April at Hilbury, a town roughly half-way between Winnipeg and Norway House, to hammer out the last draft of the script with the help of

playwright-in-residence.

The Manitoba Drama Youth Festival will take place at Prairie Theatre Exchange May 20 to 22.

Native, white students create a theatrical bridge

NO ONE IS quite sure where eight students from high schools in Norway House and Winnipeg bridged their cultural gap to co-write and perform a play together.

Perhaps it was in a northern reserve sweatlodge, or maybe it was here in town at a screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

Wherever it occurred, the result for the youths is a new respect for each other's culture and a new play called *Tangled Souls*. It's one of the most intriguing productions at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival currently taking place at Prairie Theatre Exchange. The only performance of the hour-long show is this morning at 9:30.

At last year's festival dance, teachers from ... and ...

Collegiate observed all the students standing about in cliques and not mingling.

Not interacting

"We noticed our kids were over there and their kids were over here," recalled ...

High School drama teacher. "None of the kids were interacting. That's when we started talking about an exchange."

Last November, five kids from ... travelled the 460 kilometres north to Norway House for a four-day stay to get to know their native collaborators and begin work on writing a script. The two groups continued to trade ideas and scenes under the guidance of Winnipeg playwright ... until the Norway House students came to the city in February.

The goal of the project was to have two groups of students delve into each other's culture and see what would be the theatrical result.

"The purpose was to explore, not change," said ... the 40-year-old former Winnipegger. "The hope was that in the exploration the kids would learn tolerance."

It appears from the participants that they learned far more.



On
Stage

**Kevin
Prokosh**

"When we met, I didn't think they really wanted to know about our culture," said ... a 17-year-old Grade 12 student from Norway House. "But they were really interested in learning about the way we live. We took them to a sweatlodge and a powwow. Now we are friends."

"One of them said to me when they came, 'I thought we were from two different worlds.' We discovered we were the same kind of people with different skins and we didn't let that get in our way."

... a 17-year-old Grade 11 student from ... considers the stage partnership a learning process that purged many of her misconceptions about native people.

"Frankly, I was paranoid about going up there," she said this week. "Based on the feeling of animosity I had gotten from natives in Winnipeg, I expected not to be accepted there. It turned out to be a real culture shock. Everything was so intensely different from what I was used to. It was fascinating and I made new friends."

... discovered natives are a very misunderstood people struggling with themselves, their surroundings and society. She was also surprised to learn her cultural ties were not as obvious or deep as those of her hosts.

"I don't feel I have much of a culture," ... said. "What is white culture? Is it French or Italian? They have such a rich culture."

Tangled Souls is a series of monologues, dialogues and poetry, written by eight teenagers from their experiences with each other during the last school year.

... said the show has a frank, hard edge. He describes it as being encouraging but not optimistic about the future between natives and non-natives.

Using drama to examine culture

Norway House drama group looks at northern problems and solutions

By David Kuxhaus
Staff Writer

Theatre has given students at Norway House High School the opportunity to understand other cultures as well as rediscover their own.

Last month they showcased their production of *The Bone Man* at the Manitoba Drama Youth Festival in Winnipeg.

John Braun, the drama teacher at the school, said the play — which focuses on child abuse — brings together elements of the past and the present.

"We borrow from Norway House legend and mythology and attempt to show how legend can be used to explain contemporary problems," said Braun, who has taught in the northern community since 1980.

The Bone Man is typical of many of the productions done by the school's six-year-old drama group, known as the Mikisesees Club, which means young eagle in Cree.

"The scripts are designed to show the value of northern culture," said Braun, noting that each play always contains some Cree dialogue along with the traditional music of flutes, drums, and singers.

"They look at northern problems and try to find northern solutions."

Lisa Clarke, one of the cast members from *The Bone Man*, said the experience helped her meet a lot of new people and make new friends.

"Sometimes people don't always accept us because we're native, but there (at the festival) it didn't matter," said Clarke, who was making her festival debut.

"We'd be having lunch and people would come up to us and say 'You were in *The Bone Man*' and they'd talk to us."

The Grade 11 student said being involved in theatre has also given her increased self-confidence.

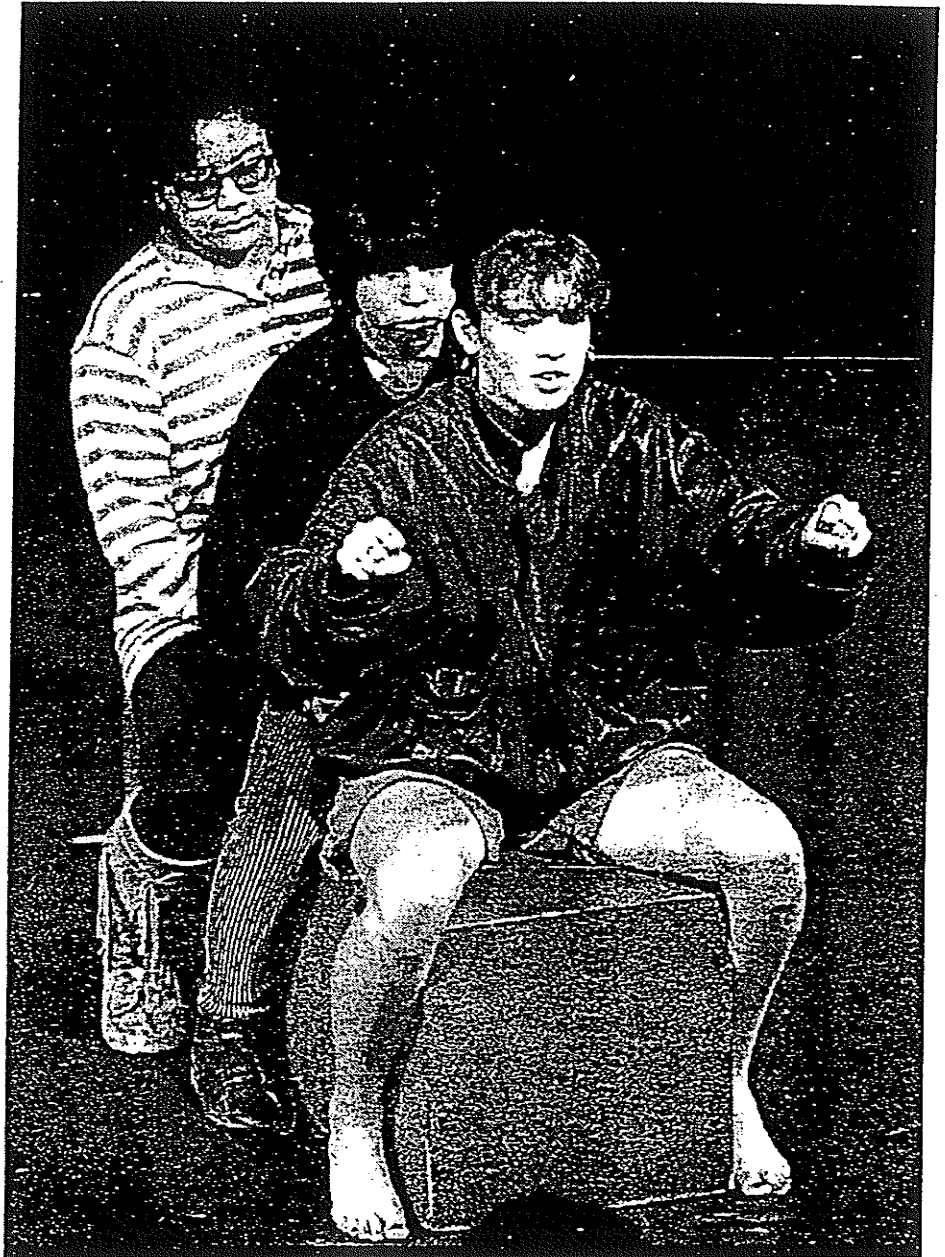
During the festival they also shared the stage with a group of students from the University of Regina in a performance of *Tangled Souls*.

The play, which was written by students from both schools, explores the relationship between natives and non-natives.

"Never anywhere else have I seen that kind of energy and commitment from students," said Braun.

Negotiations are currently underway for the group to perform the play at the Prairie Theatre Exchange this fall.

"It's like being asked to play an exhibition game against the Winnipeg Jets. It just blows me away," said Clarke, adding next year they may join forces with the University of Regina Collegiate to produce another play.



DOUG HARRIS/FREE PRESS WEEKLY

Students from Norway House and Winnipeg use the stage to help bridge cultural gaps.

Chance to be someone else lures students on to stage

FOR MANY high school students, still trying to discover who they are, theatre represents an irresistible opportunity to be someone else.

Many self-conscious young playwrights and actors are lured into the stage, where they can say and do things they wouldn't in real life.

"I can make my characters say whatever I want," says Christine Koehler, a budding playwright at . . . "Writing a play takes me away from reality. If I feel some way about an issue I can express myself through my characters. I can hide behind my characters."

Koehler, 17, has written two plays in the last two years. She has also collaborated on a third, *Inside Out*, which . . . will perform at the National High School Drama Festival in Abbotsford, B.C., next week.

Identity

One of the production's 11 teenage actors, leaving for B.C. today, is John Baluta, who enjoys assuming someone else's identity for a role.

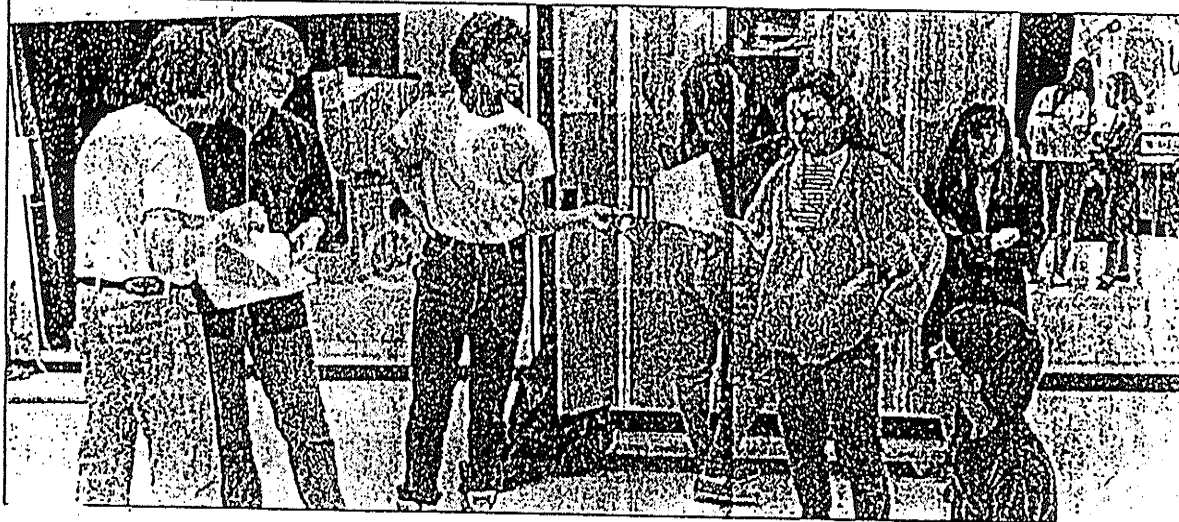
"On stage, I get to have an alter-ego and live a fake life, so to speak," says Baluta, 19. "I love it."

The Salter Street high school, like many others, has a flourishing creative-arts program with about 100 students enrolled in either drama or playwrighting.

The objective of the courses, says drama teacher Kayla Gordon-Maister, is not necessarily to produce future actors or playwrights but to use the craft of theatre to develop self-confidence, communication skills and self-discipline.

"The strength of our program is

DAVE JOHNSON/WINNIPEG FREE PRESS



Students, performing *Inside Out*, are taking their play to B.C. drama festival.



On Stage
Kevin
Prokosh

to have students solve problems for themselves, getting them to stand on their own two feet," says Gordon-Maister, a former actress. "The course teaches kids about themselves, about others and about life. It's not so much a training ground."

Inside Out is the product of months of young playwrights in-

venting characters, throwing out lines and developing scenes. The teens worked on four drafts before playwright-in-residence . . . a Winnipeg dramatist, cleaned up and shaped the final script.

"There are not a lot of good Canadian plays that are written for high school kids," Gordon-Maister says. "That's why we developed our own."

Explores

Not surprisingly, *Inside Out* is about life in high school — the way kids are and the way they want to be. It explores how young people are trying to find their true self and shed the many roles forced upon them by internal and peer

pressures.

It's an authentic look, much like TV's *Degrassi High*, at life around the school lockers. That means it deals with sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, with the odd profanity thrown in for realism.

"It had to be that way," says Koehler, a Grade 12 student. "That's high school life. That's what kids go through. It's a jungle in there."

The cast of *Inside Out*, which will also perform the play at the Manitoba Drama Festival in May, consists of Baluta; Sean Allum, Craig Coyne, Becky Fleury, Tim Gillespie, Derek Grech, Sam Koch, Lisa Loscerbo, Amy Moore, Rob Pollok and Allison Thomas.

. . . says the play shows teens are uncomfortable about being forced into playing school stereotypes such as the jock, the druggie or the geek.

"The one longing that came from the students is that they want to break out of the stereotypical roles they feel pressured into or they've developed for themselves," says Chafe, 31. "They want to be free from them."

One of those stereotypes is that theatre is only for females and "dorks." That stage image seems to be fading as equal numbers of young men and women at West Kildonan find theatre can be a vehicle for self-expression.

"Those who don't know much about theatre think it's a sucky thing to do," says Baluta.

Gordon-Maister believes that attitude vanished years ago.

"A lot more males are taking the course," she says. "It's not a sissy course. It's OK to be a little more sensitive today."

The scripts of would-be playwrights provide an insight into the mood and preoccupations of teenagers. Last year Koehler wrote *This Damned World Sucks*, a play that summarized what was on the minds of her classmates, too. All the plays were right along that line, recalled Chafe.

End up dead

"I didn't mean for my play to be so negative," says Koehler, who is going to Abbotsford as part of the stage crew. "All the characters end up dead. Last year all the plays were about killing and swearing."

This year Koehler wrote *Ticket*, a play about kids standing in line waiting to buy concert tickets. Her classmates wrote about alcoholic parents, homophobia, a domineering father and a friend with cancer.

"They are looking at their own world and saying, 'I don't have a lot of power, I don't feel great about my own personal chances,'" Chafe says. "The kids who are writing the strongest scripts are taking straight from their own lives."

While theatre empowers many students, few are in a hurry to commit themselves to a life on stage.

"Theatre is too much of an iffy field," says Baluta, who would like to be an aircraft pilot. "I don't want to be part of the starving-actor cliché. I'd rather enjoy it as a sideline."

Tangled Souls: closing the gap 181

School play examines differences in Canadian cultures

By James Crampton
Staff Writer

The rousing standing ovation for Tangled Souls said it all. The original play, a combined effort of students from Norway House and Kildonan Collegiate, struck a nerve in the audience at the recent Manitoba Drama Youth Festival at Prairie Theatre Exchange.

Tangled Souls was a daring, heart-felt, moving piece about native kids from a reserve and white city kids trying to get to know one another, trying to bridge a cultural gap and ultimately understand one another better.

This wasn't your typical Gilbert and Sullivan fare that most high schools stick with. But, then, ... doesn't have a typical high school drama program.

"I don't want to be doing the plays everybody else is doing," says Kayla Gordon, drama teacher for the past 10 years. "I've gone through the gamut of high school musicals and mainstream high school drama. But I know the kids themselves prefer something with a little more bite to it, where the kids themselves have input into the final product you see on stage."

... drama program is not a tradition course in training for the theatre. Instead, Gordon has her students explore themselves through the drama classes.

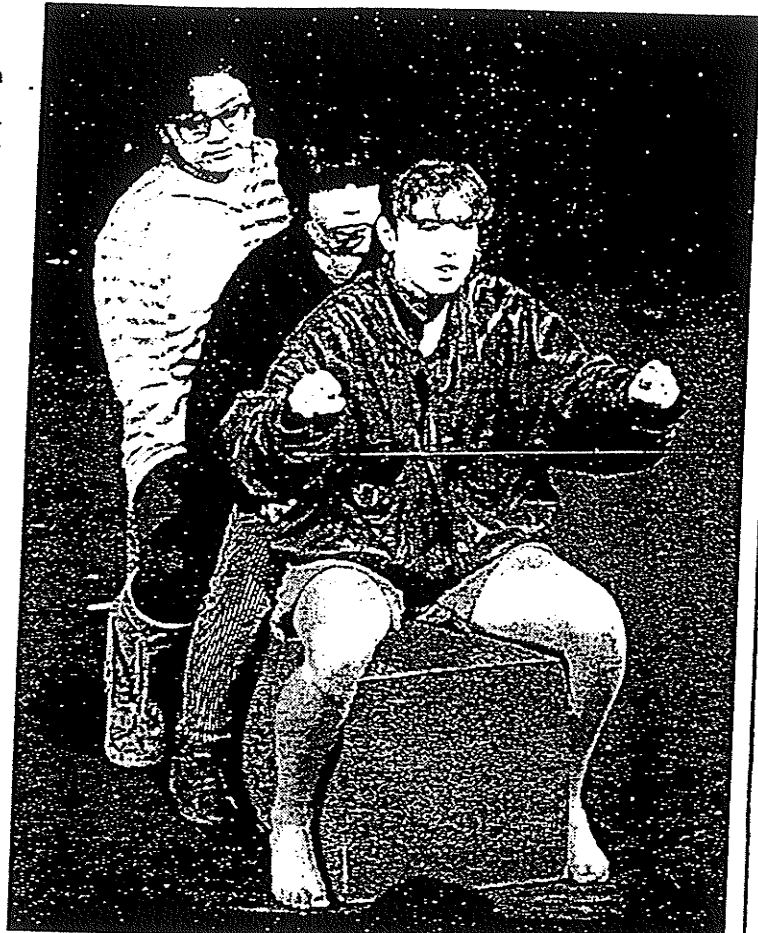
"They want to do something that's relevant to what's going on in their own lives. It's cutting edge theatre," she says, noting that her students are currently working on a play about date rape.

Theatrical process

Gordon says her intention isn't to teach acting to the students. Instead, her drama classes delve more into the theatrical process: exchanging ideas and creating stories and having her students realize their hidden talents.

Tangled Souls is the school's boldest initiative yet. Gordon and Norway House teacher ... came up with the idea for the joint effort at last year's youth drama festival when they noticed the kids stayed in their own cliques and didn't mingle during a festival dance.

The Norway House and ... groups started working on the play in November. Much of the play is based on their impressions of each other's culture after two exchanges during the play's formative process.



DOUG HAINES/FREE PRESS WEEKLY

... and ... of Norway House are passengers on snowmobile operated by

"We lived by the fax machine," Gordon says of the script re-writes bouncing between Norway House and Winnipeg. "There were times when we didn't think everything could come together."

The Norway House kids came down to Winnipeg for a few days of rehearsals leading up to the May 22 performance at PTE. "By the time everything was together, we had four days to get the play up on its feet," says Gordon, who directed the play.

Gordon, along with ... playwright-in-residence, ... helped form the play but the words came directly from the ensemble cast of students.

Norway House's cast members were ... while ... was represented by

..., a grade 11 student, is in her second year of drama at West Kildonan Collegiate. She says she "caught the acting bug" while in junior high.

"Kayla's classes are not acting classes per se...it's more about problem-solving and about life in general," ... says. "It's been a vehicle of expression for me."

The title for Tangled Souls came from a song by the same name written and performed in the play by 19-year-old ... He joined the cast

only recently. "I didn't get to experience the trip up to Norway House," ... says. "But I could feel those life experiences by being involved (with the play)."

There is talk of taking the show on the road and Tangled Souls could also see a run at PTE's second stage, Gordon says.

By Kevin Prokosh
Staff Writer

THE YEAR A shrinking economy and a state of affairs not amenable to the worsening state of arts funding in Canada, it is far more desirable to look back on what was in Winnipeg theatre in 1992 than to look ahead to what will be in 1993.

A few more turns of the ever-tightening financial vise could squeeze several theatre producers in Winnipeg out of existence in the months ahead.

The good news is that 1992 will be remembered not for sweeping trends or coherent movements but for rewarding theatrical attractions such as *Transit of Venus*, *Shirley Valentine*, *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, *Medea*, *Brave Hearts*, *Moonlodge* and *Dog and Crow*.

The year was bookended by two significant stage events: the premieres of Timothy Findley's *Not Wanted on the Voyage* and Maureen Hunter's *Transit of Venus*, both at the Manitoba Theatre Centre.

Controversial

The attention of Canadian theatre was focused on Winnipeg with the launch of *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, the controversial adaptation of Findley's retelling of the biblical Noah's Ark story.

The play provoked an unprecedented public outcry and a flurry of letter-writing from angered detractors and supportive patrons. It sparked the most lively public debate about theatre in many seasons and even allowed a couple of vice squad police officers a night out at the theatre.

The year ended on a promising note with *Transit of Venus*, a stimulating period piece about an 18th-century astronomer searching for truth and meaning. Hunter's play marked the first time a Manitoba playwright was featured on the MTC mainstage since 1967.

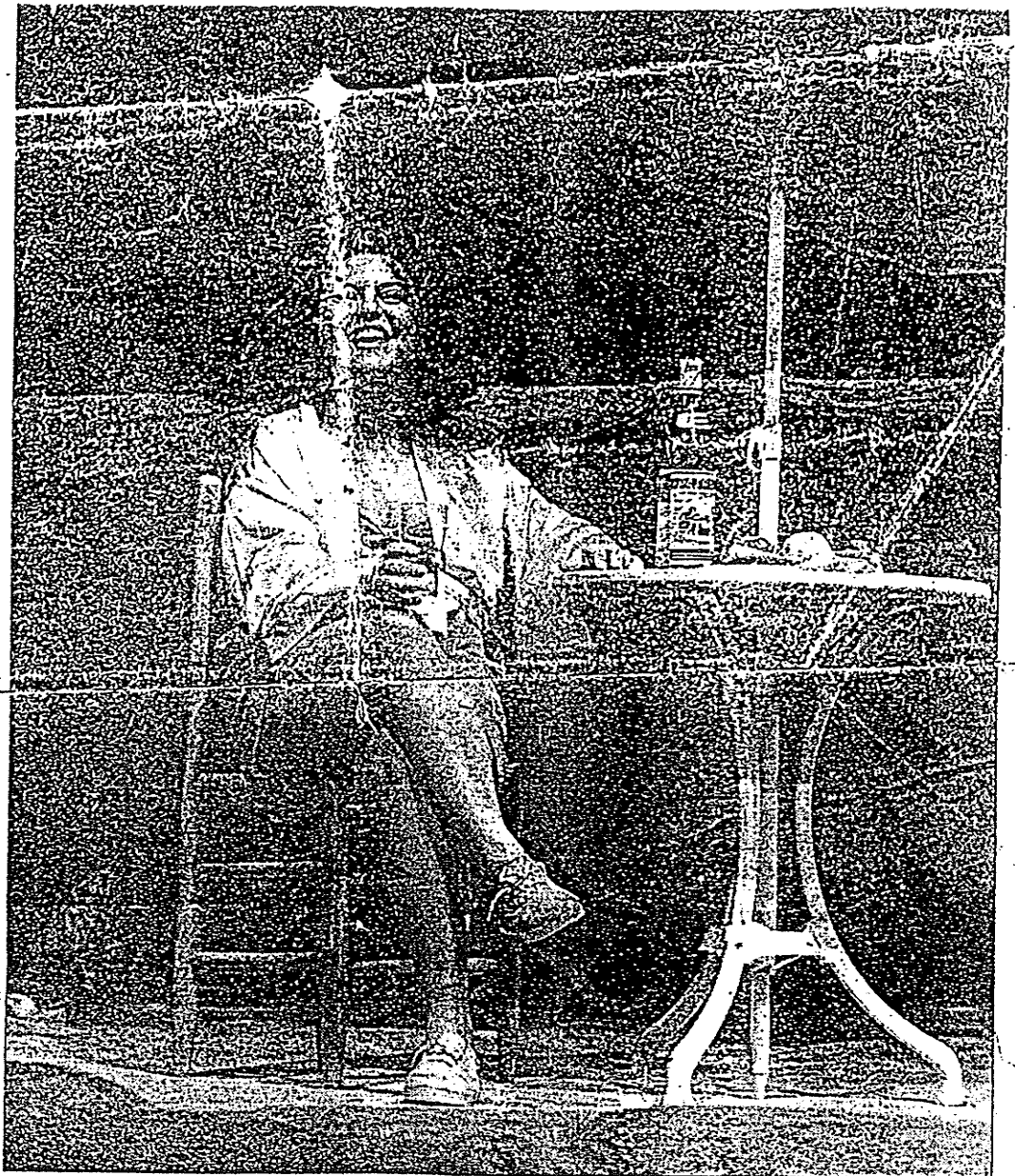
If it leads to more local writers being produced at MTC, 1992 will be remembered for Hunter's breakthrough production.

Challenging road

Between these two plays, MTC once again proved it can profitably stage other theatre's successes. Meanwhile, Prairie Theatre Exchange continued on the challenging road of presenting primarily new plays by little-known writers.

When it does not uncover any stage gems, PTE suffers an unremarkable year, as it did in 1992. That its last show, *Dog and Crow*, was its best of the year bodes well for 1993.

The revival of the Winnipeg Fringe Festival under first-year



Nicola Cavendish gave year's best-actress performance in MTC's *Shirley Valentine*.

In the spirit of celebrating the best in Winnipeg theatre, here is one theatre-goer's opinions.

Best production: *Shirley Valentine*. This moving one-woman MTC show about a spunky woman who feels life has passed her by was even better than the popular movie in speaking eloquently about the indomitable human spirit. Also noteworthy: *Medea* at MTC Warehouse and Rainbow Stage's *Guys and Dolls*.

Best performance by an actor: Heath Lamberts. It was a sublime match of actor and role as one of Canada's great stage clowns played one of Shakespeare's great comedic characters, Bottom, in MTC's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Also noteworthy: Len Cariou in MTC's *Another Time* and

ish, whose enormous talents filled the yawning MTC mainstage. Also noteworthy: Seana McKenna in the title role of *Medea* and Megan McArton in *If Betty Should Rise* for the Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba.

Best production for young people: *The Grimm Sisters*. Winnipeg playwrights Tannis Kowalchuk and Lora Schroeder fashioned a highly imaginative ecological fairytale which percolates with messages, music and magic. Briefly presented last spring, it deserves a second, longer run. Also noteworthy: *Cost of Living* for The Manitoba Theatre For Young People and *Tangled Souls*, a collaboration between students from [redacted] High School and [redacted] Collegiate.

Best fringe festival production:

Sleeping Beauty Cabaret.

Best set design: *Not Wanted on the Voyage*. Although the theatrical journey in Noah's ark was far from smooth, it was a feast for the eyes. Also noteworthy: *Medea* and *Guys and Dolls*.

Newcomer of the year: Derek Aasland. This young Winnipegger has established himself as an actor to watch with impressive performances in *Steel Kiss*, *Unidentified Human Remains* and *The True Nature of Love* and *The Secret Garden*. Also noteworthy: Adrienne Cole in *The Miracle Worker* and Kevin McIntyre in *Les Misérables*.

Theatre news story of the year: The threatened closure of the MTC Warehouse last winter sent shock waves through the city stage community. Also noteworthy: [redacted] Rainbow Stage's [redacted]

Appendix E

"Tangled Souls", a Second Draft
Developed at a Professional Workshop Following the Initial Project

OPENING:

USING INSTRUMENTS AND MOVEMENT THE ACTORS CREATE TWO SEPARATE ENVIRONMENT. LIFE IN THE CITY, LIFE IN THE COUNTRY/RESERVE

CONSTRUCTION: THE CITY ENVIRONMENT IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING, THE ACTORS ARE MOVING THE BOXES, BUILDING THEM ON TOP OF EACH OTHER AND TAKING THEM APART. THE NATIVES ARE MOVING AROUND WHAT IS ALREADY THERE; THE CONSTANTS. A DRUMMER AND A SYNTHESISER WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY AND COUNTRY. AS THE SCENE PROGRESSES THE MUSIC FOLLOWS RHYTHMICALLY ALONG WITH THE ACTION ON THE STAGE. THE ACTORS SPEAK RANDOMLY NOT NOTICING EACH OTHER AT THE BEGINNING.

SUE: I AM A WHITE BABE
ANN: I AM WIND AND WATER
BILL : I AM BORED, BORED, BORED
BOB: I AM A BROTHER
LISA: I AM FAT
ANN: I AM CELEBRATING
LISA: I NEED A SMOKE
IAN: I AM WAITING

(THE RHYTHM STARTS TO GET LOUDER AND LOUDER)

LISA: I NEED SOMETHING
ANN: I AM STRONG

(MUSIC GETS LOUDER AND LOUDER, THE BEAT PICKS UP)

BILL: I AM GOING ON AN EXCHANGE TO NORWAY HOUSE
(PAUSE)

IAN: I AM READY

LISA: I AM CURIOUS

ANN: I AM CURIOUS

(DRUM - BEAT FOLLOWED BY A CONTINUOUS BEAT LIKE A HEARTBEAT)

BILL: THEY ARE NOT RELIABLE

IAN: THEY TALK LOTS

LISA: THEY'RE DRUNK

IAN: THEY ARE MANY

SUE: THEY DON'T TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES

ANN: THEY DON'T TAKE CARE OF THEIR ELDERS THEY'RE CHILDREN

BILL: THEY ARE WEAK

IAN: THEY ARE SELFISH

SUE: HOW DO WE REALLY KNOW WHAT THEY ARE?

BILL: DO YOU REALLY CARE?

LISA: I WANT TO KNOW MORE

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2

(A HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM IN WINNIPEG WITH SUE, BILL, AND LISA)

LISA: NORWAY HOUSE!
SUE: NORWAY HOUSE!
BILL: NORWAY HOUSE!
LISA: BARE!
SUE: WHAT THE HELL TO DO?
BILL: IN WINNIPEG I CAN GO OUT.
LISA: PLAY POOL
SUE: DRINK BEER
BILL: WHAT CAN I DO IN NORWAY HOUSE?
LISA: PLAY POOL
SUE: DRINK BEER
BILL: BUT IN WINNIPEG THERE'S HUNDRED'S OF RESTAURANTS.
SUE: WELL IN NORWAY HOUSE THERE'S WELL...
LISA: YOU COULD COOK!
BILL: HER!
SUE: YEAH, I'M A COOL COOK.
BILL: GREAT, SHIT ON A STICK.
LISA: COME ON GUYS THERE'S STUFF IN NORWAY HOUSE TOO.
SUE: WINNIPEG'S BIGGER!
BILL: WELL, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN NORWAY HOUSE? ARE THERE ANY RESTAURANTS?
SUE: I DONT KNOW? GUESS WE SHOULD TAKE SOME GAMES AND..
BILL: FOOD!
LISA: YEAH!
SUE: I WONDER...WILL THERE BE T.V.? I GUESS I SHOULD TAKE MY BOOKS.
BILL: GREAT WE CAN CATCH UP ON OUR HOMEWORK.
LISA: CLOTHES. WARM CLOTHES BOOTS MAYBE I SHOULD TAKE MY SLEEPING BAG.

BILL: OH SHIT I HOPE THERE'S PLUMBING!

LISA: SHE DIDN'T SAY.

BILL: OH MAN, COULD YOU IMAGINE TAKING A CRAP AT-30.

SUE: OH FORGET IT, I'LL HOLD IT IN.

LISA: WHAT?

SUE: IT'S ONLY 5 DAYS I CAN HOLD IN IT FOR 5 DAYS.

LISA: JUST AVOID LIQUID!

LISA: I HOPE THERE'S ELECTRICITY, CAUSE I'M PACKING MY GEDO.

BILL: CAN'T GO WITHOUT THAT. THEY HAVE TO HAVE ELECTRICITY.

SUE: I WONDER IF THEY HAVE A REFRIGERATOR?

LISA: THEY COULDN'T HAVE THAT WITHOUT ELECTRICITY.

BILL: IT WOULD TAKE TOO MANY BATTERIES.

LISA: OK. COOL. JADE.

SUE: COOL.

SCENE 3

MUSIC CUE: DRUMMING OR NATIVE CHANT WITHOUT DRUMS

AT THE CABIN, ANN IS IN THE KITCHEN CUTTING UP THE BANOCK, BOB ENTER

BOB: TANZAI

LISA: MINOTO, KIMAGA

BOB: OK. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

ANN: I BROUGHT SOME BANOCK MY MOM MADE, I HOPE THEY'LL LIKE IT.

BOB: AH SHIT! SUCKING ALREADY?

(ANN LOOKS AT HIM)

(ANN CONTINUES GETTING THE ROOM READY, FIXING THE DECORATIONS.)

ANN: MAYBE THEY'VE NEVER HAD IT BEFORE.

BOB: THEY'RE GOING TO THINK THAT'S ALL WE EAT. YOU GOING TO MAKE MOOSE MEAT TOO?

ANN: YEAH , WHY NOT?

BOB: (NO RESPONSE)

ANN: COME ON. THEY'RE COMING HERE TO LEARN ABOUT US. WE'RE GOING TO THE CITY TO LEARN ABOUT THEM. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT.

BOB: WHAT ARE WE? INSECTS TO BE STUDIED. THEY'RE GOING TO COME HERE AND SEE BANOCK AND START LAUGHING. THEY'LL EXPECT US TO WEAR FEATHERS AND DANCE THE POW-WOW, JUST LIKE THEY SEE ON TV. I DON'T TRUST THEM.

ANN: MR. BRAUN HAS WORKED REALLY HARD TO ARRANGE LISA THIS, THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS COOPERATE.

BOB: I'LL PLAY MY PART DON'T WORRY.

ANN: WELL, WILL HAVE FUN GETTING TO KNOW THEM. WE'RE HAVING A FEAST WITH WILD MEAT , AND A POW-WOW PRACTICE, IF THE GUYS AGREED TO LET THEM WATCH. MAYBE A SWEAT, IF MY UNCLE WILL DO IT,

BOB: HOW ABOUT I FIND SOME WOLVES TO DANCE WITH. THAT WOULD BE A GOOD SHOW.

ANN: SHUT UP

(THEY FINISH PUTTING UP THE BANNER, IT SAYS WELCOME
WEST KILDONAN)

BOB: DON'T WORRY, WHEN THEY GET HERE I'LL ACT LIKE ONE OF THOSE APPLE
POLITICIANS I SEE EVERY DAY ON THE NEWS, ASS KISSING, YOU KNOW, RED ON THE
OUTSIDE, WHITE ON THE INSIDE

ANN: YEAH, BUT THE SEEDS ARE STILL BROWN.

ANN: NOW, GET IN THERE AND CLEAN UP THE KITCHEN.

BOB: YES, NOGGUM

ANN: I THINK THERE VAN'S COMING, SHIT. (SHE RUNS TO SIT DOWN)
(BILL, SUE AND LISANA ENTER, TALKING AND LAUGHING)

BILL: HI

SUE: HI

LISA: HI

BILL: I'M BILL

SUE: AND I'M SUE AND THIS IS LISA.

(PAUSE)

SUE: PLACE LOOKS GREAT.

LISA: EXCELLENT SIGN.

BILL: OH, I DIDN'T EVEN SEE THAT, IT'S GREAT. YOU SPELT COLLEGIATE WRONG.

(PAUSE- BILL GOES INTO THE BEDROOMS TO CHECK THINGS OUT)

SUE: OH MAN, IT SURE IS GREAT TO STRETCH YOUR LEGS.

LISA: WELL IF BILL WASN'T TAKING UP THE WHOLE BACK OF THE VAN.

ANN: YEAH, IT'S A LONG DRIVE FROM WINNIPEG

SUE: IT ONLY TOOK US 8 HOURS.

BILL: I GET THE MIDDLE BEDROOM.

LISA: IT'S NOT AS COLD AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.
SUE: YEAH, IT'S REALLY NICE OUTSIDE. BEAUTIFUL, THE AIR SMELLS REALLY...
LISA: FRESH
SUE: YEAH, FRESH
BILL: YEAH, IT'S LOVELY SO WHITE. SNOWY. (CATCHING HIMSELF) THE SNOW IS
WHITE.

(PAUSE)

BOB: SO WHO DROVE YOU GUYS?
SUE: OUR TEACHER. (PAUSE) IS IT O.K. IF WE SMOKE?

(ANN EXITS FOR MATCHES COMES BACK AND HANDS THEM TO SUE)

SUE: THANKS
SUE: DO YOU WANT ONE?
(LONG PAUSE) I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A RESERVE BEFORE
LISA: ME NEITHER. WELL ONCE WHEN I WAS A KID, MY MOM HAS RELATIVES... NEAR HERE.
BOB: DO YOU LIKE IT?
SUE: SO FAR.
BILL: YEAH, I REALLY LIKE IT. . . IT'S GREAT TO BE OUTSIDE.
SUE: THE SCHOOL LOOKS GREAT. WE SAW THE SCHOOL ON THE WAY IN. I WAS SURPRISED
AT HOW NEW IT LOOKED. HOW FANCY IT WAS..YEAH IS THAT FOR ALL GRADES?
FOR LIKE THE LITTLE KIDS TOO?
ANN: THAT WAS THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. WE'LL BE GOING OVER TO THE HIGH SCHOOL
TOMORROW FOR A PANEL DISCUSSION OR SOMETHING.
BILL: YEAH, A PANEL DISCUSSION
ANN: THE TEACHERS HAVE A WHOLE BUNCH OF STUFF PLANNED.
SUE: IS THERE A FRINGE HERE?
A & M (NOD) YES

BILL: YEAH, WE BROUGHT SOME FOOD
LISA: TONS
SUE: HEY, THE FRINGE IS FULL
ANN: WE THOUGHT YOU'D BE HUNGRY. MY MOM MADE SOME BANNOCK. WHAT SOME?
BILL: BANNOCK.
LISA: WHAT IS IT?
ANN: IT'S KIND OF LIKE BREAD.
LISA: SURE
LISA: IT'S GREAT!
SUE: WHAT'S IN IT?
BOB: FISH GUTS AND MOOSE BLOOD (THEY LISA LAUGH)
BILL: THAT'S JUST THE WAY MY MOM MAKES IT.

(A HUGE LAUGH)

BLACK OUT MUSIC CUE SYNTHESISER

SCENE 4

AT THE CABIN

PREPARATION FOR THE SWEAT. BILL IN BEDROOM

YELLING TO THE GIRLS WHO ARE IN THE KITCHEN SMOKING

LODGE IN SASKATCHEWAN ONCE. YOU SEE, HIS MOM'S PART NATIVE, SO THEY WERE AT SOME GATHERING: A CONFERENCE I THINK. HE DIDN'T ACTUALLY GO INSIDE, BUT. HIS MOM DID. I CAN'T REMEMBER IT, BUT SHE SAID THIS LODGE THING HAS A PIT WITH TONS OF HOT COALS.. OR ROCKS.. WHATEVER, AND THERE ARE GUYS AND GIRLS ON DIFFERENT SIDES AROUND THE PIT, LIKE A CAMPFIRE. SHE SAID IT WAS HOT, SCALDINGLY HOT.

LISA: I FEEL AWKWARD ABOUT THE WHOLE SITUATION

SUE: LIGHTEN UP, IT WILL BE OKAY

LISA: WHAT IF THEY STARE AT US?

BILL: IT'S COMPLETELY DARK EH?

SUE: SO THEY STARE...MAKE FACES OR STARE BACK!

LISA: THAT'S JUST INVITING TROUBLE.

SUE: THEN IGNORE IT.

LISA: IT MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE

SUE: HOLY SHIT, YOU'D THINK YOU'VE NEVER BEEN LOOKED AT BEFORE.

LISA: THIS IS DIFFERENT.

SUE: IS IT, I MEAN IS IT REALLY. THEY COULD BE STARRING AT YOU CAUSE YOU'RE PRETTY. WE ARE NOT A PHENOMENON.

LISA: NO JUST WEIRD AND OBNOXIOUS.

(BILL ENTERS THE LIVING ROOM)

BILL: SO IT'S LIKE A STEAM ROOM EH! WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO WEAR?

SUE: NOTHING, YOU GOT TO GO IN NAKED.

BILL: WHAT?

LISA: NAKED!

BILL: ALL OF US?

SUE: NO, YOU.

BILL: WHAT DO YOU GUYS WEAR?

LISA: BLANKETS.

BILL: HOW COME YOU GET BLANKETS. AND I DON'T. I'M NOT GOING IN NAKED. NO WAY.

SUE: YOU HAVE TO.

BILL: I'M NOT GOING IN NAKED.

LISA: YOU SAID IT'S GOING TO BE DARK.

BILL: I DON'T CARE IF IT'S GOING TO BE DARK. I'M NOT GOING IN NAKED.
(THE GIRLS BEGIN TO LAUGH)

BILL: WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING?...OH THANKS!

BILL: BUG OFF, THEY SHOULD SACRIFICE YOU TO THE HOT COALS.

LISA: THEY DON'T DO SACRIFICES.

BILL: I KNOW THEY DON'T DO SACRIFICES, WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M STUPID.

(THE GIRLS LAUGH, BILL GRUMBLES)

(ANN ENTERS CABIN WITH BLANKETS, SHEETS, TOWELS, SHE HANDS LISA THE BLANKETS TO THE GIRLS AND KEEPS ONE SMALL TOWEL.)

ANN: HI GUYS, HERE I BROUGHT YOUR STUFF FOR THE SWEAT.

SUE: GREAT, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT

BILL: THIS IS IT (PICKING UP A SMALL TOWEL THAT IS LEFT)

SUE: THAT SHOULD MORE THEN COVER IT.

(BILL EXITS TO THE BEDROOM)

ANN: YOU GIRLS DON'T HAVE YOUR PERIOD DO YOU

LISA: NO, WHY?

ANN: DIDN'T MY AUNT TALK TO YOU?

SUE: NO.

ANN: WHEN A WOMAN IS ON HER TIME, SHE'S TOO POWERFUL TO BE IN A SWEAT.

SUE: I DON'T GET IT

ANN: BECAUSE A WOMAN'S CHILD REARING ABILITY IS TOO POWERFUL ESPECIALLY IN THE EYES OF THE GRANDFATHERS. DO YOU HAVE AN OFFERING FOR THE CONDUCTOR

LISA: THE CONDUCTOR

ANN: MY UNCLE, HE'S RUNNING THE SWEAT TODAY

LISA: WHAT DO YOU MEAN OFFERING. MONEY

ANN: TOBACCO, OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE CREATOR, THE GRANDMOTHERS, MOTHER EARTH AND THE GRANDFATHERS

SUE: I GOT SOME SMOKES.

ANN: GOOD, LETS GO

SUE: BILL, COME ON

BILL: THIS WILL NOT DO

(SUE GETS HIM AND DRAGS HIM OUT)

SCENE 5

(MUSIC CUE- DRUM BEAT)

IN FRONT OF THE SWEAT LODGE

BILL, LISANA, SUE, AND ANN ARE PREPARING FOR THE SWEAT. ONE OF THE GIRLS HOLDS UP THE BLANKET AND THE OTHERS CHANGE BEHIND IT. BILL SNEAKS IN WEARING ONLY THE SMALL TOWEL. THE FLAP IS OPEN AND THEY ENTER. BILL GOING IN FIRST.

(BOB BY HIMSELF WATCHING THE OTHERS WHILE HE CHOPS WOOD)

BOB: YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE.

A FOX CAUGHT IN A TRAP

DESPERATE TO ESCAPE

CHEWS ITS OWN PAW

I...DON'T...WANT...TO....BE.....A.....FOX.

AN EAGLE LOSES ITS FEATHER

IT FLIES ON.

IT WILL GROW ANOTHER

THAT FEATHER FALLS

SPIRALS

A SCREWED UP CIRCLE

FALLING IN ON ITSELF

THIS IS MY LAND

THIS IS MY TREE

WRONG

THIS LAND IS NO ONE'S

WHO OWNS THIS LAND?

WHO OWNS THIS TREE?

A PAPER YOU HOLD SAYING YOU OWN THIS LAND

AND THE TREE THAT SITS ON IT

PAPER

YOU GAVE US PAPER
WELL USE THEM
TO WRITE ABOUT US
MADE OUR ANCESTORS SIGN PAPERS
WHITE PAPER
WHITE AS THE BLEACHED BONES OF BUFFALO
TRICKED
OUR CHIEFS
SACRIFICED ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE
WHY MUST WE LOSE SOMETHING
TO BREAK FREE WITHOUT SACRIFICING PARTS OF OURSELVES.
WILL IT HAPPEN AGAIN?
THIS WORLD IS A MIXTURE OF PEOPLE AND WHITE MAN
(MUSIC CUE - LARGE DRUM BEAT FOLLOWED BY SLOW HEARTBEAT)

SCENE SIX

MUSIC - ADD THE SYNTHESISER - A LOW - ATMOSPHERE OR DREAM -LIKE, - DRUMBEAT CONTINUES.
OUTSIDE THE SWEAT

THE FLAP IS LIFTED FROM THE SWEAT AND SUE, LISANA, AND BILL COME OUT FOLLOWED SOON
AFTER BY ANN. THEY MOVE VERY SLOWLY INTO THE LIGHT, STARTLED BY THE BRIGHTNESS. THEY
BEGIN TO REACT TO THE SWEAT AND SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH EACH OTHER AND THE
AUDIENCE. THEY VERY QUIETLY REFLECT BUT DON'T TALK. THIS WHOLE SCENE IS ANIMATED IN
MIME. STARTING VERY SLOWLY AND THEN GRADUALLY GETTING FASTER.

THESE ARE THE IMAGES THAT ARE BEING ACTED OUT

I COULDN'T BREATHE

FEAR

EXHILARATION

THE FRESH AIR WHEN THE DOOR WAS OPENED

THE SMUDGING (THE ACT OF LIGHTING THE SWEET GRASS AND DRAWING THE SMOKE FORWARD
OVER YOUR HEAD)

(ANN WALKS OVER TO BOB WHO IS STILL CHOPPING WOOD FOR THE CAMP FIRE)

ANN: HOW COME YOU DIDN'T COME TO THE SWEAT.

BOB: YEAH, DID THEY HAVE A GOOD TIME?

ANN: I GUESS SO... SO HOW COME YOU WEREN'T THERE?

BOB: I DIDN'T WANNA BE.

ANN: YOU WANTED TO BE PART OF THIS PROJECT DIDN'T YOU? BOB, ARE YOU GONNA HELP
ME WITH ANY OF THIS?

BOB: WHY WHAT'S NEXT ON THE TOUR? THE PLAYGREEN INN?
INTRODUCE THEM TO OUR RELATIVES. PASSED OUT IN THE SNOW.

ANN: YOU'RE SICK!

BOB: WHY? THAT'S WHAT THEY KNOW. HEY MAN, GIMME A SMOKE. MATEH BEETH DOW HIN
GIMME A DOLLAR MATEH PAYUK GUY ME A BEER. MATEH ATAWASTAM -WIN BEER

ANN: I'M NOT LIKE THAT, YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT YOU KNOW BOB, HOW DO YOU EVER
EXPECT THEM TO LEARN ANYTHING GOOD ABOUT US IF WE DON'T SHOW THEM. I'M

NOT LIKE THAT. YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT. WHAT ARE YOU SHOWING
THEM?

BOB: WHY DO I HAVE TO SHOW THEM ANYTHING?

ANN: YOU'RE SHOWING THEM A PISSED OFF INDIAN. DON'T YOU THINK WE CAN
SHARE THE BEAUTIFUL PARTS OF WHO WE ARE.

BOB: LIKE WHAT?

ANN: OUR SKY, THEY CAN'T SEE THAT IN THE CITY. AND THE LAND. IT'S CLEAN UP HERE. WE
CAN SWIM IN OUR WATER, DRINK IT. THEY DON'T HAVE ANY OF THAT.

BOB: THAT'S WHY THEY'RE COMING. TO TAKE IT

ANN: BOB A WUS

END OF SCENE BLACK OUT

MUSIC CUE : DRUMMING AND VOCALS

SCENE SEVEN (BILL IN THE CABIN ON THE PHONE)

BILL:

HEY TROY! IT'S BILL. YEAH, YEAH, I'M CALLING FROM NORWAY HOUSE MAN, UP NORTH. THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, THE SAME DAY WE LEFT, IT'S ABOUT AND 8 HOUR DRIVE, INCREDIBLE. YEAH IT, WELL... IT AMAZING, ITS JUST AMAZ...WHAT? A PARTY AT KATHERINES? SATURDAY NIGHT? NO, I WON'T BE BACK 'TILL SUNDAY NIGHT. BUT LISTEN. I GOTTA TELL YA ABOUT THESE PEOPLE, MAN, THEY'RE..THEY ARE WONDERFUL. YA GOTTA MEET THEM, THEY'RE SO...OPEN, I DON'T KNOW. WHAT? NO, NOT PARTIES REALLY, BUT LISTEN, THEY TOOK US TO A WILD MEAT DINNER AND GET THIS, A SWEAT LODGE. NO, A SWEAT LODGE. YEAH ITS LIKE ...I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS LIKE... ABOUT IT WAS....TROY? TROY, WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON... OH...OH, THE CAT,...RIGHT...OUCH....YEAH MAYBE SOME DISINFECTANT ON HIS EAR. AND PUT HIM OUTSIDE...OH, RIGHT HER, PUT HER OUTSIDE. TROY? YEAH, I'M STILL HERE, YEAH, IT WAS A BLAST, A SWEAT LODGE THEY TOOK US TO...IT WAS LIKE A DREAM... AND WHEN I CAME OUT I FELT PURIFIED. AND THESE PEOPLE, YA JUST GOTTA...WHAT? OH...NO, NO, ITS COOL, SURE, SURE,,,YEAH...YEAH. WE'LL TALK WHEN I GET BACK.YEAH. SAY HI TO THEM FOR ME...YEAH, I WILL, CATCH YA LATER..YEAH...BYE.

MUSIC CUE: SINGLE NATIVE VOICE CHANTING

SCENE 8

ON THE LAKE, JUST OUTSIDE THE CABIN
(SUE, BOB AND ANN ARE GETTING ON THE SKI-DOO)

BOB: YOU DRIVE

SUE: HOW DO I DO THIS

ANN: WHERE'S THE CLUTCH? WHERE'S PARK, WHERE'S DRIVE. WHERE ARE THE SEAT BELTS?

BOB: (POINTING) GAS, BRAKE, GOT IT?

SUE: O.K. GOT IT. HERE GOES. TWO EXPERTS BEHIND ME, THEY DON'T KNOW ME OR MY DRIVING RECORD BUT THEY ENCOURAGE. DRIVE. . GO. AHEAD.

(THEY DRIVE)

ANN: DAMMIT I'M, LOST IN THE DARK IN MY OWN HOME TOWN.

BOB: STOP

(THEY GET OFF)

ANN: MY FACE IS NUMB

SUE: WHAT IS THAT

BOB: THAT'S ORION

SUE: LOOK AT THAT, I'VE NEVER SEEN NORTHERN LIGHTS LIKE THAT BEFORE

BOB: MY GRANDFATHER USED TO TELL ME IF YOU WHISTLE THEY'LL DANCE FOR YOU

ANN: DON'T TELL HER THAT

SUE: WHY

ANN: CAUSE THEY'LL COME AND GET YOU, WELL THAT'S WHAT THEY USED TO SAY.

SUE: OH

BOB: (STARTS TO WHISTLE)

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ANN: STOP IT

SUE: WHAT WAS THAT.

(LONG PAUSE SILENCE)

SUE: WHAT'S THAT SOUND

BOB: (HUMBLY) IT'S THE ICE CRACKLING

SUE: IT TAKES A LEAP OF FAITH TO WBOBK ON WATER

(BOB LIES DOWN IN THE SNOW FOLLOWED BY ANN AND THEN SUE)

END OF SCENE ↓

SLOW FADE

SCENE NINE

(BOB COMES IN PUTS DOWN LOGS FOR THE FIRE

LISA ENTERS)

BOB: HI HOW COME YOU DIDN'T GO TO THE POW-WOW PRACTICE

LISA: YOU CAN ONLY DO SO MUCH IN A DAY

BOB: YEAH ME TOO.

LISA: I WASN'T SURE I WOULD, BUT I'M HAVING A GOOD TIME HERE

BOB: THAT'S GOOD

LISA: YOU DON'T REALLY LIKE US DO YOU?

BOB: I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU

LISA: WERE NOT THAT COMPLICATED, IN FACT THE LONGER I'M HERE,
THE MORE I REALIZE THAT

BOB: WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

LISA: WELL, YOU'RE A PERSON YOU'RE AN INDIVIDUAL BUT WHEN YOU WANT TO YOU
CAN FIT INTO A BIGGER THING. I DON'T HAVE THAT OPTION. I CAN'T CONNECT WITH MY
PEOPLE BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHO MY PEOPLE ARE. THERE'S NORWEGIAN AND
CROATIAN ON MY MOTHER'S SIDE. MY FATHERS SIDE IS SCOTTISH AND FRENCH, I
THINK. SO WHAT DOES THAT MAKE ME.

BOB: A MAJOR CROSS-BREED

LISA: (SHE SMILES) YES

BOB: THE FIRES NICE

LISA: DO YOU GET WHAT I'M SAYING

BOB: (HE NODS)

LISA: YEAH, (PAUSE) I'M GOING TO GO FOR A WALK.

(LISA EXITS)

MUSIC CUE: LOW DRUM BEAT

BOB: GRANDFATHERS, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU ARE THERE. IF YOU ARE
YOU WILL KNOW THAT I FEEL LOST. GRANDFATHERS. DO YOU KNOW WHO I
AM, WHAT I AM. DO I BELONG HERE.

MUSIC CUE: DRUMMING AND VOCALS

SCENE TEN

SUE, LISANA AND BILL WATCHING TV AT SUE'S HOUSE

SUE: HELLO?...UH-HUH...WHEN? OH! SURE, WE'LL THINK OF SOMETHING...YEAH, NO THEY'RE HERE...YEAH I WILL, OK. BYE

LISA: WHO WAS THAT?

SUE: MISS M.

BILL: YEAH, WHAT DID SHE WANT?

SUE: THE NORWAY HOUSE GANG IS COMING NEXT WEEK.

BILL: SO?

SUE: WELL WE GOTTA PLAN SOMETHING FOR THEM TO DO.

LISA: WE'LL GO TO THE FORKS.

BILL : NAH!

LISA: MUSEUM.

A & T: NAH!

BILL: BOWLING?

A & A: BOWLING!

BILL: BOWLING!

SUE: I WAS THINKING OF SOMETHING FUN, SOMETHING CULTURAL

LISA: HOW ABOUT A CHURCH?

BILL: THAT'S CULTURAL, BUT IT'S NOT US...SOMETHING THAT REALLY SHOWS US IN THE CITY.

LISA: YEAH, YEAH...THINK...THINK...THINK, FUN.

BILL: BOWLING

LISA: OH, C'MON, THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING.

SUE: I KNOW A SOCIAL.

LISA: I DON'T WANT THEM TO SEE HOW LAME IT IS HERE, FOR US AND BESIDES WE SHOULDN'T GET DRUNK.

BILL: I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT.

SUE: TO BAD WE COULDN'T GO SKIIDOING.

LISA: YEAH, LOOK WE GOTTA DO SOMETHING THAT MEANS SOMETHING, SOMETHING THAT WE LOOK FORWARD TO.

BILL: THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING. THEY TOOK US TO A SWEAT, A POW-WOW. IT WAS AMAZING.

SUE: LOOK, I'M GOING TO SHOOT MYSELF IF WE CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO DO THAT'S IMPORTANT.

BILL: EXCITING.
LISA: SOMETHING CULTURAL
BILL: SPIRITUAL
SUE: ORGASMIC
LISA: YEAH, SOMETHING ABOUT US.
BILL: BOWLING

LISA AND SUE LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND THEN ATTACK BILL.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 11

AT THE TEACHER'S HOUSE

BILL: SHE SAID WE SHOULD MAKE OURSELVES COMFORTABLE.
ANN: WHERE'D SHE GO
SUE: I THINK SHE SAID TO PICK UP HER KIDS FROM SCHOOL
BILL: HEY, YOU GUYS, THEY'VE GOT NINTENDO
BOB: I'LL PLAY YOU A GAME
BILL: YOU'RE ON.
LISA: FORGET IT THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS IS ON NOW?

THEY ALL GO TO THE FAMILY ROOM AND GET ABSORBED IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING. EXCEPT ANN

ANN:

I LOVE THIS HOUSE. I DREAMED OF HAVING A HOUSE LIKE THIS.
MY GOODNESS HOW COULD SHE AFFORD IT?
I WISH I WERE HER DAUGHTER. THIS MUST BE HER
ROOM, LISA WHITE, EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE. AND HER FURNITURE IS LISA
WHITE, JUST AS LITTLE GIRLS SHOULD BE. LOOK AT ALL THESE DOLLS SITTING
ON HER DRESSER. ALL THE LITTLE DRAWING THAT SHE DREW ARE HANGING BESIDE
HER BED. I THINK HER NAME IS AVRIL, OR ...WELL SOMETHING

THIS MUST BE HER SON'S ROOM...IS IT CHRIS. DECORATED IN BLUE, WITH THE
FURNITURE ALL BROWN. HE HAS EVERYTHING A LITTLE BOY SHOULD HAVE. JUST
LOOKING AT HER CHILDREN'S ROOMS, I'D HAVE TO SAY SHE MUST BE A GREAT
MOM

EVERYTHING'S SO NICE AND NEAT, LISA DECORATED WITH WALLPAPER
I CAN HEAR HER KIDS, THEY JUST CAME HOME FROM SCHOOL
NOW THE HOUSE IS FULL OF NOISE.

CHRIS IS YELLING, "PLAY WITH ME", AVRIL IS SCREAMING "MOM"
I GUESS THIS IS HOW IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN FOR HER..

SCENE 13

THE TOAD IN THE HALL, A PUB

ANN: (LOOKING AROUND) WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

BILL: THE TOAD IN THE HOLE, OUR HANG OUT

ANN: LOOKS MORE LIKE THE WHOLE IN THE FROG.

SUE: DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT THE PLAYGREEN INN, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET
BEAT UP.

ANN: (ANNOYED LOOK)

(THEY GO OVER TO THE TABLE AND SIT DOWN)

BOB: WHAT ARE WE DOING TOMORROW?

SUE: DOES IT MATTER?

LISA: WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE...

SUE: (CUTTING HER OFF) NO, THEIR NOT GOING TO LIKE ANY THING

BILL: SUE, DON'T START.

ANN: START WHAT? IS SOMETHING WRONG?

LISA: NO , NO EVERYTHING COOL.

SUE: NO IT'S NOT COOL. I'M PISSED OFF. NOTHING IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU.
EVERYTHING IS BORING.

LISA: SUE!

SUE: (NOT LISTENING) WHEN WE WERE IN NORWAY HOUSE AT LEAST WE MADE AN
ATTEMPT TO GET INTO THE THINGS YOU WERE SHOWING US. BUT HERE. I DON'T
KNOW. YOU DON'T WANT TO TRY. WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

BOB: WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY.

SUE: SOMETHING. ANYTHING

ANN: WELL, I LIKED IT.

SUE: I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO LIKE IT. I'M ASKING YOU TO REACT.

ANN: WELL, WE APPRECIATE WHAT YOU GUYS ARE DOING.

SUE: HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO KNOW. YOU HARDLY SAY ANYTHING.

(BOB EXITS)

BILL: THAT WASN'T FAIR SUE.

SUE: I THINK IT WAS. I'M JUST BEING HONEST.

ANN: WELL, MAYBE HE IS TOO.

BILL: WELL, WE CAN'T JUST LET HIM WANDER AROUND DOWNTOWN HIMSELF. I'LL
GO FIND HIM.

LISA: NO, LET ME.

(LISA EXITS)

SCENE 14
ON THE STREET

LISA: LOOK BOB, I'M SORRY, SUE WENT A BIT TO FAR.
BOB: (NO RESPONSE)
LISA: DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY SHE SAID IT?
BOB: (NO RESPONSE)
LISA: WE'VE REALLY BEEN TRYING TO GIVE YOU GUYS SOMETHING THAT SHOWS WHO WE ARE. WE LIKED WHAT YOU SHARED WITH US. WE WANTED TO DO THE SAME FOR YOU. WE PUT OURSELVES OUT FOR YOU AND WE JUST WANT TO KNOW THAT YOU GIVE A SHIT.
BOB: YOU WANT ME TO SAY THE THINGS YOU SAY, AND ACT THE WAY YOU ACT BUT I CAN'T.
LISA: WE WERE ONLY TRYING. ITS FUNNY, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASY.
LISA: MAYBE WERE JUST TOO DIFFERENT
BOB: MAYBE THAT'S A PLACE TO START

(MUSIC CUE: THE TWO GROUPS GO BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL PLACES FROM THE TOP OF THE PLAY.)

LISA: I AM LISTENING

BOB: I AM LISTENING

BILL: I AM REACHING

ANN: I AM REACHING

SUE: I AM CHANGING

BOB: I AM CHANGING

END OF PLAY