Illinois State University

ISU ReD: Research and eData

Theses and Dissertations

7-2-2018

Co-Creating our Lives, Performing our Multi-Cultural Worlds

Aidah Nalubowa
Illinois State University, msbatya@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/etd

Part of the Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons, and the Theatre and Performance Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Nalubowa, Aidah, "Co-Creating our Lives, Performing our Multi-Cultural Worlds" (2018). *Theses and Dissertations*. 962.
https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/etd/962

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact ISUReD@ilstu.edu.

www.manaraa.com

CO-CREATING OUR LIVES, PERFORMING OUR MULTI-CULTURAL WORLDS

Aidah Nalubowa

96 Pages

In his Foreword for *Theatre and Migration* (Cox 2014), director Peter Sellars writes, "None of us are the picture in our passports" (viii). Neither are we the person that we look or sound like at first glance or the first meeting. Rather, who we are is shaped by among other factors our environment and cultural upbringing. Because traditionally people from different places perform and participate in social and cultural events that are naturally "scripted" differently, we are so much more than the pictures and names we carry on our identification documents. Migration, Sellars continues, is "one of the most basic human yearnings, one of the most basic ways in which human beings complete themselves, one of the most basic ways worlds open, eyes open, and hearts open" (ix). Globally, theatre and performance explores the human condition and challenges the participants – artists and audience members alike – to recognize and think critically about their role in creating safe spaces for equal and mutual co-existence. In my research, I examine multicultural social performances using a theatre process that encourages and recognizes participants' ideas and experiences. This process creates open spaces for everyone to tell their story and be who they are with pride and authority while learning and unlearning about each other and takes as its goal the creation of new shared communities, first in theatre and possibly out into our waking lives.

KEYWORDS: Interculturalism; Migration and Immigration; Multiculturalism; Multicultural Theatre, Participatory Theatre, Social Performances

www.manaraa.com

CO-CREATING OUR LIVES, PERFORMING OUR MULTICULTURAL WORLDS

AIDAH NALUBOWA

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

MASTER OF ARTS

School of Theatre and Dance

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

2018

www.manaraa.com

© 2018 Aidah Nalubowa

www.manaraa.com

CO-CREATING OUR LIVES, PERFORMING OUR MULTICULTURAL WORLDS

AIDAH NALUBOWA

COMITTEE MEMBERS

Ann Haugo, Co-chair

Michael J. Vetere III, Co-chair

Connie de Veer

www.manaraa.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'm immensely grateful to everyone who gave their time, opinions, laughter and honest self during the workshops I conducted. Thank you very much for always showing up! I never did and will never take your time, experiences and contribution to this research for granted. I will forever be indebted to you! I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Ann Haugo, Dr. Michael J. Vetere III and Connie de Veer who were kind and generous with their time and guidance. I would specifically like to acknowledge Dr. Ann Haugo whose patience, guidance and nurturing has changed my view of what being a teacher means.

This thesis is dedicated to my great grandmother, the late Ms Hadijah Nanfuka and my grandfather the late Ssalongo Kiguli Sulaiman. Thank you for teaching me what selfless love is!

A. N.

www.manaraa.com

CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMNENTS	i
CONTENTS	ii
CHAPTER I: RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND	1
Introduction: Migrations	1
Purpose of the Study	4
Need for the Study	4
Research Questions	9
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
Introduction	10
Summary	21
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	23
Scope of the Study	23
Participatory Theatre	25
Participants	31
Demographics	31
Limitations	32
Summary	34
CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	35
Introduction	35
Workshop and Observations	37
Day One	37

www.manaraa.com

Day Two 44

Day Three 51

Day Four 58

Interviews 63

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION 68

Summary 68

Discussion 69

Race and Racism 69

Defining and Confronting Racism 70

Representation and Misrepresentation 71

Addressing Stereotypical Narratives 73

Creating our Desired Multicultural World 76

Recommendation for Further Research 78

Conclusion 79

WORKS CITED 83

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM 88

APPENDIX B: PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE FORM 90

APPENDIX C: VIDEO RELEASE FORM 91

APPENDIX D: PRESENTATION SCRIPT 92

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 95

APPENDIX F: EMAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGE 96

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

"When we act in everyday life we do not merely re-act to indicative stimuli, we act in frames we have wrested from the genres of cultural performance." – Victor Turner

Introduction: Migrations

In the Fall of 2016 I embarked on my Master's degree in Theatre Studies at Illinois State University, thousands of miles away from the home I had known the rest of my life, Uganda. I was required to get a Visa before I could set foot in the United States of America for school. Uganda being one of the developing countries or, as countries like that are commonly referred to, a "Third World" country, the process requires that in addition to filling in application forms and providing your information, you present yourself with your passport and other documents for an interview at the consular office. So, I did. And after a few questions, I was handed a blue paper which meant I had the "permission" to come to the U.S., and I was instructed on when and how to pick up my passport – the same passport, now with a Visa, that I had to present at the airport (the port of entry) to finally be let into the country, after a couple of questions of course. While questioning you, the officers both at the consular offices and at airports or other ports of entry glance at the picture in the passport or travel documents and then back at the eager and sometimes nervous and tired face on the other side of their glass window or table for seconds. Repeating the motion twice or thrice, they make the decision that one is eligible to enter their country or not. Of course, there are other factors considered in the process, but one wonders what they see when they look at the pictures in the passports of the many people they see and interview, what they read in these static faces in the pictures, what they are looking to see when they do the "eyes up and down" motion and how they arrive at their decisions.

www.manaraa.com

In the Foreword for Cox's *Theatre and Migration*, director Peter Sellars starts, "None of us are the picture in our passports" **(**viii**)**. And neither are we the person that we look like or sound like at first glance or first meeting. Rather, who we are is shaped by many factors; among them are our environment and cultural upbringing. Because traditionally people from different places perform and participate in social and cultural events that are naturally "scripted" differently, we are so much more than the pictures we carry on our identification documents or the person we may seem like at first glance.

Migration as defined in *The Sage Dictionary of Sociology* is *"*The movement of people from one country to another, with the intention of staying, … further described as either 'emigration' (leaving) or 'immigration' (entering). (……) In a strictly logical sense there can be no immigration or emigration until national boundaries and national identities have been introduced" (Bruce and Yearley 197). Sellars believes that migration is "one of the most basic ways in which human beings complete themselves, one of the most basic ways worlds open, eyes open, and hearts open" (ix). Having been born and raised in a country with people from predominantly one race, even with prior knowledge, it was shockingly new for me to adapt to this multi-racial community; learning how to address people, updating myself and my vocabulary in order to not offend people, and adapting, for the first time in my life, to live in the community as part of the minority race. Taft and Robins write in *International Migrations: The Immigrant in the Modern World* that migration "makes possible admission to new primary relations and develops mutual appreciation and mutual understanding" (5). Sellars confirms,

> Every culture on Earth has primary and foundational myths, legends, and stories which understand that in order to find yourself, you have to leave your own country and your own people and go to a distant land where you will be challenged, amazed, and

www.manaraa.com

transformed and where, in adversity, you will meet your hidden heroic self and find friends you never imagined you would have. (ix)

Today people from various places travel from one country to another for purposes of education, work, political refuge, medical care or pleasure, and aside from their passports and suitcases, they bring with them their cultures and ways of life. It is not about the dominant nations exporting their cultures to less dominant ones anymore. While these newcomers are adapting to the new cultures in their new settlements, the people there are adapting to the cultures of the visitors too. The understanding and appreciation is not automatic or easy. It is indeed a trial and error process for both the newcomer and the natives who both "have strong in-group preferences. They feel at home in the in-group and fear the out-group" (Taft and Robins 6). The process is further complicated by the fact that we find ourselves in a world that is shaped by a painful history. This history and unfortunately present, complicates relationships that are already burdened with differences in language, beliefs, traditions, politics, misleading propaganda and many as such. Performance Studies scholar Richard Schechner explains that, "the differences among cultures are so profound that no theory of performance is universal: one size cannot fit all. Nor are the playing fields where cultures interact level. The current means of cultural interaction – globalization – enacts extreme imbalances of power, money, access to media, and control over resources" (2-3). It is therefore a series of suspicions, adaptations, and renewed opportunities to learn about oneself and other people, to discover and adapt to each other in a world where unfortunately, the playing field is not leveled. There are no set rules to play by, and there is no one standard rule for intercultural integration.

www.manaraa.com

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study was to observe and find out how people from different countries and backgrounds interact with and adapt to each other's cultures, using the Participatory Theatre approach to encourage dialogue about diverse cultures, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. Participants were a select number of people from both the international and domestic populations at Illinois State University and the nearby community. The broad goals of the study were to ascertain how participants with varying cultural backgrounds and contrasting cultural experiences respond to and behave in intercultural social interactions and experience social cultural exchanges.

I also sought to document how people from different countries, cultures and beliefs relate with each other, address cultural misconceptions and myths, confront their own perception of others, learn and unlearn from each other and adapt to each other's differences to forge a new community or fit into an existing one.

Need for the Study

Migration is not a new trend. People have been migrating for as long as the world has stood, from their small villages to neighboring villages within their cultural ethnic groupings, from one town to the other, adopting the practices of their hosts or retaining theirs and existing side by side. With the improvement in transportation from one country to another, for purposes of exploration, trade, and political reasons, peoples from countries like Portugal and Spain and later England, France and others traveled and acquired states overseas to expand their empires settling there for years and some even permanently. With the empires came their cultures and ways of living which in many cases were imposed on the conquered territories with attempts to assimilate them into their colonizer's culture and erasing theirs completely. Slave trade and

www.manaraa.com

slavery also saw and influx of black slaves from Africa into America who after the abolition of slave trade never went back "home."

For the longest time, the world survived on colonialism, racial and cultural prejudice and privilege. "During colonization, a racial ideology developed to rationalize and justify the exploitation of non-Europeans. European colonizers reduced indigenous people and African slaves to biologically inferior and savage "red" and "black" races that needed to be civilized." (Toro-Morn and Alicea xvii). Anthropologists and other scholars spread propaganda and ideology of racial inequality, making arguments for the superiority of white people over other races in their territories and other places in the world. As some of the newcomers settled into their newly acquired territories, most countries put in place laws of controlling multiethnicity, laws that managed the flow of immigrants and what type of immigrants ended up within their newly formed borders and what cultural practices were recognized. Australia's "Whites Only" immigration law formally known as the *Immigration Restriction Act* of 190, for example, ensured that only Europeans immigrated there and as per the constitution, Aboriginal people did not take part in the nation's population census. The case was the same with the native people in New Zealand and in America, natives of the United States. Even though they had tribal citizenship, Native Americans were not recognized as American citizens by congress until 1924. The goal was to maintain a monolithic cultural society at least politically (or on paper). This type of propaganda and laws helped to protect their economic control and cemented their power both political and cultural over their colonies. When Japan proposed a clause on equality for all humans to the League of Nations in 1919, according to Ali Rattansi in *Multiculturalism: A Very Short Introduction*, western powers "were involved in defending empires in large parts of Asia and Africa based quite explicitly on racial principles which deemed white people superior to

www.manaraa.com

other 'races'" (14). Therefore, they declined the clause. Without the recognition of other people's equality to them and/or keeping those who didn't look like them (white) out, these countries didn't have any political or social obligation to recognize these people's cultures or customs and therefore could maintain a monolithic cultural society with values only uniform to those they acknowledged.

The laws however as history has proven, can only do much. Socially, people adapted to the cultures of the people in their new settlements, or as the indigenous people adapted to those of their visitors, even in places where assimilation or segregation was the norm. In that context, although most communities were segregated, it is safe to argue that countries like America, with different ethnic groups like free African slaves and Native peoples on top of the majority white settlers was multicultural.

With improvements in transport and more reason to travel, "Now most people with any cosmopolitan pretensions find themselves socialized to some extent in more than one culture" (Fisher 191). Certainly, many people are traveling and encountering people with different cultures on their journeys or on their destinations and the adaption to these cultures is not easy or does not happen instantly because as Fisher observes, "When one learns culture as a child, the common sense of the culture is absorbed and remains largely out of awareness. When people enter a new culture later in life, their common sense remains imprinted indelibly in their psyches to block the new, so they have to apply greater intellectual effort to "read" the web and capture the logic of the second culture" (192).

Culture is a very complex topic. Every discipline and every individual will define it differently depending on the context in which you are speaking. For the purpose of this study culture will be defined by borrowing Bruce and Yearley's description: "the totality of (…) shared

www.manaraa.com

beliefs, norms, values, rituals, language, history, knowledge and social character. …It implies those things that are conscious, that are kept in being only because we choose to maintain them. …Culture is a human creation into which we are socialised and which we can, with some effort, modify" (58). Culture is learned and shared behavior that is passed from one generation to the other with accepted and frowned upon customs depending on a particular group's values.

Traditionally, there are events and actions that people everywhere in the world perform or participate in, from weddings to religious proceedings, dating to the simplest of things like greetings or responding to your parents when they call after you or when they say something to you. Naturally, these are performed differently and accorded varying importance. As Madison confirms, "...diverse cultures and subcultures may practice each of these activities in strikingly different ways" (171), the importance we attach to these activities and how we interpret them differs too. What I hold dear as a *Muganda* (my tribe) from central Uganda might not make sense to another person; it might even be laughable. I was recently talking to friend's mother who told me that she and her husband opened a wedding account when they had three girls because in the American culture, the girl's family pays for the wedding. To me, this didn't make sense at first, because in my own culture, the opposite is done. The boy's family takes care of all wedding expenses on top of offering dowry to the girl's family. But that is the thing about cultural practices, there is "no one universally preferred or natural way of life…" so, understandably, the "standards for evaluating cultures must, to a large extent, be comparative and relative" (Fisher 44). I could not use the standards with which I evaluate my culture while approaching the American culture and the reverse is true.

Migration and immigration which are the root of intercultural encounters and societies, did not start today; they certainly are not going to end tomorrow. Each of us is bound to have

www.manaraa.com

encounters with people from distinct cultures. Sometimes, these are brief encounters like on a plane, or airport, a short trip to a foreign country, a conference and other places. But sometimes, the encounters are long and result in lasting relationships. Most times when migrants arrive in a new society, because they are the minority, their identities are defined by those in the receiving communities who project their narratives and idea of the newcomers onto them. In return, the newcomers sometimes feel the pressure to fit into that box. Qadeer believes that the process of cultural exchange between the newcomers and the receiving communities "follows a path that leads from exposures to encounters, tolerance, engagement, acceptance, and relationships" through which the "ethics of mutual accommodation and cultural exchanges evolves" (151). For this, the skill needed is not just "observing *what* is going on, but exploring the *why* behind the behavior" (Fisher 187).

But this is not easy, Qadeer writes in *Multicultural Cities* that "this is an ongoing project that moves in a rhythm of two steps forward and one backward" (151). We blunder, make up our minds about people that are different from us and approach them with preconceived assumptions about who their kind is like, or known to be, what they can and can't do. We dismiss them and their opinions and in some cases, treat them as such without a second thought or chance as individuals like us as we navigate these relationships.

There is no doubt however that when people meet, these interactions produce cultural spaces which become breeding spaces for new cultures. So, how do people learn ways, languages both verbal and nonverbal, create a space that can allow a confluence of their cultures, values and identity, and what is the process of this adaptation and creation of this new community and culture for people belonging to both registers of either cultures or those in between? This is an ongoing conversation where all possible approaches need to be employed.

www.manaraa.com

Every person, every culture, every ethnicity, every voice regardless of origin or power, needs to be represented and included in the integration and redefinition of our multicultural communities.

Research Questions

In my research, I seek to find out how people from different countries and backgrounds interact with and adapt to each other's culture. As a guide, I will be asking the following questions;

1) How do the students at a State University in an urban mid-west region and members of the surrounding community respond to intercultural social interactions and experience social cultural exchanges?

2) How do they perceive those from countries or cultures other than theirs and how does that impact the way they treat them?

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

By examining available literature in multicultural studies and multicultural theatre, the review of literature focuses on multiculturalism, looks at recent trends and approaches to multiculturalism, how multiculturalism is different in policy and social reality, how political, social, economic and cultural power is produced, who produces and benefits from it and how it affects people who are outside that racial or cultural equation and how they respond to it. I also assess the role of theatre in reconciling cultural differences and negotiating understanding between different groups of people, how theatre makers and scholars are interpreting and responding to the multicultural question and how we can use the practice efficiently to open and maintain dialogue on multiculturalism and propagate multicultural language and behavior in and outside the theatre. Although my research was concentrated in the U.S., I will use literature from research in other parts of the world where I feel that there is correlation between the studies.

Multiculturalism is a very debated concept both in terms of policy or response towards the issue of growing need for cultural understanding, and what it really means. Although the concept is a fairly new one, many scholars have suggested different meanings for the term over the years. They have advanced different definitions and ways of implementing the concept. For example, Wieviorka notes that the term has been used interchangeably with cultural pluralism, pluriculturalism, and interculturalism although these terms irrespective of a few similarities, are different especially in implementation.

According to the *Harper Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, multiculturalism is, "The acknowledgement and promotion of cultural pluralism as a feature of many societies (.....) multiculturalism celebrates and seeks to protect cultural variety, for example, minority

www.manaraa.com

languages. At the same time, it focuses on the often unequal relationship of minority to mainstream cultures" In *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines*, Meer and Modood define multiculturalism as, "the political accommodation by the state and/or a dominant group of all minority cultures defined first and foremost by reference to a race or ethnicity, and, additionally but more controversially, by reference to other group-defining characteristics such as nationality, aboriginality or religion" (113). Their definition lays the burden on the policy makers' recognition of the multicultural nature of the societies and implementation of policies that cater to this cultural diversity. "It rests upon the premise that ethnic groups that receive fair treatment from the government, through the democratic social contract that organizes such societies, will live together harmoniously in the nation-state" (Williams 3). Rattansi defines multiculturalism in terms of policies too but briefly branches off to acknowledge that the term is also "confusingly" used to refer to multiethnic societies. What these scholars acknowledge is the existence of multiple cultures be that religious, ethnic, national or any group-defining criteria. And the people from these societies are the main focus of this study.

While scholars debate the differences in the terms, some politicians and policy makers alike keep advocating for interculturalism "support for cross-cultural dialogue and challenging self-segregation tendencies within cultures. It involves moving beyond mere passive acceptance of a multicultural fact of multiple cultures effectively existing in a society and instead promotes dialogue and interaction between cultures." (Definitions.net) instead of multiculturalism.

Although different racial and ethnic groups like African-Americans, Native Americans and Americans of European origins co-existed in the country for decades, multiculturalism is a fairly new term. According to Rattansi, multicultural societies were only recognized in Canada

www.manaraa.com

and Australia in the 1960s and 1970s and later in the U.S. The term only made its way into the world dictionary in the 1990s and over the years, scholars have defined, studied the theories and practice of multiculturalism. Some scholars argue that multiculturalism is failure and menace and therefore the country should emphasize assimilation. (Schmidt 1997, Caravantes 2010) Giving the examples of the Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazis and the old and abolished Sati culture of burning the widow among India's Hindus, Schmidt goes ahead to proclaim that all cultures are not equal. "To say that all cultures are of equal value is to give these particular cultures equal honor and respect" (Schmidt 34). With more examples like female genital mutilation practiced in parts of some African countries, Europe and North America and others, one is tempted to agree with him. The cultural practices he makes examples of are immoral and in fact illegal. But that is per U.S. standards where the scholar is from. Are the practices illegal or immoral? Of course, that is subjest for debate. Other people who do not belong to these cultures might find them immoral and illegal while the people that belong to these cultures may not. And that is because they view them in the perspectives of their own. Even then, the cultural practices would be illegal or immoral and not the entire culture. Schmidt also cites the cultures of the Spanish and Portuguese settlers (South America) and the French and British settlers (North America) who emphasized different values as the reason for the gap in economic prosperity of South and North America. To completely dismiss the idea of multiculturalism, Schmidt argues that, "If cultures are truly equal, then there is no need to change the American culture by introducing the values, beliefs and practices of other cultures" (40). This argument implies that multiculturalists want to replace the American culture with the minority cultures, which he alludes to as he concludes this chapter "If America were to fully accept the multiculturalist doctrine of cultural equality, it would undoubtedly have the effect of drastically diluting its present national and cultural pride" (40).

www.manaraa.com

He is wrong in two ways: multiculturalists do not want to replace the American culture with any other culture but are arguing for shared space for all cultures, "both the acknowledgement of cultural pluralism and the promotion of a political climate in which the maintenance of diversity is encouraged." (*The Sage Dictionary of Sociology* 2006). Secondly, the belief that accepting other cultures dilutes the American values and erodes its cultural pride is misinformed and prejudiced. This argument positions the American culture as superior to others which multiculturalists contend is wrong. By making this argument, Schmidt is no different from the settlers in the U.S. who used "scientific racism" and "eugenics" (Saenz et al 220) to keep immigrants like the Jewish from coming to America in order to preserve the American culture and values. Ironically, while declaring that America's multiculturalism is a failure because it does not make it "clearer that some cultures are better at promoting success than others" (78), Caravantes, another anti multiculturalism scholar cites the Jewish and Asians who during the times of the settler would not be allowed into the U.S. for the same reason as successful at instilling these values in their children comparing them to the Hispanics.

Scholars Meer, Modood, Kymlicka and others stand on the other side of the argument, suggesting ways to approach and successfully implement multiculturalism. The three have argued that instead of doing away with multiculturalism and replacing it with interculturalism, policy makers and interculturalists ought to try implementing both approaches instead of substituting one for the other. Kymlicka points out that that multiculturalism "highlights the problem in the state-sponsored privileging of nationhood, and in the exclusions, this has entailed, which makes clear why it is a matter of justice and justice and collective responsibly" and suggests that the task is "redefining nationhood in a multicultural direction" (158-177).

www.manaraa.com

In his article "Is Multiculturalism the Solution," French sociologist, Wieviorka offers three analytical approaches to multicultural practice, the 'sociological approach, *stricto sensu'*, which examines how multiculturalism works in the social context, how cultural differences are received or processed. He positions multiculturalism in this case as a 'problem', a challenge that has to be addressed and suggests the "political philosophy approach" as a response to "…question in what way it is desirable or undesirable, what it contributes, and what it costs society, in the light of criteria which may be moral or ethical, but also economic. Then the political science approach would be concerned with studying and evaluating the multicultural trends and its effects" (881-910).

Still, the implementation of such policies doesn't come without push back or criticism from the anti-multiculturalists. For example, multiculturalism is associated with encouraging division and disunity among different cultural groups which undermines the "core values" of the nations (Murphy 2012, Qadeer 2016). In the article "Multiculturalism on Trial," political columnist Tim Donner in fact refers to multiculturalism as an epidemic and like many others on that side of the debate, accuses immigrants of illegal activities and the overall crime surge in the places they go. Immigrants are also accused of segregating themselves and forming states of their own. "A critical mass of these Muslims have refused to assimilate, confining themselves strictly to their own ethnic ghettos." Donner writes. He is not alone on this. Multiculturalism critics have for long made claims that immigrants especially from the Middle East, form their own small communities and refuse to engage or adapt to the cultures or sometimes common laws of the places they settle in. Multiculturalism and its associated policies have been massively accused of retreating "from enlightenment principles of reason and universality, and with commitment to preserving cultural diversity at the expense of liberalism's most fundamental

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

commitments to individual rights and moral equality of all human beings" yet always being " far too willing to tolerate intolerant cultural minorities and far too reluctant to sanction intervention when minorities take advantage of this forbearance to undermine the freedom and dignity of their own members." (Murphy 3). Donner warns that unless the newcomers assimilate, "We shall never find peace and harmony in this world. But we'll come an awful lot closer to it in a society which recognizes the manifest danger of multiculturalism and affirms a common culture that welcomes all who share its values." Donner and others like him expect immigrants to adapt themselves to their host's values, cultures and languages. For example, Caravantes insists that foreign people be required to not only learn but also speak English when they come to live in America. It is their duty to suspend their own traditions and sentiments and assimilate.

This obviously does not come easy or in an instant because as Fisher writes, "When one learns a culture as a child, the common sense of the culture is absorbed and remains largely out of awareness. When people enter a new culture later in life, their original common sense remains imprinted indelibly in their psyches to block the new, so they apply a greater intellectual effort to "read" the web and capture the logic of the second culture" (191-192). People giving up their cultures and identities cannot happen the moment they step into the new land: "For if a culture is learned and results in socially shared thinking and behavior, it can be absorbed by newcomers in bits and pieces in simple day-to-day experience," continues Fisher. Martin J. Gannon writes in *Understanding Global Cultures* "…Cultures tend to change only slowly, typically at a snail's pace, and the influence of culture persists for centuries even after mass immigrations take place" (6).

For some people, the general feeling is that with these diversity and inclusiveness policies, the scale has been tilted in favor of newcomers and minorities which has caused a

www.manaraa.com

backlash to multiculturalism as people nourish pronounced and subtle negative feelings towards immigrants and minority groups. Rattansi writes, "…too many of the worries caused by growing economic insecurity, and more general social fragmentation, have been displaced onto issues of immigration" (5).

All the opposition and backlash makes multicultural policies or social practices even harder, yet multicultural populations are growing. The world is quickly becoming globalized with "the rapid movement of capital, labor, ideas and products across nations and the resulting interlinking of economies and societies" (Qadeer 48). Toro-Morn and Alicea observe that "growing economic integration and interdependence between countries in the world economy" (xvi) results in domestic and international populations adapting to different ways of living and relating with people whose cultures and ways of life could be otherwise different. In his article "Coping with the Mindset of Dimension," Glenn Fisher acknowledges that, "Now most people with any cosmopolitan pretensions find themselves socialized to some extent in more than one culture; they expand the complications of their thought patterns accordingly" (191).

William warns in the introduction to *The Multicultural Dilemma*, "Immigration effects and the multicultural dilemma can be expected to be the most pronounced in advanced industrial countries, which are targets for immigrants seeking a better economic condition or way of life, although there are residual effects in native societies where immigrants came from as well" (7). With new waves of people from the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America, multicultural communities are ever growing in the U.S. and so are the policy demands. The immigrants along with the minority groups like the African Americans and First Peoples are putting pressure on key players in policy making and society for recognition and equal treatment. Multiculturalists

www.manaraa.com

have also been pushing for redefinition of societies, and recognition of everyone's cultural identity

Frame explains "Defining Culture and Interculturality in the Workplace" that "Culture is an idealised construct associated with group belonging. It corresponds to the shared knowledge (meanings, values, representations and so on) attributed to members of a particular group, developed and modified through interactions with other group members" (2). He argues that people typically adopt their culture from their closest environment and what they learn defines what he believes is their unconscious culture which also happens to be the primary make -up of most people. This "Primary socialisation" has a larger influence on a person's behavior compared to the "Secondary socialisation cultures" which are usually "learnt relative to" the former. For people learn or immerse themselves in a secondary culture, they need to have constant experiences with that particular culture as their primary culture is strongly imprinted in their unconscious. He stresses that learning and therefore a change of attitude is a conscious choice. On that note, Voyer advocates for and hails diversity training as a way to change attitudes among different cultural groups because multicultural acceptance and sensitivity is not born, it is trained, she argues. "Properly multicultural selves are not merely the natural extension of interior individual qualities. Instead, people produce modern identities vis-a`-vis diversity through the use of language and the negotiation of its meaning" (1875). Voyer also explains that "...multicultural discourse acquires a moral status as a language that is free from bias and privilege and should be used in all circumstances." (1881) and this can be achieved through training.

Indeed, Institutions too are making more efforts to put in place policies, offices and training for integration, inclusion and dialogue that recognizes and fosters diversity and manages

www.manaraa.com

the new trends in multiethnicity and multiculturalism. Individuals too are seeking ways to inform themselves and become more sensitive to others. The participatory theatre approach used in my study, is one of many ways that can be used for multicultural understanding and sensitivity training. And the results for example, the change in attitudes among individuals and communities will take a while.

These efforts are of course, are put in the same communities that multicultural critics operate too. These critics for example do not see the point of immigrant parents raising their children speaking the languages of their origin country or instilling the cultures of the nations they left behind and believe it is a disservice to these children as they grow up lacking a sense of belonging. They lack the culture of the country they grew up in yet they don't belong to the country whose culture they were raised in. Infact, this is why they join gangs when they grow up (Caravantes 2010). William notes that "xenophobic and far right-wing parties and interest groups have gained ground in recent decades, extending the pressure on advanced industrial country governments to adopt increasingly restrictive migration policies" (7). In 2017, Donald Trump, newly elected president of the United States of America, proposed a travel ban on numerous predominantly Muslim countries which was passed early in July of 2018. Additionally, the U.S. government through their "Zero Tolerance policy" is separating families that enter the country illegally or come seeking asylum (Daily News). In May 2018 President Trump was quoted calling illegal immigrants "animals" (The New York Times). Earlier in the year, the president referred to poor countries as "shithole countries" and gave the example of desired immigrants as Norwegian. These claims were interpreted by the media as a desire for white immigrants than people from Africa, or Mexico (The Washington Post).

www.manaraa.com

In an opinion pieces in *The Washington Post*, Sociologist professor Aliz Luft and Georgetown town University PhD Candidate Daniel Solomon analyzed the U.S. President's statements and the impact of such rhetoric and dehumanizing language on sentiments towards immigrants and general perception of "the other." They argued that while it may not directly result in violence, it fuels and possibly normalizes such "extreme perspectives" which changes people's views of what is acceptable. It cements the beliefs of those who hold such views that immigrants are bad people, and makes it hard for others to speak up against such views even if they do not believe them because, as Qadeer observes, "Their positive feelings are tinged with lingering distrust of the other" (163), by this continuous propaganda which "perpetuates the idea that the threat described is real" (Luft and Solomon). This obviously affects how Americans view immigrants and how freely immigrants can interact with Americans. Cox intimates that "The degree to which different migrant groups can manoeuvre within the frame of a city's endorsed narratives has a lot to do with where they sit on a spectrum from *heritage* to *undesirable*" (58).

Cox, Walker and May task theatre with the responsibility of improving relations between cultural groups creating new narratives. "Stories can be powerful forces of transforming, helping us remember and reclaim the past and call forth new visions of the future" (May 1).

As institutions and individuals are advocating for the recognition of all cultures, theatre makers too are adding their voice to the movement. For years, playwrights and theatre companies have produced what is typically called multicultural theatre. In *Theatre and Migration*, Emma Cox examines how different theatre artists are employing the practice to tackle issue of migration. Patrice Pavis's *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture* (2003) examines the issues of colonization, cultural appropriation in intercultural theatre experiences and in "International

www.manaraa.com

Theatre Today" (2010) discusses how different texts can and have been produced in cultures different from the playwright's or original production. Pavis also examines other theatre artists collaborating and working with people from other countries and cultures. Knowles (2010), like Pavis, looks at how theatre has been put to use or how effective and/or successful intercultural production and collaborations were. While these texts were well researched, their emphasis is the use of the art form to engage the artists themselves, and the audience and the analysis of that process. There is also a growing discourse on using theatre to engage the community as partners in the making of theatre that undertakes the issues of culture, interculturalism, multiculturalism, pluralism, diversity and inclusivity.

In "The Dilemma of Multiculturalism in Theatre" Walker challenges theatre makers to address the pitfalls of multiculturalism as well as we celebrate and highlight its advantages. Walker strongly believes that the practice has the means to engage people with issues on the topic but points out "Theorists generally define multiculturalism from a Western European basis, implying the assimilation of other groups into the base culture" (7). Pruitt's article, although not about theatre or multiculturalism in America, raises the same concerns, "Multiculturalism is most often understood as relating to the white majority and immigrant. Migrants are positioned in particular ways in relation to the white majority and Indigenous peoples" (271). Thus, for some institutions and artists theatre is multicultural when for example an Asian play is added to the season or when a traditionally western play is cast with actors of diverse backgrounds. Walker argues that this is not enough. Because if the same approach was taken from a "non-European, nonmale base, multiculturalism means not only including people as "nons," but, more importantly, recognizing the equality and value of many cultures and people." (7-8) To avoid 'othering' or tokenizing minority cultures, walker challenges theatres to put in place structures

www.manaraa.com

that allow artists to have these difficult conversations and debates on multiculturalism and diversity and make way for telling all the stories that must be told, 'validating both the story and the storyteller" (8). To develop a culture of tolerance, diversity and inclusivity, multicultural attitudes need to be fostered. Such dialogue is way overdue.

Theresa May believes that a community-based theatre process "provides a model for how the arts can open a space for multiple and underrepresented viewpoints and contribute to healing historical trauma" (11). May describes a theatre-making format in which discussions are held and everyone is given the chance to tell their own story in their own time, a theatre that allows spaces where "...difference is valued, and disagreement becomes a source of new knowledge" (7). Unlike the earlier described theatre, this one values everybody's experiences and input: "...everyone paddles, everyone gets wet, and everyone learns how dependent we are on one another…" (7).

Summary

The study looks at multicultural social interactions and performances. By encouraging dialogue around cultural difference and the perception of these differences through participatory theatre, the study investigates the participants' attitudes towards other cultures and negotiation of these differences in the communities.

This chapter examines literature on multiculturalism and theatre and a way to encourage dialogue on diversity and dominate multicultural language inclusivity. A review of literature found that while there is a large body of literature on multiculturalism both in the U.S. and other parts of the world especially Britain and Australia, not much research has documented Participatory Theatre to work with people both artists and especially community members, on matters of multiculturalism and its success. A body of work does exist on what is typically

www.manaraa.com

referred to as multicultural theatre or cross-cultural theatre, in which there is collaboration between theatre artists from different cultures. While it aims to engage audiences on cultural difference, this theatre (cross-cultural) doesn't create the space or the time and possibly the comfort for both artists and community members to confront their multicultural views. Cox and Knowles for example put together good research on how artists are addressing issue of migrations and Interculturalism respectively. (Schchner 2013) briefly discusses culture and theatre. While these works were brilliant in their research and were effective in framing the issues, they were not necessarily helpful in developing the practical application for my study.

The review of literature also found that different scholars have different definitions for multiculturalism from the political perspective (policy making), to the social perspective (i.e., how people relate with each other in a multicultural setting). Whilst not a broadly researched area, the review of literature also found that multiculturalism does not apply only to countries or societies but also individual human beings, "Even with the very categorizations that we rely on (for example, 'black', 'gay', 'Asian' or 'disabled') [many people] no longer seem to be able to tell us much about who people are, what lives they lead, who they identify with, or what services they need from government and society" (Cantel 133-157).

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Scope of the study

In this study, I sought to find the answers to my research questions while fostering multicultural interactions and dialogue. This study took place at Illinois State University. It included workshops facilitated by myself, held in the School of Theatre and Dance where participants convened and engaged each other on various topics on the theme of multiculturalism, interculturalism, cultural difference, cultural identity. Participants created and performed short scenes on these issues and had follow up discussions of their interpretation of the performances. During the process, with authorization from the university's Institutional Review Board and consent from the participants, I collected data through observation, still photography, video and audio recording of the workshops, which I will be presenting in form of themed data. Considering the Institutional Review Board's requirements and signed consent forms from the participants, crucial identifying information about the participants will be withheld. I also conducted interviews with interested participants prior, during and after the period of the workshops.

Some of the questions I asked prior to the workshops included but were not limited to,

- How would you describe yourself?
- Where are you from?
- How long have you been here? (Illinois State University community/State or country)
- Why did you come here?
- Could you describe your first encounter with someone from another country?
- Could you give me an idea of your initial perception or expectations of America or any other country you have visited?

www.manaraa.com

- Were your perceptions and expectations matched with what you actually experienced when you got here or that country you visited?
- Could you describe how an average day here is different from how it would be back home?
- If you had a chance to go to any country for however long, where would you go? Why?
- Could you tell me about a culture or practice you have heard of that you think is bizarre?
- How did you learn about that practice or culture?
- What do you think is the biggest misconception about your country and/or culture?
- Can you tell me about a time that you felt offended or disrespected because of your culture or where you come from by someone or something they said?
- What is the one thing about your culture that you are most proud of?
- What do you think is most challenging thing about working with people who are from a country or culture other than yours?
- What would you say is most fun working with people who are from a country or culture other than yours?

For interviews held Post-Workshops, I asked the following questions:

- Why did you come to the workshops in the first place?
- Can you talk to me about your experience as a participant in the project?
- How would you rate your experience from the process? And why?
- Can you tell me about one event or day during the workshops that changed your perception of the World?
- What is the one single most valuable lesson you are taking away from this process?
- Would you participate in another project of this nature if called upon? Why?

www.manaraa.com

- Any tips, dos and don'ts for someone who is having their first intercultural interaction?

Participants attended a total of four one-hour workshops once a week held over a period of one month. During the workshops, on the first and second day, participants suggested and agreed on topics to talk about. This process allowed open inquiries and expression on numerous issues: national, ethnic and racial backgrounds, cultural experiences, perceptions and misconceptions, navigating relationships and encounters in multicultural settings. The two days also offered participants judgement-free space to learn and unlearn about each other. The following third and last day, participants broke out in groups to brainstorm and put together short scenes based on their feelings on the discussions from the past two days. Both groups then performed for each other. After the performances, we proceeded with evaluation of the scenes, where people shared their interpretation of the scenes and their content and possible takeaways.

The reason for this collaborative approach is that it presents participants with the opportunities to embark on a self-evaluation journey where they can confront themselves and their views while learning and sharing knowledge and experiences with each other and in turn collectively birthing new knowledge and perspectives. In her *Critical Ethnography,* Madison acknowledges, "It is through collaboration that all participants are creators in a mutual journey of discovery and invention" (238).

Participatory Theatre

In the study, I used the Participatory Theatre approach with the participants to encourage dialogue and understanding about multiculturalism. Director Sellars recommends that "ongoing solutions to the permanent challenge posed by immigration and migration in the twenty-first century demand the best from all of us. The solutions will have to be creative solutions. And humane solutions" (xii). Participatory theatre is a form of people's theatre which encourages all

www.manaraa.com

involved parties (participants) to come together to explore and debate the issues that affect them and creatively present them and/or their solutions in the form of performance.

My approach is adapted from the step by step process used by Artivists 4 Life Collective in Uganda in their message development and dissemination process while working with communities. The process is broken down into stages, from the group's first encounter with a community to the message dissemination. The steps are as follows:

- Introductions: All participants introduce each other using fun activities to warm up and get everyone relaxed as well as be briefed about the project and to stress that everyone's opinion is valid and needed.
- Community engagement or discussions: Participants explore, share and debate the issue.
- Creative process or dramatization: Stories and scenes from the key issues discussed are developed, cast and rehearsed.
- Message testing: Participants perform for each other for feedback about what they think the scene is about, whether it conveys the intended message, and if there are other ways the message could be effectively put across. The feedback is about how well the message is conveyed, never about the acting skills, because the community members are not artists and because participant engagement and message dissemination, not talent, are the key for this type of theatre
- Dissemination: Participants then share the messages they created by performing for the larger community that they belong to.

Participatory theatre is similar to Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed which challenges and gives voice to the people to confront themselves and their societal injustices. The Participatory Theatre approach invigorates and positions its participants as agents of their own

www.manaraa.com

being and thus part of the solution to their own problems and avails theatre as an avenue for assessment and expression. This theatre is similar to Theatre for Development, which the *Participate* initiative describes as a "practice which operates from [the community's] perspectives, using their own language and idioms of expressions. In this way theatre is domesticated to specific needs, taken over and shaped by community people," according to "Participate." The approach seeks to encourage the participants to immerse themselves in the creative process. Theatre then becomes a vessel for exploration and expression, as Augusto Boal describes it in his *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy*, "an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions" (15). Much like Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, this theatre encourages participants to be active agents of change in their communities by taking part in identifying and understanding the issues, orchestrating collective responses and ways of responding, and sharing them in the form of performance. This research employs the participatory theatre framework that

> "…encourages the taking of space (literal and metaphorical) and the raising of self-esteem, so that participants come both to question the root causes of their problems and oppressions – a process that leads from the micro to the macro, and from the particular community to the wider polity – and to believe that they can take centre stage to give voice and expression to their understandings." (Boon and Plastow 7).

The identified community is made aware of an existing problem, or in many cases, community members identify the issue and instead of providing them with solutions and ways to deal with them, the participatory theatre facilitator fosters discussions where participants confront themselves and their feelings, define their identities and draw within and from themselves to find collective responses and solutions to these issues. In this way, they develop a

www.manaraa.com

discourse not on one group's terms but as a collective. It encourages everyone who is a part of the equation to apply themselves and their lived experiences to create and perform in their own theatre modeled on issues that are crucial to them so that control over the interventions shifts from the outside to the inside, to the people who are directly facing and living the experiences on a social scale.

The idea is that the content presented and the performances are authentic as they are created by the people on issues that they deem important to them. The process of this type of theatre includes discussion and reflection on the issue by the participants and a collaborative and participatory creative process in which 1) everyone's ideas are welcome and important and 2) everyone takes on different responsibilities as composers, directors, and performers of their own theatre. About collaboration, Madison confirms that,

> The collaborative approach is a powerful learning experience. It also builds a sense of camaraderie and shared respect and responsibility. It is through collaboration that all participants are creators in a mutual journey of discovery and invention. The essence of collaboration the deeply humanizing reciprocity of different individuals working through the complications and challenges of a problem in which the force is the interactive relationship they hold for and with each other (238).

This theatre is different from other commercial forms of theatre because it is not the artists producing and presenting plays that address the issues of the people or using theatre to engage the audiences. Rather, it is theatre that doesn't draw the line between artists (actors, directors, technical crew) and the audience. Everyone has a responsibility to take part in the brainstorming, creation of characters, story development and performances. The participants then perform for the larger community. In this project, because we did not do a full-scale production,

www.manaraa.com

participants broke out into groups which then performed for each other. Unlike Boal's theatre, where the audience members are "spect-actors" and therefore need to "invade the stage and transform the images that are shown there" (Boal xx). In this theatre, actors cannot be and were not interrupted by the "audience "during the performances. The roles of actors and the audience are clear even though both are members of the same group, the community. Discussion on the performances followed after the performances. For the sake of this research project, some stages like message testing and message dissemination were eliminated because of time constraints, other logistics and the overall purpose of the project.

In my research, I encouraged and facilitated workshops where discussions were held from which scenes were created and performed. Victor Turner writes that, "The proximity of theatre to life, while remaining at a mirror distance from it, makes of it the form best fitted to comment or 'meta-comment' on conflict, for life is conflict, of which contest is only a species" (105). Performing or taking part in the process of creating the performances gave the participants more insight into the issues we were discussing, thus reaffirming their realities. "The act of making theater," Sellars writes, "is the act of recognizing, affirming, extending, imagining, and re-affirming a community or, possibly, communities. Metaphorically at first and then literally and tangibly, theater is the creation of newly shared space on Earth" (xii). The discussions and later the process of creating and acting in these scenes gave the participants a chance first of all to step out of their own shoes and be someone else and therefore get a sense of what it is like to live the life of the character they played. It also gave them the courage, the re-affirmation that they can indeed be or do anything and that the persona they were taking on during the process, whether director or life of another person as an actor, can be re-enacted anywhere outside the room as they pleased. This process "promotes the idea of giving voice to the oppressed sections

www.manaraa.com

of the community so that they may collectively analyze the issues that affect their lives." (Bamuturaki 2). What this means is that, during the workshops, the creative process was a form of rehearsal for the participants to be able to speak up if they noticed any injustice or just simply be the force of change where it is needed.

For the first two days, I facilitated discussion on topics suggested by the participants. During this time, we became conversant with each other and the project. On the third day of the workshops, I encouraged participants to get on their feet and into groups. In these groups, they created short scenes from their experiences and from the discussions we had in the previous days. Each group then performed their piece for the other. This kind of practice "understands individual action to be part of the social practices that operate in the local context. Social practices are communally defined, standard ways of doing things that structure and provide resources for action and relationships" (Sliep et al. 311).

This practice gives all participants a voice through whatever role they choose to take and allows them to become authors as their ideas go from opinions to performance pieces. This creates a sense of togetherness – community – and encourages the participants' agency to create and share the lives of their characters. After all, like Theatre of the Oppressed practitioner Doug Paterson avows, "Humans (…) create themselves by means of dialogue made possible by languages, art, and culture. Or by wolves. Our dialogue is what we become" (xii). In the study, performances were followed by a discussion about everyone's experience in the process of creating the scenes and performing, and if or how doing so in such a short time affected their understanding of the topic depending on the role they played, why they chose the role and the topic.

www.manaraa.com

Participants

The study included both domestic and international students at Illinois State University and community members from the Bloomington-Normal area between the ages of nineteen and mid-fifties. Students' ages ranged from nineteen to mid-forties, and they were both undergraduate and graduate level. Members of the community were between twenty-three years of age to late fifties and all recorded a minimum of an undergraduate degree. Participants included people that were born and raised in the United States, those that were born elsewhere but are United States permanent residents, and those that were born in other countries and are not permanent residents of the U.S. but were currently living here. For participants who were not permanent residents of the U.S., the periods they had lived in the country varied from one year to over twenty years. Participants who were born and raised in the U.S. all reported to have lived in one or more countries for periods ranging from two weeks to two years. All participants lived in the U.S at the time of the study. Participants included people from both North and South of the Sahara in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America.

Demographics

Illinois State University is a public university located in the city of Normal, in the county of McLean, Illinois. University activity is spread across the city of Normal and neighboring Bloomington. The two cities are commonly known as Bloomington-Normal. Bloomington has a population of 78,024 as of 2016 with the ethnicity makeup of White alone 72.6%, 10.6% Black alone, 8.1% Asian alone, 5.5% Hispanic, 2.2% two or races, 0.7% other races alone and 0.6% American Indian alone and the city of Normal has a population of 54,594 according to 2016 records with 77.9%White alone, 9.0% Black alone, 5.8%Hispanic, 4.4%Asian alone, 2.0% two

www.manaraa.com

or more races, 0.2 American Indian alone, 0.2 Other race alone, 0.05% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone. (City Data.com)

Illinois State University has a total population of 19,520 students, with 17,150 undergraduate students and 2,370 graduate students (spring 2018 enrollment report). From 2013 to 2018, the five years prior to this study, the university admitted 1943 international students from over 67 countries (undergraduate, graduate and non-degree seeking) and 449 international exchange students from 12 countries in Europe, East Asia, Australia and South America, according to the University's International Students and Scholar services website.

The ethnic makeup of the domestic students according to University enrollment report of spring 2018 was, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 2% Asian, 2.8% Multi-race (not Hispanic/Latino), 8% Black/African American, 9.7% Hispanic/Latino, 74.8% White, 0.3% Not reported and 2% international students.

Limitations

Limitations to the study included time constraints, number of participant and participant absence, the sensitive nature of issues discussed, comfort with performing and to some level, language. The topics of culture, identity and race are sensitive ones that some people tiptoe around or participate in with reservations. The researcher encouraged respectful and empathetic discussions, and encouraged participants to, if possible, not talk about the details of our discussions and activities outside the workshop. The researcher encouraged participants to not feel pressured to talk, give their opinion or take part in any activity they are not comfortable with.

Some part of the project included taking part in scene as creators and performers, some participants were hesitant. The researcher included games and warm up at the beginning of the

www.manaraa.com

workshops and after the discussions before the participants broke into groups to help everyone to loosen up and feel comfortable around each other. Workshops and interviews were conducted in English which was the shared language but for some participants (and the researcher), it is not the first language, so some had trouble communicating their views and generally participated very little because of that.

Workshops were voluntary and because participants were not obliged to show up, there were absences every day and new faces too. The researcher had to get everyone caught up, give the new participants an overview of the project, issue consent forms to read and sign. As for time constraints, by the time of the IRB approval, there were only a few weeks left to final exam period so the project had to be adapted to the few weeks left; workshops lasted exactly one hour during the week so some participants came late as they either had class activities, work or family engagements so some didn't fully take part in the discussions on some occasions because they couldn't give informed views. Other potential participants missed because they could not make the selected time. It was also challenging to get people for the interviews both before and especially after the workshops because as most were students, they had final exams to prepare for and thereafter most had to leave for winter holidays. As result, not many interviews were done which limits the amount of data from one on one conversations to draw from.

As a researcher, workshop facilitator and participant all at the same time especially during the workshops, it is possible that there were moments that my feelings and opinions influenced my role and judgement as a researcher. Even then, I endeavored to maintain an open mind and held my personal experiences and emotions aside during my observations and interviews. I do recognize however, that there is no way of estimating how my experiences and contribution affect the data I collected.

www.manaraa.com

Summary

The study aimed to find how a participatory theatre process enabled people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and countries to interact and maneuver their encounters. The study also investigated how people perceive others and therefore receive them when their cultures are different from theirs, how immigrant individual or groups live through the process of adapting to new cultures when they move to another place and how the people in the receiving community adapts to the newcomers. And how these groups and those in between forge a community with a mosaic of various cultures, each making strides to preserve their own values and identity and respecting the others, while also adapting to each other and producing a new culture altogether.

The goal was to use the participatory theatre approach to encourage open and respectful dialogue across different cultures. The process would give participants the opportunity to learn and unlearn about each other, demystify myths and misconceptions and share their values and pieces of themselves during the discussions. Participants would then create and perform their realities, individual or personal messages and desired approaches to multiculturalism. The scenes would depict their views on other cultures and ways of living in the increasingly multicultural world.

The participatory theatre approach would provide the environment and means for the participants to be who they are with pride, hopefully limiting censorship of self or others, reducing the fear of being judged or misunderstood and continuously seeking ways of respectful intercultural and multicultural interactions and co-existence.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate perceptions, attitudes and social performances during multicultural interactions. This study was conducted at Illinois State University with members of the International and domestic student body and the surrounding community. Participants were observed during discussions, interviews and participatory performances. The research was guided by the following questions:

1) How do the students at a State University in an urban mid-west region and members of the surrounding community respond to intercultural social interactions and experience social cultural exchanges?

2) How do they perceive those from countries or cultures other than theirs and how does that impact the way they treat them?

The case study took place at the School of Theatre and Dance every Tuesday at 5pm for one hour over a period of four weeks. Throughout the period, sixteen participants from eleven countries and five continents took part. On the first two days, participants engaged in open discussions on issues of cultural difference, perceptions, misconception, representation and misrepresentation and others. During the discussions, I proposed topics, encouraged discussion, and asked follow-up questions. On the third day, participants dramatized/performed short scenes mirroring their views on issues discussed in the previous workshops. The scenes were then followed by discussions about the depiction of the characters and the cultures in the scenes. On the fourth and last day, a longer scene was performed about multicultural living. During the last part of that workshop, we discussed ways to maintain or improve the relationships and/or

www.manaraa.com

communities that we discussed and presented and provided general feedback on the process the research project enabled.

As a researcher in a participatory project, I went back and forth among the roles of participant, facilitator and researcher. As a participant, although I did not take part in the performances, I participated during the discussions sharing my thoughts and experiences on the topics. As the facilitator, I oversaw the discussions, proposed topics to discuss especially on the first day when most participants were hesitant to propose any, I facilitated icebreakers when we did them, in moments when the room was silent, although when we had moments like these the participants offered up an opinion or asked a question to fill the silence when that didn't happen and it seemed that they were out of ideas, I offered alternative directions to the topic or asked prompting questions. I also kept time during the creative process, I worked with the groups to answer any questions they had about their performances or what was expected of them in that moment. As a researcher, I observed participants' individual performance in the setting from when they walked in, I studied their body language both during the workshops and the interviews, I set up video recording equipment at the beginning of the workshops or interviews and took photographs during the ice breakers, discussions and the performance, I took notes during the workshops and interviews, I reviewed videos and photographs taken and wrote short reflections after the workshops and interviews and I recruited more people to the project.

Although some of my responsibilities were sharply defined to a particular role, for some, the lines are blurred as to what capacity I stood in when I performed them. For example, when I asked questions during the workshops, it was hard to tell whether I was asking as the facilitator or as just a participant, when I explained the project to the participants at the beginning of the workshop, part of it was my job as the facilitator of the workshop but also as the researcher I

www.manaraa.com

would have to do that, when participants lingered around after the workshops, it was difficult to separate my role when I took part in those conversations in the hallways, listening or contributing as either participant/facilitator or I purely as a researcher.

During the interviews, I asked questions about individual's cultures, opinions on other cultures, experiences with other cultures and views on multiculturalism. In the follow-up interviews, I sought to find any changed views or perspectives, participants' experiences in the workshops (discussions and performances), lessons learnt and possible ways forward as individuals and as a community.

In this chapter, I looked at the observations from the weekly workshops and interviews. My observations were written during and after every workshop and interview, watching recorded videos, listening to audio and studying photographs taken during the workshops. All these were analyzed for behavior, comments and quotes.

Workshops and Observations

Day One

Discussion

The first workshop was attended by seven participants, five females and two males representing five countries. The seating order was a circle and after everyone introduced themselves, I introduced the project officially. Prior to our first meeting, I had met some participants one on one, explained the project, distributed and explained the consent and release forms (Appendix A, B and C). At this first meeting, because I had not met some of the participants earlier, I went over the project again. We read the forms together and I stressed that participation in any part of the project was voluntary and that anyone could withdraw at any time if they wished. With that done, I opened up the discussion.

www.manaraa.com

I didn't want to impose a topic on the participants because as a researcher investigating social performances, it made sense that I let my participants choose the topics that they felt were relevant to the workshop without leading them into a particular direction. And as a facilitator using the participatory approach, it was befitting to give the participants the opportunity to pick the topics that they wanted to discuss. I began by asking the participants if they had anything that they wanted to talk about. No one seemed to have one in mind or was brave enough to suggest any, which is understandable for a first meeting. I then asked them to share which countries we were from or have ties to.

Although to some these were easy assumptions to make, or at least the general idea of it based on our race, accents and the ease or difficulty with which we spoke the English language, it was a good way to break the ice and shade some light on our identities. Still, at the end of this, the room went quiet again. So I began with one of the interview questions and requested that if possible we go around and share, "Which cultural practice have you seen or heard of that you think is bizarre?" Understandably, there was a moment, and when the first person spoke, it started out light, the participant talked about a neighboring country where people don't have or respect personal space, which to the participant is important. This seemed to be a feeling that some participants shared so a few talked about other cultures they have encountered that do that. Still, there were moments, pauses in between; then someone would start slowly just to fill the silence. This kept the conversation going, moving from lighter topics like personal space to more intense issues.

As everyone shared their experiences or responded to other participants, the conversation transitioned from personal space, to ethnicity to nationality and into race - especially in America. The conversation lingered on African-American behavior and stereotypes versus those of

www.manaraa.com

Continental Africans, and slowly moved on to other races and cultures toward the top of the hour.

Key to the discussion was emphasis on definitions. One participant after listening quietly for a while, suggested that it was important to define the terms we were using so that everyone was clear about how we were applying these terms. His examples were racism and multiculturalism.

Racism: The biggest question here was if people attach different meanings to racism and therefore apply the term in circumstances that may otherwise not be racially motivated as one participant called it, "Playing the race card", using or overusing it even in circumstances where people should step back and approach situations differently? An example one of the participants gave was refusing to play basketball with someone because they felt that the way they were asked for the ball was disrespectful, seeing as they didn't know each other and the other person asked if they were refusing to play with them because they were racist. Aware of the biases, the same participant went on to clarify, with an example that he does recognize racist behavior for example, they noted that if they called home with the news of getting married to an American, everyone would be so proud of them until they showed up with a black American, then everyone would ask "What's wrong with you?" and if it was a white person, "They'd go Hallelujah! They'd boast about me all over the place." With the two examples, racism was defined. The consensus was that, all participants had experienced racism or witnessed it but that hostility and accusation of race has increased in the recent years.

www.manaraa.com

Still on race, the group briefly touched on the influence of one's background in behavior noting that while people may belong to the same race, their behavior and in this case culture is influenced by their experiences which, if different, the behavior will be different too irrespective of the similarity in skin color. Comparisons were made between Africans from the continent and African-Americans with generations in America and a history of slave trade or first-generation Africans Americans noting that the behaviors of the former are always different from that of the later owing to culture background and upbringing.

Multiculturalism: Questions arose about the nature of multiculturalism. What is a multicultural community or country on a realistic social level? What are the determinants for a multicultural community? Although the definition for multiculturalism or interculturalism was not thoroughly explored; it was almost apparent from the discussions that all the participants understood what a multicultural society looked like on the social scale. I don't believe they knew the trends and/or recent policies when it comes to the topic but it did not make sense to offer all that information in our already limited time period since they had a solid basic idea of what multiculturalism means.

Stereotypes: The discussion on stereotypes covered the importance defining stereotypes or identifying stereotypical behavior, perpetuating and reinforcing them or performing against stereotypes. One participant who is African shared that being aware of the stereotypes associated with being black, they consciously, police themselves and their behavior so as not to play into the stereotypes of what black people are like even in moments where they'd like to say something or differ from the majority because then they'd come off as angry. Participants also talked about the dangers of approaching

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

people with stereotypes noting that whether racial, cultural, ethnic or even gender stereotypes, it gets in the way of getting to know people or giving them a chance to know who you are as a person. And this, one participant said is "Sometimes, it's doesn't seem harmful but then when you don't think about the individual, you stop seeing the individual.", and this creates groups of people who think they know the other and keep them at arm's length instead of giving each other a chance.

Representation: We also discussed representation, the question of who should represent a particular culture or group of people. Who should be speaking for whom? And whose views are valued about different topics? One participant opened with a disclaimer, "I have to be careful in presenting my country because Indonesia is a very multicultural country, so people can have cultural practices different just because they come from different Islands." they said before sharing their opinion which was specific to their own ethnic group. They made it clear their ethnic group is not the majority and that, specific behavior may be common in other ethnic groups but in that moment, they were speaking for their small ethnic group. This participant also noted that while there is information about their country, this information is always mostly generalized omitting the uniqueness of sundry ethnic groups on the Islands. "The thing is many uhm… many people who claim they know Indonesia, they would actually associate with the majority group." She said.

The trend of questioning representation extended to other topics, one person who passionately pointed out that it was unfortunate that negative stereotypes were attached to African Americans and wished that the encounters that some people had given as

www.manaraa.com

examples were good ones, was also quick to point out that they can't be speaking for the group because clearly, they don't belong to the group.

During the first discussion, I noticed that while each of the participants had introduced themselves and the countries they come from to the rest of the group, and that we had had insightful conversations on such sensitive issues as multiculturalism and other people's cultures, race and racism, representation, and they all listened carefully and gave well-thought about views and responses, most of them were nervous and hesitant, especially at the beginning. It was clear they were engaged and appreciated the conversation but were almost afraid to say what they thought. I assume this was because although some had met before in other settings, they didn't know each other that well to engage on such topics as cultural difference which usually leap into race since issues of race are ever sensitive everywhere in the world and especially in America.

Many times, at the beginning, when one person stopped talking, there was some awkward lingering silence for a couple of minutes before anyone with a question or response to the previous speaker or their own views on the topic spoke up. In moments like this, I let the participants absorb the silence. I believe it was a good way for them to reflect on these moments, the views that had previously been aired, to think about and rethink words and also to let them know that it is okay to not have something to say. And when the this went on for long like the case of suggesting a topic to discuss, I prompted them. Nevertheless, there was some level of confidence and honesty when they spoke. While sometimes, some spoke to fill the silence, there was essence in what everyone said.

During the discussion one issue came up continuously, race and racism. whether we were talking about on race itself, stereotypes, multiculturalism and to some degree representation, the

www.manaraa.com

conversation found its way back to racism. It is possible that because the environment (America specifically) where race is a topic of discussion, debates, politicking or even casual conversation, it was easy for the participants' minds to go there, it is also possible that the fact that people in the room were of different races discussing cultural differences that it was an easy go-to topic since as the discussion progressed we found that many people still consider race key in one's cultural make-up. It is also possible that the workshops provided a safe space, an opportunity for the participants to share their opinions without the fear of being judged or offending other as on participant later shared in the interview that these kinds of discussions are hard to talk about and people generally avoid them because of the tension. Or simply because the workshop was about multiculturalism and it's impossible to discuss multiculturalism without discussing the racial make-up of people's cultures. Either way, the issue of race, difficult as it is, seemed to be of interest to many participants and indeed they had a lot of experiences and opinions to share about it.

During the discussion, although U.S. has a diverse racial makeup, most of the discussion lingered on mainly two races: Americans of the west European descent (Caucasians) and Americans of African descent. Most examples that were given were comparisons and perceptions of these two groups of people first by themselves and by others of different races. The conversation then went on for while about Americans of African descent, how they are perceived, the stereotypes attached to them as a race (lumping Africans from the continent together with them), how they play into the stereotypes, etc.

Unfortunately, although our discussion lingered on race issues and African Americans in particular, there was no participant from the African American community in the room so there were no views from that perspective or lived experiences put forward and most of the

www.manaraa.com

conversation rich and objective as it was, discussing a whole group of people without their views or representation or knowledge from lived experiences from the community was unyielding and to be honest, felt a bit unfair to this community.

As earlier mentioned, the discussion was slow at the beginning, but it picked up towards the end and at the top of the hour when the session ended, participants had so much more to say or respond to that when we left the room, they stood around in groups and carried on the conversations some for close to an hour.

Day Two

Discussion

On the second day, there was a total of eight participants, five females and three males representing six countries. We started a couple of minutes into 5pm as people were coming from class or other engagements. When the first few people arrived, we briefly talked about topics that they would like to discuss. Unlike the previous week, this time the people who had come early easily suggested topics to discuss. I assume it's because the previous workshop had given them a better idea of what the workshops were about so, it was easy to think of and pick topics under the theme and the fact that there was a sense of trust, a feeling that this was a space free of judgement. There were not many people when I asked for suggestions and they each had met the people in the room from the previous week. Even the one participant who was joining us for the first time seemed calm and ready probably because I had met them prior and talked to them about the project, gone over the forms and they knew two of the people in the room. Because the turnout was low, I suggested that we wait for more people to come in before we start officially. At this point, two participants had written down two topics to be discussed on the whiteboard. The agreement was that we were going to wait a few minutes for more people to come but some

www.manaraa.com

people seemed excited and started chatting about the topics among themselves, or one on one. As more people came in, we decided that we might as well begin.

Two main topics were discussed; Hospitality/Social norms and Parenting styles in different cultures. Going off one of the topics suggested (hospitality), I suggested that we all share the countries we have been to and how long we were there. Sitting in a circle, we went around and we each briefly talked about the countries we had been to. The discussion went from hospitality to community or creating a sense of community around oneself and fostering relationships with the neighbors, to different ways people go about parenting and how that impacts their children's behavior.

Hospitality and Sense of Community: When the discussion commenced, we began with how we receive visitors. One Participant opened up the discussion by saying that they felt that in the U.S. they are individualistic because from what they'd heard people in parts of Africa and South America would welcome their visitors when they show up even if they are unexpected. The Americans in the room nodded in agreement when asked if this was relatable adding that it is very possible to live in a place for years and not know your neighbors. One of them added that they have said only a few words to their next-door neighbors all the years they've lived in their home. Although they easily agreed on this, the way one of them shared their thoughts was almost as a realization of something or someone who have known for long but have never paid attention to. It was as though saying it out loud solidified it even more and thrust everyone into thinking about why this is the case. Some of the factors that were cited for this disconnect was the weather. In their opening, the Participant who said they felt that the U.S. was more individualistic had said that the cold weather makes people more individualist because no one want to

www.manaraa.com

go out. “What about the summer?” I had wondered. Another participant, who was older offered reminiscently that people used to go out and meet neighbors, have block parties, kids rode their bikes and played around the neighborhood which meant that they saw each other more often but with air conditioning, Television and computers, people just stay in their houses. One of them expressed the fear of getting off on the wrong foot with someone you are going to live next to for years and ruining the relationship. So why risk it? They seemed to imply.

But all is not the same everywhere, the same participant spoke of a friend who lives in a small town not far away from the University town that has a community-based system where they have a neighborhood newspaper, meetings, organized garage sales with assigned dates and parties that maintain a sense of community in that part of town. For a moment, the conversation was between the three Americans in the room with the rest of the participants just nodding although not in agreement but more as a realization. This it seemed was not something relatable for the other participants who weren’t American.

A participant from France looked at it differently though. He said that they talked to their neighbors and had dinners occasionally, but that it was no guarantee that they would be close to them especially if they were not good neighbors or good people in general. If they play loud music in the middle of the night for example. For him it was not about communing with everyone just for the sake of it. Asked if he’d say that the dinners or other such gatherings were something of a French culture in general, he responded that they could only speak for the suburb they lived in in Paris. Another participant commenting on hospitality, said that when a visitor shows up to their house, they are

www.manaraa.com

given the best welcome, served with drinks because in their culture, whether announced or unannounced, "guests are kings". This, I offered is a shared feeling in my culture with a proverb that goes, "*Mu lugya temubai kubbo*" loosely translated as there is no way through one's compound /yard implying that if someone shows up to your house, they aren't looking for directions or just "passing through", they are guests who are to be welcomed and treated as kings.

On their reception in the countries they visited, all participants reported to have been given the best welcome, wherever they had gone with every person they met treating them better than the previous one. The countries visited included Ecuador, Spain, India and others. Those whose such experience was with America or other parts on North America, noted to have been "surprised in a good way" at how well they were received and treated and for some, the sense of community in the neighborhoods they lived in, one participant said they went to one of the kid's game and his parents (the participant's hosts) and everyone they met from the neighborhood seemed to know everyone and have a well-knitted relationship.

Everyone however agreed that for that particular community and those relationships and the one in the small town mentioned earlier to work, there needs to be initiative from some of the community members who are willing to take charge, lead and coordinate the activities or just plainly break the ice and start a conversation with the neighbor. Trends have obviously changed, the participant who said that in their culture it's common for people to come to visit unannounced, also said that their peers don't just show up to each other's place unannounced. It's generational it seems as they said, the text among each other before going to visit although their parents are still doing it the old-fashioned way.

www.manaraa.com

Parenting: The conversation went from how different people raise and discipline their children and how the children behave around them, to child abuse versus disciplining and the impact of government's intervention in family matters, to behavioral change in children who are raised in one culture but are moved to different one. One Participant who was younger cited a huge difference while comparing how their American and Asian friends behave whether around or away from their parents. The participant said that their Asian friend would be worried about the simplest things like coming late to class, getting a bad grade because his parents would be upset with for apparently bringing shame to the family. Another younger American participant spoke of a friend who was once so sad because they got ninety percent which translated into a '*B*' grade instead of an '*A*'. "Would you say this is cultural thing?" I prompted. "It might be a combination of culture and also with parenting style, what you are told to expect of yourself." they mused. One of the younger participant confessed that if they said half the things they have heard their friends say to their parents, they'd not get away with it.

The conversation then went on to address disciplining versus abuse. A Participant who was older noted that they were spanked as kids when they deserved it but things have changed today "where now like if your child gets hurt at home and you take them to the emergency room you get this whole list of questions and they're asking the child, you know, "what did mummy do? What did Daddy do?" trying to almost plant the idea that you were abused!" They agreed that it has made children spoiled because kids know they can get away with things. "The fact that the government here has gotten inside people's homes, is a big deal because as a parent you almost have no authority over your child. That is how it feels sometimes." Said another participant who was raised in Kenya and

www.manaraa.com

has children who were born and raised there partly and others who were born in the U.S. They shared that that it is challenge to discipline children especially in the American context. One of the Participants who was brought to the Unites States of America as an early teen compared how their parents treated them back home and how things changed when they came here. They spoke of a time they called their dad by his name like they had heard kids at school do sometimes and got a very stern warning, how their behavior changed when they got to the U.S. At school kids talked to their parents different and could get away with a lot of things, so they changed too because they knew now that they could do these things and their parents couldn't do much about it in comparison to how they would be disciplined if they were in their birth country. Another one noted that the way some parents raise their children affects their goals and choices in life, for example taking us back to their Asian friend, they said that he aimed for '*A*'s, was always smartly dressed and aimed for perfection in everything because they didn't want to be a source of embarrassment to their parents. Being high achievers and cautious were mentioned as traits common among Asian and African children while the American kids were generally relaxed to which almost everyone agreed.

Class and financial status of the parents was mentioned as one of the factors that impact parenting and consequently children's behavior. "A child is a product of their environment." One participant said of how children behave today. A statement that I believe was intended to summarize the views brought forth by everyone during the discussion.

Although, the sentiments towards visitors differed, all participants agreed that they'd receive their guests and give them the best treatment they could afford. The motivation for this

www.manaraa.com

would be dictated by culture or out of the niceness of the person or, as one participant who shared that even with meagre resources and almost nothing for them as children in their household, their mother found the best delicacies for their guest a practice that meant they would always be blessed with something to eat for being selflessness with others; God's blessings. When the conversation of hospitality and sense of community opened, the conversation was mainly between the Americans in the room talking about their what the culture is about reception of guests, neighborhood relationships and justifiably giving reasons as to why there is a general disconnect in the communities and why people are individualistic. They (Americans) casually laughed about it. It seemed relatable to them, almost like a norm. The non-Americans were not laughing however. They didn't frown upon it either and actually some had smiles because it's natural to laugh or at least smile when people around you laugh, but these smiles were not from a place of familiarity with the idea. It was clear that the cultures of other people in the room were different and the views shared by the Americans were not relatable to the rest.

Interestingly, during this part of the workshop was that, although I clear that other people didn't relate or agree with these ways, they didn't go out of their way to blatantly judge or criticize them but shared their own instead. Just other types of cultures alongside the first one shared. We continued to learn about the cultures of all who wished to share but did not debate one against the other. Rather, everyone listened fascinated by the little details that we all shared. For example, one participant shared that in their society, there is a superstitious belief that seeing a butterfly was a sign that you are going to receive guests and I shared that in my culture (tribe) we share the beliefs only it's a bee instead of the butterfly.

It is important to note that the two participants that were not too excited about the idea of unannounced reported not knowing their neighbors were mostly younger participants under the

www.manaraa.com

age of twenty-five years. I guess there is something to be said about that in relation to the other participant from Indonesia who said earlier that people can visit without prior notice also shared that that although their parents still do this, the younger people don't do that anymore. They added that they text each other first before they can visit. This goes to show that generations come and go and with them their trends as new ones are ushered in. The more technologically advanced and connected a place is or the amount of technology a person or home has access to, for example the air conditioning during the summer, the TV in evenings, over the weekends or days people would be spending together, the computers, video games, and others as such, the more an individualistic life is made easier and therefore the need for a community slowly fades or the avenues in which people would meet personally to form some kind of bond. Therefore, technology influences and shapes the cultural norms of a community.

Interestingly, while addressing the impact of technology, no one mentioned social networking sites where we now have access to millions of virtual friends and community that for some has become more important than the physical community. No one mentioned how that has perhaps contributed to the disconnected communities and, the ever growing multicultural, intercultural and cross-cultural virtual community growing daily. Because no one brought this up, I let that be as were out of time.

Day Three

Dramatization

The third day had the highest attendance of all days. The workshop was attended by twelve participants from eight countries. Four of these were attending for the first time. I had met three of them prior and talked to them about the workshops and the consent forms and the other came with a friend who had attended all previous workshops, so I was meeting for the first time

www.manaraa.com

too. He had been briefed about the workshops by the friend. I took a few minutes to answer some questions and asked him to sign the consent forms. For the four new participants, there was mild uneasiness while mingling with the rest of the group at first even if they each knew some of them. I reminded them that the plan for the day was to start going over scenes about previously discussed topics. To warm up and get everyone to loosen up, I led the group in icebreakers. The laughter at watching each other do random movements warmed up the room. They made jokes and mimicked each other losing any defenses in the process. The next stage was creating scenarios, so they broke up into groups and among themselves decided what their scenarios would be about depending on what we had discussed. One group presented their interpretation of parenting from different cultures. The other, by using the example of greetings, their scenario showed how people from varying backgrounds can address their subtle differences.

Scenario 1: Parenting

The scene opened with a teacher handing back assignments and dismissing the class. The rest of the scene followed the students back to their home showing the assignments to their parents.

Home 1: African Parent

MOTHER: Hey my daughter, welcome home. What's wrong?

DAUGHTER: So, we got back our grades back at school today and our teacher asked… our teacher wants you to sign something. (*She timidly starts*)

MOTHER: Oh let me see. Let me see. Wha..? A '*D*'! Do I send you to school to go play? All this money we're paying for you to go to school and you cannot… you bring a '*D*'? From today, I want you to study and study until you get it. Where is

www.manaraa.com

your phone? (*The daughter apologetically says something inaudible, but the mother won't have it*). Let me have your phone. Let me have your phone!

DAUGHTER: I'm sorry I will…

MOTHER: Let me have your phone. Are you… do you want me to stand up?

DAUGHTER: No. (*She hands the phone over*)

MOTHER: I do not want you to see this phone until I see an A. Do you understand? Go to your room.

Home 2: American Parent

The daughter walks in calling her mum

DAUGHTER: Mum… Andrea [Name changed]

MOTHER: Honey…Hey… How was your day?

DAUGHTER: Horrible! Look. (*Hand her class assignment*)

MOTHER: You know I don't like you to call me Andrea but it's okay honey… whoa! Don't tell me…Teacher gave you a '*D*' on this test?

DAUGHTER: Yeah, but look at the questions he asked, they weren't even fair. Those were not on the study guide. He never even talked about it in class.

MOTHER: No, no, no. Because I helped you with this test, I gave you the answers. I can't believe it. Well, I'm gonna have your father go talk to that teacher. I'm not signing anything until teacher..., until your dad takes care of this.

DAUGHTER: Good. Can I go play?

MOTHER: You go out and play honey and then comeback for a snack. Okay?

DAUGHTER: Thanks mum.

MOTHER: Ok. (*They hug and she runs out*)

www.manaraa.com

Home 3: Asian Parent

SON: Dad.

DAD: Hello Son. What is this? A '*D*'? Do you realize how "*shamed*" this make me? How ashamed of yourself you should be for getting a '*D*'? Do you… My neighbors are going to come over and say "you are '*shamed*' because of your, your son is '*shamed*'. (*He bitterly went on*)

SON: It's my fault. It's my fault

DAD: You are not my son anymore because you are '*shamed*'. (*Pushing him away*) I'm gonna get me another son who will not get a '*D*', who will get *A*s and won't make me ashamed. (*He continues to lash out as the son leaves telling him to go and live on the streets.*)

SON: That's fine. (*He walks away with his head down.*)

DAD: Get out of my sight. ***End***

After the scene, everyone sat around for a brief discussion. One of the participants/actors asked if the people who are not in the scene would tell the cultures represented, the first person to speak up said the first one was an African family first of because of the color of the actors possibly their accents too although he didn't mention this (both actors are in fact from Africa), the second one was an American because of their color, he noted lightly but mostly because of their behavior, and the last one was American too but one that was a hardworking with a strict dad who expects a lot from their kids. Asked if they had other views**,** another person said that the last family was German while another said the second and third families might as well be European.

www.manaraa.com

Interestingly, when the first participant to speak up said the second family was American, people agreed, quoting lines from the scene like "I'm gonna get your dad to fix this" or "All teacher's fault." Which according to the participants is very typical of American parenting. Although the participants didn't get the last family which according to the performers was supposed to be Asian, the performers explained that while some American parents may be strict, it is uncommon to shame the children out of their homes like it is in the Asian culture.

Scenario 2: Addressing differences

The next group presented a two-part scene. The first part showed two people who have a familiar way of greeting each other without any trouble. The second part was of the scenario was of two friends who run into each other. The friend introduces a female friend to the other who leans in to give her a kiss. She holds out her hands.

GIRLFRIEND: Wait, wait… what are you doing?

FRIEND: I want to kiss you...

GIRLFRIEND: Uhm, no.

BOYFRIEND: What do you mean?

FRIEND: On the cheek (*Confused and embarrassed, he quickly explains*)

BOYFRIEND: This my girlfriend, man.

FRIEND: Oh, we do that in Europe

BOYFRIEND: Ohh... No, in the US we don't do that.

GIRLFRIEND: Yeah

BOYFRIEND: We just shake hands.

FRIEND: Nice to meet you

GIRLFRIEND: Nice to meet you. (*They shake hands*) ***End***

www.manaraa.com

After the scene, we talked about the simple differences in our cultures for example in the way we show appreciation, greet each other and things as such where for example from people kiss three times, others twice or once or none at all. Or cultures where people don't even shake hands because their traditions don't permit it. And the need to always have to be open to these differences and ready to learn, adapt or just respect other people.

The conversation then transitioned into appropriate public behavior in different cultures. In the case of America, the change in tradition was tracked from some years ago, from what people did and what they saw on Television and the influence of Hollywood on cultures. A younger participant shared that the shows their parents used to watch, married people slept in different beds which was corroborated by an older participant who had watched this particular show. They were implying that these shows didn't show or imply sex in anyway while today, as the younger participant continued, they show everything! The same participant went ahead to point out that "America is driven by consumerism and what people want and we want sex while in other countries have so much traditions respect of authority… their consumer products reflect that rather than just doing what makes money." So, what is shown on Television and in the movies influences people's behavior and overtime the culture which is then reflected in more movies and the cycle continues. Hollywood certainly does not represent the mainstream as one participant said but everyone in the room agreed that Hollywood and the media in general has such huge influences on the shaping of cultures whether multicultural or hegemonic. A participant from France acknowledged that the culture in France is becoming more "Americanized" because most of the movies and TV shows that they are exposed to are modeled on American pop culture.

www.manaraa.com

During the creative process, the performances and the discussions that followed the performances, I couldn't help but notice the generalization and stereotyping of people. This was not harmful or even intended to be harmful, but it was stereotypical either way. It was innocent stereotyping that most of us do before we check ourselves. Something that many are guilty of. And for some reason, this didn't come up in the discussions or the interviews that I did with some people. In fact, I didn't give it much thought until I went back and started analyzing the videos. I realized that although the participants' performances were well meaning and not intended to harm any of these groups of people and even though some stereotypes were not bad per se, they were still stereotypes attached to a group of people. Period. For example, when in the first scenario, the mother in the American family said that they'd wait for the dad before they signed anything, none of the participants pointed out how the family presented is stereotypical. The participants in the project were not presenting these stereotypical families to begin dialogue on stereotypes, they were presenting the parents as they believe them to be or how they believe they treat their children. Frame's argument on primary and secondary socialization (2) holds true here. Because these participants' primary socialization has not been to American culture (and vice versa); these cultures were a secondary socialization that they are distanced enough from that they have a propensity to stereotype despite having the best intentions to not do it. Again, these were not supposed to be ill intended stereotypes but stereotypes, good or bad are always harmful.

Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her 2009 Ted talk *The Danger of a Single Story,* observed that, "the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story." Certainly, as she continues, when you "show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what

www.manaraa.com

they become". This get in the way of seeing anything else about the person other than that. This hinders multicultural relationships and consequently society because we approach people with the assumption that we know them which is cannot be entirely true if you now one side of a person or group's story.

Although in presenting these families in the scene the performers seemed to forget the initial discussion we had had about individuality, and the effects of one's environ in shaping their culture irrespective of race, they were however able to point out like they had in the previous discussion on parenting that sometimes, the way people raise their children and the expectations they set for them doesn't entirely depend on their culture but class and financial status too. So when participant E said that both families were American, but from different classes or when another person said they were both European families, this was not based off their race or country, but their class and family policy or rules.

Day Four

The fourth and last workshop took place after Thanksgiving break. Attendance was low, the workshop had the least number since the project began as most people had not returned and were still recovering from the festivities. There were seven participants, all female representing six countries. As we waited for more people to come in, everyone sat around and talked casually. By now they all knew each other apart from the one of the participants was attending for the first time. Still, I had met her separately and explained the project and she knew at least three of the people there so they settled right in. Everyone started checking in sharing stories about how their thanksgiving was and where they spent the week, trading stories about the weather, places they've lived, first winter (for people who were not American) and cracking jokes about their lives. There was a general sense of community so to say. Minutes later, we started, I asked that

www.manaraa.com

we all get on our feet. One of them wondered if we were going to dance (do the icebreakers that we had done in the previous workshops), I reassured them that we would not be dancing or do any icebreakers if they were not up to it but it would be great if we did this last part of the workshop on our feet as we had a lot of fun things to do on our last day. We all stood around in an attempt to make a small circle. The plan of the day was to take everything we had shared and discussed in the previous meetings and create a scene which depicted how people from varying cultural backgrounds can live together. We wanted to explain what we had done the previous week to the two participants who were not there then and to sort of "initiate" one of them who was attending for the first time and the best way to do this was the icebreaker activity we had done where everyone does a pause and says their names, the rest of the group does the same pause and says their name and we go around through everyone. This helps the participants to loosen up, and associate other people with a pause so it is easy to remember their names.

After the ice breaker, I shared the plan for the day which was without enacting the same scenes or using the same characters or cultures represented in the scenes we did during the previous meeting, we would create a scenario where the traditions and cultures we talked about before and after the scenes or all our unique differences converge and are acknowledged and mutually celebrated. There was only enough people to make one group so we decided to all work as one group to come up with the scene instead of breaking up in groups. When the brainstorming process began, one member suggested that they create a community that bonds over food to which everyone strongly agreed. Everyone sat back down around a table and there the conversation went on with everyone sharing standard staples and delicacies in their cultures or just their favorite food.

www.manaraa.com

Multicultural living

The first person shared a delicacy. Although they are American, they shared one that is not typically American, but something from Poland where their grandfather came from to settle in the U.S. The next person shared a delicacy from their country Kenya, they confidently pointed to the Americans and said, "I'm sure you don't do it" when explaining the soup and how it is made. They believe that only the people from African countries eat this or would understand and rightly so, all African participants knew what they were referring to albeit with different names or ways of preparation. And with this, the ball was set rolling it seemed. The next person to share was American but shared something that is not American. At least from the way their opening. "I'm from the German culture" they started and then went on to share something that is special to German. And on it went to rest of the people in the room.

They did have some good laughs and were in awe of some of the delicacies they shared. Infact, the brainstorming session turned into a discussion that kept going that they forgot it was a process of creating a scene. When finally reminded that we had to present a scene, they agreed to on a structure of the scene and how it would unfold. When the rehearsals began, they just kept going on with the discussion. At first, I let them go on but later, I had to remind them to do the scene.

The scene

> Because it was after Thanksgiving, the participants decide to do a Thanksgiving dinner where a group of people from different cultural backgrounds who live together had invited some friends to celebrate the holiday together. Roommate A who felt that their roommate cooked food (offals) that smelled terrible decided to confront them and tell them they didn't like how their food smelled. Offended, roommate B defends herself but

www.manaraa.com

the colleague will not let up, an argument ensues attracting the attention of their other roommate D who jumps in to calm the situation by sharing that they eat something like that where she comes from. It turns into a teaching moment and later when they bring out the food to their guests, everyone proudly talks about the food they made. The group ends up enjoying *Injera* a flatbread from Ethiopia, *Okra* soup from Nigeria, German sausages, offals and *Ugali* (dough made from white corn or maize) from Kenya and *kruschiki* dessert from Poland.

The conversation around the dinner table continued organically and morphed into an insightful conversation on cultural differences in other ways other than food, class, race and influences on people's cultures. It was like a continuation of the conversation from the first day. I observed that everyone was so engaged that no one remembered to call "scene" to indicate that the scene had ended until I reminded them that we were out of time. Still, they wanted to continue the conversation. Unfortunately, we only had the room for that one hour.

At the top of the conversation when the participants were introducing delicacies that they wanted to share with the rest of the group in the scene, they chose to tie this into their countries. I do not know why everyone especially chose the idea. I barely know why the Americans especially felt the need to share foods from the origin countries of their grandparents. It could be that because we are in America where all participants live and have encountered most of the food here, that sharing food from their origin countries made them feel unique in a way. But it was an American who started the trend, so I wouldn't say they felt the need to follow another non-American example. It could be that by sharing delicacies unique only to them in this group gave them a sense of belonging to this group of people (non-Americans) with whom they shared the American food yet they had something else, their own delicacies that the Americans do not get to

www.manaraa.com

share in and this gave them something unique only to them to share. I do know that half way into that discussion, everyone had as much genuine interest and questions about everyone's food.

During the scene, the discussion on the table went from the food that they were sharing to cultural differences which was expected, and from there, it morphed into race in America again! Talking about African Americans once more, how the history of slave trade shapes African-American's social and economic status, their relationships with other white American and how they are negotiating the years of oppression from the past and the systematic oppression today. This time around, as the conversation went on, it turned into a debate. An interesting debate that we unfortunately had to end because our time in the room was up.

Just like all the previous workshops, there was still no representation or voice from the African-American community so the conversation still seemed like an unfair discussion of a group without their first hand lived experiences.

Overall, during all workshops most of the participants seemed to agree on most all the issue we discussed. Even in cases where they didn't, the difference in opinions was not was easily reconcilable. I wondered therefore, and still do how these discussions would have turned out if there were people with very opposite views that they each vehemently defended. Also, out of all the participants, there were three that is didn't know prior to the call for participation in the workshops and only two that I briefed just prior to the workshops. Others knew me or we had met at least once before they came to the workshops. I suspect thus that this prior relationship irrespective of how strong it was and the ones they had with each other had an impact on their ideas and how they presented them. This makes me wonder how these discussions would have gone if most of these people didn't know me. Or, if I, the person that briefed them about the workshop and gave them the consent forms was never in the room and they didn't know each

www.manaraa.com

other. I also suspect that if these kinds of discussions were held with participants who hadn't prior experiences in another country other than theirs. For example, if they were American who had not travelled outside the U.S or people from another country who had not travelled elsewhere in the world.

Interviews

A total of five interviews were conducted. Two were pre-workshop interviews and three were conducted after the workshops ended. One participant took part in both interviews. All interviews were conducted in a room at the University campus where only I and the participant were present. In this section, I will focus on the responses from the interviews in responding to the pre and post workshop interview questions (Appendix E).

During the interviews, I asked about the experiences, perceptions, and realities during encounters with people from other cultures whether as visitor in another country or the host in their country or knowledge and views on other cultures in general. As earlier noted, all participants in the project had visited and stayed in at least one additional country for periods of more than two weeks to seventeen years. Thus, their answers to some questions could be about experience in other countries, not just the U.S.

From all the interviews conducted, participants responded with a general sense of reservation, self-awareness and empathy when answering questions about other people and cultures. For example, one of them although with strong opinions on various issues, was very objective and hesitant to comment on certain issues. When he mentioned the way women are treated in Saudi Arabia giving the example of not being allowed to drive until recently in response to cultures he thought were bizarre, he also quickly added that, "I wish I knew more about this so I can cite facts and have something to support my thinking… I don't know much to

www.manaraa.com

speak about it in an informed way". Another one although she had mentioned that she was visibly in shock when a woman rubbed some oil on their chest after she fell ill, also added that the woman was trying to help them and that this seemed like a normal thing to in these kinds of situations.

All interviewed participants were attuned to the differences in culture and backgrounds, but they also acknowledged that those are the only differences among all of us. One of them thoughtfully said, "We are all different. That is a fact and discussing about these differences and trying to understand it and gain a good view of it, a general consideration of it is better than being afraid of these differences." This awareness of the differences and eagerness to explore and understand each other was very apparent. When asked what the biggest take away from the workshops was, one participant responded, "Basically, that like everybody is the same everywhere, you know? Like, everybody has different backgrounds but at the core we all kind of like similar things, we all dislike similar things, and that really, it's just easy to talk to anybody for the most part if you are making the attempt to do it." They were also aware that all that needs to be done is getting to know the person or giving them and yourself a chance to know each other as individuals, "When I meet someone for the first time, I don't think about their country. I'm a true believer in the human nature by itself... I like to consider you as a human being and not someone from a particular country because if I do this, it might influence my judgment." One participant said. There was general agreement from the participants I interviewed that we all have to be patient and understanding with other people but also ourselves.

One of the participants said that although they had had numerous experiences with different people from different countries since they were young, read about other cultures and were aware of and open to the challenges and knew that these encounters especially in a foreign

www.manaraa.com

country would not be the same, it still did not shelter them from the "culture shock" and therefore recommended that it is important to keep in mind that encountering other cultures is different in experience than in theory therefore it's crucial to keep an open mind and always seek and keep the communication avenues open. Still on challenges and communication, one participant noted that one of the hardest parts of the multicultural encounters is, "Not always realizing that there is a different way to see the same thing." Most people attach different value to different things and without the knowledge of this during these encounters, perspectives clash sometimes. She gave the example of time and how it is a non-factor to some people while for others it is very important. For example, in America she said, if you invite someone to an event and they arrive late, it is a sign of disrespect or that they don't care about you, yet for the people in the country she had visited first, it was about coming and being there, irrespective of when you arrived at the event. The unintentional and intentional messages sent through these little things can be misread by people from different backgrounds, and "until you have a conversation you can't realize that this is what I was trying to say, this is what my actions mean to me". Even then it is not easy because "if you don't have enough language to even have those kinds of conversations, uhm there is just a lot of frustration… like I don't understand why this is happening. And that's probably the hardest part.", she continued.

The conversations and the nature of the workshops, the participants acknowledged that was important. In answering the questions of why they took part in the project and what they thought about it afterwards, a participant they came because, "First, Aidah asked me to come to the workshop but then it ended up sounding like something really interesting, to try and work through with other people." she said later adding that, "...it was a learning experience I guess. It was fun to come in and talk about different experiences with different people. Cos otherwise... I

www.manaraa.com

wouldn't have any contact with any of the people that were in the group and so, it was nice to get together with people that I usually wouldn't hang out with.", while another participant said, "I think in everyday life it's hard to talk about this kind of topic and having a framework and to do with people you don't know and people you wouldn't meet otherwise I think it can only be beneficial. Nothing wrong can come out of this... I'd do it again without any hesitation."

Throughout all the interviews that I conducted, there was first of all, some noticeable fear to comment on some topics for some people even when there was only me and the camera in the room, there was what I first felt like was tippy-toeing around especially when asked about other cultures or when the response included commenting on other races which is totally understandable. I however noticed that this was reservation resulting from self-awareness that one cannot know everything about other people or they may not be the right person to make certain comments about other people. And I later came to appreciate and admire this trait about the people I interviewed. I would like to think that this level of understanding and respect for other people's customs and beliefs and experiences is because these people have travelled, lived and experienced other cultures and that is why they are open and objective, and their ideas exuded a sense of pride of who they are but empathy and almost admiration for others. I also would like to assume it is because their experiences were long and involved living with the people of those environs and not as tourists but even then, I cannot completely say that for a fact because I also believe there are other factors that go into one having such a mindset. I do believe that it is a combination who these people are as individuals and their experiences.

Overall, most of the participants seemed to agree on most all the issue we discussed. Even in cases where they didn't, the difference in opinions was not was easily reconcilable. I wondered therefore, and still do how these discussions would have turned out if there were

www.manaraa.com

people with very opposite views that they each vehemently defended. Also, out of all the participants, there were three that is didn't know prior to the call for participation in the workshops and only two that I briefed just prior to the workshops. Others knew me or we had met at least once before they came to the workshops. I suspect thus that this prior relationship irrespective of how strong it was and the ones they had with each other had an impact on their ideas and how they presented them. This makes me wonder how these discussions would have gone if most of these people didn't know me. Or, if I, the person that briefed them about the workshop and gave them the consent forms was never in the room and they didn't know each other. I also suspect that if these kinds of discussions were held with participants who hadn't prior experiences in another country other than theirs. For example, if they were American who had not travelled outside the U.S or people from another country who had not travelled elsewhere in the world.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

"I'd say, it's all about open-mindedness, trying to free your mind from preconceptions and just considering the human being in front of you and not the idea of this particular human being you have in your mind and I know it sounds like, idealistic but it's really what everyone should aim for. This is the best tip and it's not an easy one, it's not gonna be automatic but I think working towards this purpose is the best you can do."

- Participant interview, November 2107

Summary

This research project focused on ways in which people from different cultural backgrounds perceive each other, navigate their differences and interact in multicultural settings. The second focus of the study was to encourage respectful open-minded discussions of issues of multiculturalism and ways to achieve harmony in multicultural societies. In the first chapter, I discussed the background and need for the study, the setting, participants and limitations to the study. In chapter two I reviewed literature giving relevant definitions to migration and immigration, multiculturalism, interculturalism and globalization in order to expound the background and trends of multicultural policies and societies. In chapter three I described the methodology used in the study. It explained the process of creating the data, collecting it and analyzing it. In the fourth chapter, data analysis, reported the data collected and observations made during the workshops and interviews.

In this chapter, reflecting on available literature and collected data, the following pages will include analysis of the research findings from chapter four by considering the research questions from chapter one. The questions were:

www.manaraa.com

1) How do the students at a state university in an urban mid-west region and members of the surrounding community respond to intercultural social interactions and experience social cultural exchanges?

2) How do they perceive those from countries or cultures other than theirs and how does that impact the way they treat them?

I will continue to summarize the study and its findings, suggest areas for further research and give a conclusion.

Discussion

Throughout the course of this research, I observed participants during the discussions, creative process and performances in the workshops. I conducted interviews with some participants before the project and after the final workshop. During our discussions and the performances, a number of socio-cultural matters came up and were discussed passionately and scenarios were created and performed about them.

In the following analysis, I will answer the two research questions through issues that were discussed and opinions that were shared and observed.

Race and Racism

Out of four workshops, the topic of race and racism was brought up in three. Even on days when the topic of discussion was different, somehow the conversation leaped into one on race especially in America. African-American race issues in the U.S. came up more often than other minority races in the country. Although none of the participants (none of whom were African-American) reported to have experienced racism, all of them agreed that it is a huge issue in multicultural relationships and communities. Indeed, although in her article "Humanism and Multiculturalism," (51-74), Reverend Sarah Oelberg concentrates on black-white relations, she

www.manaraa.com

acknowledges that the problem is broader than that. During the course of the discussion, one participant openly shared their family's racist tendencies by using the example of marriage partners from different races and how their family would react to them. This participant explained that a partner of African descent/Black, would not be welcomed very well by their family yet they would applaud them for getting a white partner. This participant was neither black nor white. This particular example throws light on the commonly and easily believed notion of racism exclusively being a 'crime' for white people. More instances were given where people claimed that the actions were racist or racially motivated even though that would be debatable. Throughout these conversations, it was clear that race is a huge and important part of this conversation and that we have to work out that puzzle before we can proceed to work on multicultural relations.

Defining and Confronting Racism

Racism has numerous faces. Sometimes it is blatant while other times it is subtle and can go undetected. Sometimes the effects can be very harmful or violent and other times the harm goes unnoticed too. Either way, it causes some form of damage, whether short term or long term. Reverend Oelberg explains the different forms of racism in simple terms. From individual, societal, interpersonal, institutional, occasional and systematic racism (54). Obviously, some forms have more adverse effects on interracial relations as compared to others but they are all undeniably a problem. Oelberg suggests that we are all guilty of at least one or more forms of racism. So, the starting point is accepting that we are racists (54). Understandably, this is a serious accusation and naturally, many people will vehemently deny it. And that, I guess is the biggest problem. During one of the conversations in the hallways after the workshops, some of the participants carried on with such a discussion. We had had an intense discussion that carried

www.manaraa.com

on into the hallways in groups and later one on one as people left. After clearing the room, I later caught up with one of the participants who candidly shared their views about another participant's views during their conversation. This one participant thought the other was prejudiced and racist. They felt that if you are racist or hold racist views towards another group of people, you are racist, and you don't need hours to explain yourself. The implication was that this person was justifying their views instead of accepting and possibly working on themselves. Which is common. We all have traces of different kinds of racism, preconceived notions about people both of our own and other races that consciously or unconsciously dictate the way we view others sometimes as special or with prejudice. Especially prejudice. In the article, "The Presence and Absence of Race" Peter Wade suggests, "Recognizing the specificity of race at once allows us to see when racism is at work, even when not labelled with the name of race" (48). And if multiculturalism is supposed to be not just tolerance but acceptance and celebration of all cultures and traditions, more efforts need to be made so that we can confront ourselves, address this prejudice, oppression, racial inequality and other injustices. Then, we can start to have an open discussion on cultural difference and multiculturalism.

Representation and Misrepresentation

During the research, although the individuals that participated in the project lived in different cultures and arguably had connections to different countries and backgrounds, one interesting observation was that even though the topic of race came up almost every day and was passionately and deeply discussed, not one participant at any one point spoke in terms of or as a representative of a racial group. Even when the discussion bordered on that, people spoke at least in terms of their country but not their race. I thought this was interesting because while race relations were discussed and debated more than other topics, everyone spoke from an

www.manaraa.com

individualist or national point of views. It came down to most saying, “We Americans do this”, or “We Kenyans believe this.” Even though some people who are not from Africa made the typical unconscious mistake to generalize the whole of Africa, it was Africa as a continent (mostly sub-Saharan) not black people as a race. When the African participants spoke about their countries, they made it a point to be specific which country they talked about. Still, it was not “the black people;” it was “in my country” or “in my tribe”. They made the effort to speak from their experiences as members of a particular community or ethnicity and in some cases the nation. Each time a question was asked, the general unspoken consensus was that they were speaking as people from a particular group, but everyone was cautious not to speak for the entire group, tribe or country and made it clear that their views, while true to their experiences as persons from those countries, may not be shared by others. Usually, as humans we fall into the trap of wanting to speak for places or larger groups of people we belong to. In fact, many times when we find ourselves in a space where we are the only one from a particular group and a question is asked about that group, people in the room will look at you in anticipation for answers. This behavior makes the wrong assumption that we can be ambassadors of these groups and therefore can speak for them, and sometimes we accept the role without questioning although we wouldn't do it if given another option. About her time in college in the U.S., Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngonzi Adichie shared, “Whenever Africa came up people turned to me. Never mind that I knew nothing about places like Namibia. But I did come to embrace this new identity, and in many ways, I think of myself now as African.” (TEDTALK 2009) While this is something that I’m yet to collect more data about, it is a common feeling among most people from African countries, South American or Asian countries that I have

www.manaraa.com

encountered. It was therefore impressive that the participants in the project were aware or consciously made the effort not to make the mistake.

Addressing Stereotypical Narratives

Culture is an important dynamic in one's life. It shapes our beliefs about people and our entire world view. Our cultures are however different depending on how and where we grew up. We are different, whether in gender identity, culture, attitudes, politics, race and other ways, and it's these differences that make us special. On stereotypes, participants raised the concern of African-Americans and Continental Africans always being boxed into the same stereotypical category just because of the same color. In one of the workshops a participant from an African country shared their frustrations of being approached with stereotypes attached to African-American women. The participant shared that they have to keep policing and censoring themselves so that they don't fulfill the very common stereotype of "the angry black woman," even in instances where they thought what they had to say would matter or even when they would justifiably be angry. The very idea of having to act otherwise because you are performing against a stereotype is more than sad; it takes away from one's individual identity and personality. When the participant shared this, almost all participants whether from Africa or other parts of the world agreed to either having the same feelings (for the Africans) or tending to consider and approach most black people they encounter as African-American and therefore with some stereotypes (for nonblack participants), until they engage with them. One wonders about those who never get the opportunity to disprove these stereotypes because there have been no descent interactions.

People and communities are defined by their actions, and a pattern in behavior becomes some form of identity or something that other people associate with you. It is not a secret that

www.manaraa.com

our attitudes and understanding of other people are formed from what we know and have heard about them. When one's mind learns a concept or consumes a piece of information over a period of time, it can be difficult to unlearn. However, there is always more to a person and these one-sided opinions are damaging. Novelist Adichie observes, "Show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become" (TEDTALK 2009). True or not, this information stays long with us and dictates our perception of other people, even in instances where we are making the effort to be as open as possible.

In a follow-up interview, a participant said to me, "Culture doesn't have any impact on you as a human being. Everyone can be good and everyone can be bad. It's not related to culture." Every individual's behavior is specific to them although it may be influenced by elements of their culture. Therefore, to lump everyone together and judge them based on a stereotype formed from one person's behavior is unfair to the group as whole and the individuals that make up that group. Qadeer acknoweledges, "A group is an abstraction. Its facelessness makes it a stereotypical category, based on ethnic, class, racial, or cultural characterizations. Images and stereotypes, positive or negative, play a stronger role at the group level than in dealings among individuals" (154). It is therefore of importance that we desist from the long fed stereotyped narratives that shape our views and attitudes towards other people and approach every person we encounter with an open mind, as individuals not as a person from a particular group. Insisting on these one-sided stories takes away from the numerous experiences of other people and denies them the opportunity to create an individual identity. This blocks any chances of knowing them (because we think we know them), ultimately affecting the way we engage other people, the creation of new identities and relationships, or straining the ones that already exist.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

One participant referred to a moment that changed their perception of the world and themselves during the interview,

> Okay, one of the people there, was very adamant that [they] was not racist but [they] kept saying racist things and being really bigoted against things and I was like, "How can you, how can you have this so that you believe so firmly in something and you also believe in something that is completely the opposite?" ...And so I guess that like, helped me realize that there is people out there that are just like that, which was weird for me… It made me think what if the things I'm saying are perceived differently from what I mean, you know? 'Cos I'm sure there were times where the person I was listening to with that experience was meaning different things but it was difficult for them to like get it out, just cos everybody is like that and so I was thinking, "Oh, maybe this is something that I also do, where I'm trying to say something and it's completely different." So yeah, that's definitely, that was concerning. (Participant interview 2017).

As a researcher, I did not register these comments as racist until this participant's comments. I then went back to watch the recordings again. Voyer explains that the words we use have meanings beyond what may be intended, and the way one's words are interpreted or implicate their position is the responsibility of the speaker (1882). This was a huge awakening to me as an individual.

During the workshops, there was some form of agreement that motivated us all to deeply discuss our differences and similarities, to share and learn about each other. The idea and tone that I enforced in the room was that everyone came in to learn with no judgement or fear of the same. People learnt about each other's traditions and customs and were given or gave themselves a chance to see things in other people's perspectives After the workshops, conversations

www.manaraa.com

continued in the hallways or down the sidewalks. And I like to believe that for some, these conversations continued in their houses or their hearts and sparked something in them. We need to make more efforts to improve our cultural understanding of each other, open communication lines in the social context and push for policies that encourage, foster and celebrate diversity and inclusivity.

Creating our Desired Multicultural World

We are thrust into worlds where we encounter people with noticeable differences, for example, race, tradition, gender, accents and numerous others that can be spotted without interaction. But this is not enough to know about someone. Neither is quietly sharing a space, for example, in class, public transport, or standing at a train station or office building without interaction. Multiculturalism in the social context is "fundamentally about recognition, of the self and others of similar or different cultural experiences" (Wood and Gilbert 679-791). It is therefore paramount that we seek and find more ways like participatory theatre to establish and maintain dialogue; to create and nurture opportunities and settings where people can engage others; to hold open discussions where participants help each other to understand themselves and their identities, make sense of their attitudes and feelings, to bridge the racial and cultural gaps; encourage everyone to tell their story and be who they are with pride and authority as "interaction reduces prejudice" (Qadeer 153). We need challenging and immersive forms of interaction and "since theatricians are in the business of presenting a creative interaction at every performance, theatre should lead the way," Walker suggests (10).

Professor Walker has more faith in the potential of theatre than she believes the arts can do more. Oft-times when we write about using theatre, we position it as a storytelling device where people and their stories are brought to life. By doing so we reach and engage even more

www.manaraa.com

people who come to the shows as audience. Many theatre makers have come up with creative ways to engage their audiences either through pre- or post-show activities to get them thinking about the lives and experiences of persons of the story they see. Issues of migration and multiculturalism have been a part of this effort. As Walker points out, when most theatre makers and producers talk of multicultural theatre or multiculturalism in theatre, it translates to having actors of color on stage, producing plays by minority playwrights, and collaborating with minority theatre companies. While that is a good start, it is not enough. "Theatres are skilled at dramatizing and narrating the stories of our times," Theresa Beckhusen states in "Seeing Themselves Onstage," a 2018 *American Theatre Magazine* article about the staging of immigrant and refugee dramas. "But can they do more? (....) Can they act as a gathering and knowledge-sharing space for all members of their community: immigrants, refugees, and U.S.-born?" I say, yes. While I do not disregard the accomplishments of theatre artists and producers who have used their craft to engage fellow artists and audiences by projecting the ways of life of different people thereby opening and maintaining dialogue and possibly changing minds, and while I do not overlook the resources of time, financial and emotional investments required in their work, in my research I argue that theatre and theatre artists can do more. By breaking down the lines between the artists (playwrights, directors, designers and actors) and the audience and inviting everyone as an equal contributor in an interactive creative space where they can voice and debate their opinions, popular or otherwise, participatory theatre offers community members the space and tools to experience other cultures, to develop acceptable and sensitive languages, narratives and ways to disseminate collectively formed culture(s) through an immersive process. Participatory theatre also has the potential to help our communities and/or individuals to pose deeper questions and reflections that would produce long-lasting experiences, hence changing

www.manaraa.com

and fostering psychological and social intercultural and multicultural understanding among groups and individuals.

Moreover, these interactions foster cultural exchanges on different levels, ways to practice multiculturalism and multicultural perspectives of inclusivity and attitudes that do not merely tolerate but accept and grant social citizenship to all members irrespective of their national, racial or cultural experiences. With the soaring forms for cultural exchange and the declining relations between cultures, such immersive exchanges and dialogues afforded by participatory theatre provide a way out of what could potentially be or has been referred to as a global dilemma.

Recommendation for Further Research

While doing research on available literature, I found an immense body of work on the concepts multiculturalism, interculturalism, pluralism and related topics. The literature ranges from policy discussions to theoretical debates to case studies of societies and many more especially in Britain, Australia and Canada. In terms of theatre, there is research on intercultural theatre which I have come to call cross-cultural theatre. This is where a text from one culture is performed in another, actors from another culture are put on a stage of another or where artists go to different communities or countries to collaborate with artists there. There is little to no literature on immersive community engagement theatre on issues of multiculturalism. Native American theatre makers and scholars are doing a great job documenting and performing native American cultures but still with not many projects that seek to engage non-native Americans in or with these cultures. Future research could focus on a larger more organized and planned study of this nature possibly with funding and partners and fewer time constraints with more people doing different roles and the researcher concentrating only on data collection and observations.

www.manaraa.com

During the discussion, participants talked about technology but didn't delve into the impact of the internet and power of social media. Technological developments that are sweeping over the most parts of the world, the internet and social media are nurturing a fast-growing virtual multicultural space, communities and relationships which would make for interesting research.

Conclusion

From the discussions and the interviews I conducted during my research, every day I walked away with a renewed appreciation for our differences and for the people who respect and celebrate these differences and know how to live with each other. This is not an easy task, but each time I listened to the discussion and how respectfully everyone listened and gave their opinion, I appreciated these people even more. When I chose this topic, I wanted to learn more about peoples' multicultural social performance. Naturally, I went in with a set of expectations as a detached researcher but this project brought desired challenges. The process itself and the participants' empathy and candor challenged me to constantly evaluate myself, my actions, my feelings, and pushed me to check my prejudice.

One key question that my mind kept going back to during the workshops and as I reviewed the data was, "How do we proceed from here?" The question is short and seems simple yet broad. In that room with a structured hour of discussion and exchange of experiences, everything was alright. A topic was proposed and agreed upon, people spoke in turns while others listened intently with a right to be heard irrespective of their cultural background. It was an open and safe space with a leveled ground for all participants. This however is not the case outside that room, beyond and before that one hour. Outside, the power play, the racial and cultural politics, the politics and the propaganda are very present and very influential. I know as I

www.manaraa.com

believe the participants knew, too, that outside that room, the world puts us on different platforms, affording us privileges or disadvantages for numerous reasons. One would wish that the safety in that space would be extended beyond the walls of that room to include, more stories, more experiences and more voices.

The participatory theatre project offers all these opportunities. Through the discussions, participants get to debate and maybe for the first time say their sentiments or view of other people and themselves out loud. They get a chance to think deeply about their opinions and share them while they listen to others; and during the creative process, they have a chance to produce lives and experiences, theirs or those of others, through the characters they create and the way they present them. Many times, we may not know who we are until we see ourselves in another person's perspectives. In spaces like this, we get a chance to see ourselves reenacted by others giving us a chance to reconsider or re-enforce our attitudes.

This project, the workshops, the discussions and the scenes were just one of many ways to address these differences, to celebrate each other and our co-existence, to develop communities, practices, languages and means of communication that recognize and are sensitive to other people's identities and stories. I agree that there are things we are not capable of changing, at least not in one project like this, but there is also so much we can accomplish by just being open, unafraid, by listening, listening carefully and being willing to learn. In one of the interviews, one person said,

> ...there were a few times where I like had an initial thought and then was like, "oh I really need to rephrase this." Because I was, even if like the place was not that professional, it was us trying to be professional with each other and so I was trying to be really respectful about everything and so sometimes I had to take a step back and try to rephrase it and try

www.manaraa.com

again.”.

And this is what we have to. Maybe all we can do in such settings, be respectful and sensitive, reconsider our language and rephrase our thoughts. “People produce modern identities vis-a vis diversity through the use of language and negotiation of its meaning,” writes Voyer (1874-1893) and we have the power to do that. All we need is a constantly renewed willingness to do no matter where on the continuum society positions you.

Having been born and raised in a county with people from predominantly one race, even with prior knowledge, it was shockingly new for me to adapt to this multi-racial community, learning how to address people, updating myself and my vocabulary in order to not offend people and learning for the first time in my life, to live in the community as part of the minority race. I don’t believe I will ever say that I have fully learnt everything there is about living in a multicultural society. Every day is an opportunity to learn about oneself and other people, to discover and adapt, to continuously seek ways of respectful intercultural interactions and co-existence. It is an ongoing conversation where every person, every culture, every ethnicity, every voice regardless of origin or power, needs to be represented, and included in the integration and redefinition of our multicultural communities.

Gannon uses an interesting metaphor of a Marketplace in reference to Nigeria’s diversity that I want to borrow. From the rows of stalls each assigned a different product to sell them altogether they make the market; so are human beings. We, like the stalls in the market selling different items possess unique qualities and offer a special piece, making us interdependent on each other and this mosaic market place (world). The key is to, while celebrating the differences that make us special, focus on our similarities too, create a world where we all can live our true

www.manaraa.com

selves, tell our stories and share our experiences with pride certain of mutual understanding respect and a feeling of belonging.

www.manaraa.com

WORKS CITED

Bamuturaki, Kenneth. "Participatory Research in Theatre for Development: An Evaluative Paradigm of Walukuba Project in Eastern Uganda." *Consciousness, Literature and the Arts*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2016.

Beckhusen, Theresa. J. "Seeing Themselves Onsatge: Theaters Find New Ways to Relate to Immigrant and Refugee Communities, Not Only as Audience but as Partners" American Theatre Magazine. May/June 2018.

Bloomington, Illinois, City Demographics, City-Data.com, http://www.city-data.com/city/Bloomington-Illinois.html Accessed 27 May 2018

Boal, Augusto. *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Translated by Charles.A, Maria-Odilia. L McBride, Emily Fryer. London, Pluto Press, 2000.

---. *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy*. Translated by A. Jackson. London and New York, Routledge, 1995.

Bruce, S, Yearley, S. *The Sage Dictionary of Sociology.* Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 2006.

Caravantes, Ernesto. *From Melting Pot to Witch's Cauldron: How Multiculturalism Failed America* Hamilton Books, 2010.

Cox, Emma. *Theatre and migration.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Davis, Julie Hirschfled. "Trump Calls Some Unauthorized Immigrants 'Animals' in Rant" *The New York Times*, 16 May 2018 https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/16/us/politics/trump-undocumented-immigrants-animals.html Accesses 23 June 2018.

www.manaraa.com

Dawsey, Josh. "Trump derides protections for immigrants from 'shithole' countries". *The Washington Post*, 12 Jan. 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-attacks-protections-for-immigrants-from-shithole-countries-in-oval-office-meeting/2018/01/11/bfc0725c-f711-11e7-91af-31ac729add94_story.html?utm_term=.084706a04dc3 Accessed 23 June 2018.

Donner, Tim. "Multiculturalism on Trial" *Liberty Nation,* 09 Jun 2018, libertynation.com/multiculturalism-on-trial/. Accessed on 23 June 2018.

Felin, Phillip. "Revisiting Multiculturalism in Social Work." *Journal of Social Work Education*. Vol. 36, No. 2, Spring/Summer 2000, pp 261-273.

Fisher, Glenn. *Mindsets: The Role of Culture and Perceptions in International Relations*. 2nd Edition. Intercultural Press, Inc., 1997.

Gannon, J. Martin. *Understanding Global Cultures: Metaphorical Journeys Through 23 Nations.* Sage Publications, Inc., 2001.

International Students, Illinois State University, https://illinoisstate.edu/admissions/international/ Accessed 28 May 2018.

International Statistics, Office of International Studies and Programs Illinois State University https://internationalstudies.illinoisstate.edu/students-scholars/about-isss/statistics/ Accessed 28 May 2018.

Jary, David. and Jary, Julia. *The HarperColllins Dictionary of Sociology*. New York, HarperPerennial, 1991.

"Native History: Citizenship Thrust Upon Natives by U.S. Congress" *Indian country Today,* Jun 2014 https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/native-history-citizenship-thrust-upon-natives-by-u-s-congress-diZuPnKVq0C3vugN0JlgQQ/ Accessed 17 May 2018.

www.manaraa.com

Knowles, Ric, *Theatre & Interculturalism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Kymlicka, Will. *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990.

---. *Politics in the Vernacular: Multiculturalism and Citizenship*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

Luft, Aliza and Solomon, Daniel, "How dangerous is it when Trump calls some immigrants 'animals'?" *The Washington Post*, 25 May 2018 washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/05/25/how-dangerous-is-it-when-trump-calls-some-immigrants-animals/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f0a7704637fd. Accessed 31 May 2018.

Madison, Soyini. D. *Critical Ethnography: Methods, ethics, and performance*. 2nd Edition. Sage Publications, Inc., 2012.

May, Theresa, et al. *Salmon is Everything: Community-Based Theatre in Klamath Watershed.* Oregon State University, Corvallis, 2014.

Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines. Edited by Nasar Meer, Tariq Modood and Ricard Zapata-Barrero. Edinburgh University Press, 2016.

Murphy, Michael. *Multiculturalism: A Critical Introduction*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, 2012.

Normal, Illinois, City Demographics, City-Data.com, http://www.city-data.com/city/Normal-Illinois.html Accessed 27 May 2018

Patterson, Doug. Preface in Rohd, Michael. *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue: The Hope is Vital Training Manual*. Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1998.

Pavis, Patrice. *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*. 1st Edition. Routledge, 2003.

---. "Intercultural Theatre Today" *Forum Modernes Theater*. Vol. 25, No. 1, 2010, pp 5-15.

www.manaraa.com

Pruitt, J. Lesley. "Multiculturalism at play: Young People and Citizenship in Australia" *Journal of Youth Studies*. Vol. 19. No. 2, 2016 pp 269-285.

Qadeer, Mohammad Abdul. *Multicultural Cities: Toronto, New York, Los Angeles*. University of Toronto Press, 2016.

Rattansi, Ali. *Multiculturalism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An introduction*. 3rd Edition, Routledge, London and New York, 2013.

Schmidt, Alvin J. *The Menace of Multiculturalism: Trojan Horse in America.* Praeger, Westport, Connecticut and London, 1997.

Sellar, Peters. Foreword. In Cox, E, *Theatre & migration.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Sliep, Y. et al. "Narrative Theatre as an Interactive Community Approach to Mobilizing Collective Action in Northern Uganda." *Family, Systems & Health*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2004, pp. 306-320.

Student Enrollment Reports, Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis, Illinois State University. https://prpa.illinoisstate.edu/data_center/student/enrollment.shtml Accessed 2 June 2018.

Tapp, Robert B. *Multiculturalism: Humanist Perspectives,* ed. In cooperation with the North American Committee for Humanism. Prosmethus Books, New York, 2000.

Taft, Donald R., Robbins, Richard. *International Migrations: The Immigrant in the Modern World.* Ronald Press Co., New York, 1955.

Toomer, Jeanette. "What is "multicultural theatre?" Feb. 2001. Backstage https://www.backstage.com/news/what-is-multicultural-theatre/ Accessed 8 July 2018.

Toro-Morn, Maura I. and Alicea, Marxsa, ed. *Migration and Immigration: A Global View*. Greenwood Press, Connecticut & London, 2004.

www.manaraa.com

Turner, Victor. *From Ritual to theatre: The human seriousness of play*. New York, Performing Arts, 1982a.

Vertovec, Steven. "Introduction: New directions in the Anthropology of Migration and Multiculturalism." E*thnic and Racial Studies* Vol. 30 No. 6 November 2007 pp. 961-978.

Voyer, Andrea. "Disciplined in Diversity: Learning the Language of Multiculturalism." Ethnic and Racial Studies. Vol. 34. No. 11, November 2011. pp. 1874 – 1893.

Wade, Peter. "The Presence and Absence of Race" *Patterns of Prejudice.* Vol. 44, No. 1, 2010.

Walker, E. Pitts. "The Dilemma of Multiculturalism in the Theatre" *TDR* Vol. 38, No. 3, 1988 pp 7-10, MIT Press 1994.

Watson, Sophie, "Making Multiculturalism" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 15, 2017 pp 2635- 2652.

Wieviorka, Michel. "Is Multiculturalism the Solution?" Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 21, No. 5, 1998.

William, Michelle Hale, ed. *The Multicultural Dilemma: Migration, Ethnic Politics, and State Intermediation: Migration, Ethnic Politics and State Intermediation*. Routledge, London and New York, 2013.

Wood, K. Patricia, Gilbert Liette. "Multiculturalism in Canada: Accidental Discours, Alternative Vision, Urban Practice." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. Vol. 29, No. 3, Sept. 2005 pp. 679-691

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Co-creating our Lives, performing our multi-cultural Worlds
Project head: Aidah Nalubowa
Illinois State University, 2017

Introduction
This research project is being conducted by Aidah Nalubowa at Illinois State University to study the behavior and social performance of people during intercultural interactions. All participants must be 18 years of age or over.

Procedures
Participants will, according to their availability, attend workshops as agreed and openly and respectfully participate in the discussions and the creative process. Throughout the whole process, participants shall attend one workshop for a time period less than two hours per week for the next seven weeks beginning September 2017. Participants can withdraw from the project with a notice (without reason) to the facilitator.

Risks/Discomforts
Participants might get feelings of mild embarrassment at a given moment and there is possible breach of participants' confidentiality by other participants but these are no more greater then risks encountered in everyday life.

Benefits
There are no direct benefits (financial) to participants. But the participants will leave with more knowledge about other people's cultures and values, knowledge, experience, personal growth as humans in an inter-cultural world and the agency to create more open and safe spaces for mutual cultural respect, understanding and tolerance.
Participants will leave with an appreciation of making theatre.

Confidentiality
All data collected will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data and pseudonyms will be used with no identifying information.
Photographs taken during the workshops may be used in the thesis paper only if the participants captured in them consent to this and have signed photograph release forms to this effect.

Compensation
There will be no compensation for participating in the project.

Participation
Participating in this project is voluntary. Participants may discontinue their involvement in the project at any time. While all opinions are open during the discussions, participants are free to sit in without contributing to the discussion. Participants can opt out of parts of the project or the entire project whenever they wish to.
Conflicts of Interest
This study is not funded.

www.manaraa.com

Additional information.
For more information, questions or any inquiries about the project, contact Aidah Nalubowa at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics & Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529 or via email at rec@ilstu.edu.
You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

I consent to participating in the above project.

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX B: PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE FORM

Project tittle: Co-creating our Lives, performing our multi-cultural Worlds

Project head: Aidah Nalubowa

Email: xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu

As part of this project, we will be taking photographs. Please initial in the spaces below what uses of these photographs you consent to, and sign at the end of the release form. Photos will only be used in the ways you consent to. Your name will not be identified in these photos.

1. _____ Photographs can be reviewed by the research team.

2. _____ Photographs can be used for project illustration.

3. _____ Photographs can be used for promotional materials, such as brochures or fliers.

4. _____ Photographs can be used for classroom presentations.

5. _____ Photographs can be used for academic conference presentations.

6. _____ Photographs can be used for fundraising presentations/proposals.

7._____ Photographs can be used for newspaper or magazine publication

8. _____ Photographs can be posted on a web site for promotional purposes.
9.---------- Photographs can be posted on social media for promotional purposes.

_____
Name

_____
Signature

_____
Date

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX C: VIDEO RELEASE FORM

Project title: Co-creating our Lives, Performing our multi-cultural Worlds

Project head: Aidah Nalubowa

Email: xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu

As part of this project, I will be making videotape recordings of you during your participation in the research. Please indicate what uses of these videotapes you are willing to permit, by putting your initials next to the uses you agree to, and signing the form at the end. This choice is completely up to you. I will only use the videotapes in ways that you agree to. In any use of the tapes, you will not be identified by name.

1. _____ The videotapes can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.

2. _____ The videotapes can be used for publications.

3. _____ The videotapes can be shown at conferences, meetings or public presentations.

4. _____ The videotapes can be shown in classrooms to students.

5. _____ The videotapes can be used on television or the audio portion can be used on radio.

7. _____ The videotapes can be posted to a web site or other online platforms.

I have read the above descriptions and give my consent for the use of the videotapes as indicated by my initials above.

Name_____

_____ _____

(Signature) (Date)

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX D: PRESENTATION SCRIPT.

Project Tittle: Co-creating our Lives, Performing our multi-cultural Worlds: The Participatory theatre project.
Project Head: Aidah Nalubowa
Location: Illinois State University, 2017

Greetings
Hello, hello…. I am so glad you are here today. Thank you for reaching out, showing interest and actually showing up here today. You have no idea how happy this makes me. As some of you know, or might have guessed from the emails or however way you heard about this project, my name is Aidah. My other name is Nalubowa but I find that it's hard for people to pronounce so I always almost never say it these days. We'll stick to Aidah for this project. Again, thank you very much for coming. Today is going to be a good day. I feel it. We are going to do great stuff but first of all, we need to take care of the serious stuff. So, if you have not signed the consent form and the video and photograph releases forms, I am going to be handing them out so that you can read them (carefully please) decide if this s something you want to be apart of and how you want to be apart of it. I'm going to take you through what you have to know about the project and then you can decide for real if you want to be here. I do hope you do but either way, I'll still be glad that you actually came today and gave the project a chance. So here goes;

Introduction: The project is called, *Co-creating our Worlds, Performing our multi-cultural beings: The Participatory theatre project*. The project focuses on the study of social and cultural performances during intercultural interactions. I am the project head, I will be acting as the facilitator during the workshops and throughout the research project. I'm more than glad to answer any questions you may have about the project anytime. Be sure to come to me during the workshops, send me an email, call me or stop by my office during my office hours. I'm adding an extra office hour for any inquiries about the project. I do ask that everyone here is 18years of age or over as those are the only people I have authorization to work with. Thank you very much!

Procedures
As said earlier, I'm the facilitator and the sake of the language, we are all participants. According to your(participants), availability we shall have workshops as agreed for no more than two hours a week during which we shall openly but respectfully participate in the discussions and the creative process. The project will go on for seven weeks however, participants (you) can withdraw from the project anytime.

Risks/Discomforts
The risks associated with this research are no greater than those encountered in everyday life. Such as, at some point some of us might experience mild feelings of embarrassment, and some of us may breach our confidentiality. On that, it's my plea that we are respectful to each other and everyone's opinions and keep the identities of other participants confidential. Forexample, while you may talk about the issues discussed here (there is no way of keeping anyone from doing that), we ask that you keep the identities of the participants confidential from non-participants. Thank you again.

www.manaraa.com

Benefits
There are no direct benefits(financial) to participants. But I hope that every time we meet and ultimately at the end of the project we all will go away with much more knowledge about other people's cultures and values, confidence and pride of sharing our cultures with the rest of the participants, and hopefully the agency to create more open and safe spaces for mutual cultural understanding, respect and tolerance. Through creating skits from our own ideas, we shall get the opportunity to learn, experience and get an appreciation of making theatre.

Confidentiality
All information provided will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information. And we ask that you too keep it that way.

Compensation
There will be no compensation for participating in the project.

Participation
Participating in this project is voluntary. You may discontinue participation in the project at any time. While all discussions are open to everyone, participants are welcome to sit in without contributing to the discussion. Participants can opt out of parts of the project or the entire project whenever they wish to.

Conflicts of Interest
This study is not funded.

Video recording and photography
As part of this project, we will be taking photographs and making videotape recordings of you during your participation. On the release forms, please indicate what uses of these photographs or videotapes you consent to by putting your initials next to the uses you agree to, and signing the form at the end. This choice is completely up to you. I will only use the photographs and recordings in ways that you agree to. In any use of the tapes, you will not be identified by name.

Photographs
1. _____ Photographs can be reviewed by the research team.

2. _____ Photographs can be used for project illustration.

3. _____ Photographs can be used for promotional materials, such as brochures or fliers.

4. _____ Photographs can be used for classroom presentations.

5. _____ Photographs can be used for academic conference presentations.

6. _____ Photographs can be used for fundraising presentations/proposals.

7._____ Photographs can be used for newspaper or magazine publication

www.manaraa.com

8. _____ Photographs can be posted on a web site for promotional purposes.
9. ---------- Photographs can be posted on social media for promotional purposes.

Videotaping.
1. _____ The videotapes can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.

2. _____ The videotapes can be used for publications.

3. _____ The videotapes can be shown at conferences, meetings or public presentations.

4. _____ The videotapes can be shown in classrooms to students.

5. _____ The videotapes can be used on television or the audio portion can be used on radio.

7. _____ The videotapes can be posted to a web site or other online platforms.

Additional Information.
You will be given copies of the consent and release forms for your records.
For more information, questions or any inquiries about the project, contact Aidah Nalubowa at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics & Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529 or via email at rec@ilstu.edu.
Thank you again for coming today. Let's read and sign the forms (for those of us who haven't yet) and we will get started.

Signatures.
On the bottom of the consent form, video recording and photography release forms, please print your name, date and sign the form.

Thank you again for coming today.

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Pre-Workshops

How would you describe yourself? Where are you from?
How long have you been here? (ISU community/State or country)
Why did you come here?
Could you describe your first encounter with someone from another country?
Could you give me an idea of your initial perception or expectations of America or any other country you have visited?
Were your perceptions and expectations matched with what you actually experienced when you got here or that country you visited?
Could you describe how an average day here is different from how it would be back home?
If you had a chance to go to any country for however long, where would you go? Why?
Could you tell me about a culture or practice you have heard of that you think is bizarre?
How did you learn about that practice or culture?
What do you think is the biggest misconception about your country and/or culture?
Can you tell me about a time that you felt offended or disrespected because of your culture or where you come from by someone or something they said?
What is the one thing about your culture that you are most proud of?
What do you think is most challenging thing about working with people who are from a country or culture other than yours?
What would you say is most fun working with people who are from a country or culture other than yours?

Post-Workshop

Why did you come to the workshops in the first place?
Can you talk to me about your experience as a participant in the project?
How would you rate your experience from the process? And why?
Can you tell me about one event or day during the workshops that changed your perception of the World?
What is the one single most valuable lesson you are taking away from this process?
Would you participate in another project of this nature if called upon? Why?
Any tips, dos and don'ts for someone who is having their first intercultural interaction?

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX F: EMAIL/SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGE

Email message

Dear student/Faculty,

You are invited to participate in a fun research project about intercultural social interactions.

I am a graduate student form the School of Theatre and Dance conducting a project about the interactions of people from different ethnicities, race, nationalities and cultural norms. If you are 18 years of age or above and agree to participate, we shall have preliminary meetings in (Room number and building) from (start time) to (end time) on (day and date).
Specifically, participants shall participate in open and respectful dialogue on intercultural interactions. The discussions will take no more than an hour and a half. I will use no identifying names in the study. Your participation will be completely voluntary. You may choose to contribute to the discussion or just listen in and you may leave at your convenience.

If you'd like to take part in the project please reply to this email, come to (above location and date).

For more information contact Aidah by email xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu or cell xxx-xxx-xxxx

Sincerely,
Aidah Nalubowa
Graduate Assistant
School of Theatre & Dance
Illinois State University

Online Social platforms message

You are invited to participate in a fun research project about intercultural social interactions.

A graduate student from the School of Theatre and Dance is conducting a about Intercultural social interaction. If you are 18 years of age or above and agree to participate, we shall have preliminary meetings in (Room number and building) from (start time) to (end time) on (day and date).
Participants take part in open and respectful dialogue on race, ethnicity, nationalities and other intercultural issues and interactions. Participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to contribute to the discussion or just listen in and you may leave at your convenience.

If you'd like to take part in the project please comment here and the project head, Aidah Nalubowa will contact you.

For more information inbox Aidah Nalubowa or email her at xxxxxxx@ilstu.edu.

www.manaraa.com