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Adolescent self-esteem : theatre plays a leading role

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ADOLESCENT SELF-ESTEEM:
THEATRE PLAYS
A LEADING ROLE

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Television, Radio, Film and Theatre

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

William Charles Guilford

May 2001

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2001

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ABSTRACT

ADOLESCENT SELF-ESTEEM: THEATRE PLAYS A LEADING ROLE

by William Charles Guilford

This thesis addresses issues of adolescent self-esteem as it relates to the theatrical process of staging the musical *Oliver*. It examines key variables associated with elevating self-esteem, the use of drama as a therapeutic remedy, and specifically the effects of the theatrical process on adolescents from twelve to fifteen years of age.

Students were observed over a four month period with their journal entries collected following closing night of their performance. Clearly, the data and observations provide positive associations between the involvement of adolescents in the theatre and increased self-esteem.

Using the existing literature on self-esteem as a guide, tables were formulated indicating the thirty-five prevalent variables bolstering adolescent self-esteem. A thorough analysis and cross checking of journals with the thirty-five variables revealed a majority of adolescent participants experienced the key determinants inducing high self-esteem. Thus, this study illustrates how drama can be utilized as a tool in elevating adolescent self-esteem.

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Introduction

Over the years educators, sociologists, and scores of researchers from a host of disciplines have studied the period of human development known as adolescence. This stage of life is replete with a host of inherent problems. Among them is poor self-esteem. Many researchers in their quest to query, explore, unravel, and prescribe social cures for a wide variety of adolescent problems have examined this vexing variable in the adolescent equation. The purpose of this study, then, is to examine the pitfalls of sagging adolescent self-esteem, highlight the existing literature detailing key variables leading to increased self-esteem, and illuminate participatory activities underscoring these variables. The specific research question that guides this inquiry is: Does adolescent participation in the theatrical process of staging a play lead to improved self-esteem?

In this thesis the role of the researcher is to provide deep descriptive meaning emerging from adolescent journals maintained during the process of staging a production of the musical *Oliver*. Moreover, by examining the students' experiences from their own viewpoint, from their natural environment and their own individual perspectives, clear unhindered qualitative data should emerge. What insights could be valued or learned from this study? A rich database percolates from the student perspective which can assist in our comprehension and policy making regarding adolescent self-concept and self-esteem.

Statement of the Problem

This study examines and describes the experiences of students involved in the musical production of *Oliver* at San Lorenzo Valley Junior High School in Felton, California. Collected and coded data from this study of the student/adolescent viewpoint may enlighten our understanding of adolescent self-esteem through their involvement in the theatre experience and provide "alternative perspectives or

confirmatory evidence” pertaining to claims made in the extant literature (Johnson 8). Analysis of student experience and reaction to their participation in the theatre, describing the effects of their involvement in their own words, should illicit important implications regarding self-esteem, adolescence and the theatre. As such, does, and if so, how does adolescent participation in the theatre bolster self-esteem as claimed in an abundance of the existing literature?

Definitions

Before we review that literature, however, we must clarify and define a number of concepts central to this work:

Negative risk-taking refers to engaging in risks which may physically endanger the self or others, such as illegal or harmful activities.

Positive or safe risk-taking is the engaging in legal activities relatively free from self-inflicted physical harm.

Participation, according to Andrea Brennan, is “an act or state of sharing in common with others,’ i.e., involvement of the student in activities outside of required class work and study, including clubs, organized committees, sports, and residential and social events” (448).

Self-esteem, according to Rosenberg is “the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself, expressed as an attitude of approval or disapproval” (5).

High self-esteem, as defined by Pope, is considered to be a “healthy” view of the self –one that realistically encompasses shortcomings but is not harshly critical of

them.

Need for the Study

Current literature indicates strong relationships between self-esteem and relevant features of adolescent development, including associations between self-esteem and academic achievement (Demo and Savin-Williams 772), drug abuse (Reardon and Griffing 36), and juvenile delinquency (Lund and Salary 68).

Delinquency, particularly violent behavior in our schools, has steadily escalated: For children younger than eighteen, between 1985 and 1990, arrests for murder, manslaughter, and aggravated assault rose by 60%. Maguire and his coauthors found that those older than twenty-five years, however, between 1985 and 1991 homicide arrest rates declined, yet doubled among younger males (Ellisckson 566). The National High School Senior Study reported that seventeen year olds' assault rates rose by 20% between 1975 and 1985 (Osgood et al. 399). Moreover, most startling and most relevant within the context of early adolescence are the data retrieved by RAND authors Phyllis L. Ellickson and Kimberly A. McGuigan. In their article "Early Predictors of Adolescent Violence" they report findings from a 5-year longitudinal self-report survey of over 4300 high school seniors and dropouts from California and Oregon: "Deviant behavior in grade 7, poor grades, and weak bonds with middle school predicted violent behavior 5 years later" (Ellisckson and McGuigan 569). Additionally, low self-esteem girls as early as seventh grade were more likely to engage in violence 5 years later. Moreover, adolescents identified as "getting in trouble" as early as grade 7 were "significantly more likely to be violent 5 years later than those who did not" (Ellisckson and McGuigan 570). Finally, Ellisckson and McGuigan conclude that those students who had not developed strong bonds at school were more likely to engage in delinquent activities. Early studies also reveal a link between the transitional period of elementary to junior high school and a decrease in the young adolescent's self-

esteem (Simmons, Rosenberg, F., and Rosenberg, M. 558).

Recently, a congressionally mandated study by the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health revealed that teenagers are more likely to smoke, drink, have sex or be violent if they have a “lot of unstructured free time. . .” (Dlouhy A-5). The study points out two key predictors of bad behavior: “Problems with schoolwork and a great deal of unsupervised time spent ‘hanging out’ with friends, especially peers already involved in smoking, drinking and other illicit activities” (Dlouhy A-5). Thus, with increased signs of delinquency, escalating crime rates, prisons and juvenile halls over populated, and self-esteem seemingly playing a pivotal role, is it not in our national interest for policy-makers to seek out measures which elevate adolescent self-esteem?

Logically, the school experience can and should meet these intrinsic needs of students by creating opportunities via successful programs as a part of the school climate. Adolescents continually search for understanding and acceptance. Eccles and Midgley hypothesize that the more schools provide opportunities to address the developmental issues and needs of the adolescent, “positive school motivation, behavior, and mental health will follow” (23). Furthermore, adolescents who perceive that their teachers or other significant adults view them in a positive light develop greater confidence in their abilities leading to increased self-esteem and subsequently a higher value on school. Hence, a positive teacher regard (a teacher who respects or thinks highly of a student) may contribute to social-emotional resources benefiting the adolescent’s academic and psychological well-being (Ryan, Stiller, and Lynch 226). Dryfoos supports this assertion, claiming that positive teacher regard relates to less school truancy.

It is imperative for educators to examine and study the effects of the experiences they provide for their students. Fulfillment, as Crandall asserts, is found as we seek and uncover meaning and purpose in our work, family relations, and outer and inner experiences. Literature, drama, music, dance, and the visual arts can

"reflect the reality of who we are, and, thus, become an essential part of our pursuit of meaning" (32). As Eisner states: "To neglect the contribution of the arts in education.....is to deny children access to one of the most stunning aspects of their cultures and one of the most potent means for developing their minds" (40).

Though literature regarding adolescents and self-esteem saturate the sociological and psychological journals, sparse data exist when the ingredient of theatre is added to the mix. Indeed, empirical data describing attitudes, emotions, feelings, and personal significance of the theatrical experience are lacking (Hylton 287). Thus, qualitative data leading to potential insights regarding the variables leading to increased self-esteem are rarely channeled into the existing literature. By having students log their experience throughout the theatrical process, it is hoped that relevant and pertinent data associated with variables fostering higher adolescent self-esteem can be extracted, thereby sparking further qualitative research in this field.

SELF-ESTEEM: A SOCIAL VACCINE?

One of the most important aspects of the self-concept is self-esteem (Greenwald, Bellezza, and Banaji 34-45). Though much research has been conducted over the decades on self-esteem, interest in it has not been limited to the academia. The California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility embodies the public's interest in the benefits of self-esteem. The aspirations of the task force are evident in its report asserting that self-esteem "is the likeliest candidate for a social vaccine." The report further states that higher levels of self-esteem protect individuals and society "against the lures of crime, violence, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, child abuse, chronic welfare dependency and educational failure." The conclusion of the report states: "The lack of self-esteem is central to most personal and social ills plaguing our state and nation" (qtd. in Baumeister viii). The primary force behind the self-esteem initiative, California State

Assemblyman John Vasconcellos, was most concerned with California's multi-billion dollar budget deficit. Raising self-esteem, he concluded, would solve California's economic woes and produce a balanced budget. Vasconcellos stated bluntly, "People with self-esteem produce income and pay taxes. Those without [self-esteem] tend to be users of taxes" (qtd. in Baumeister viii).

Ritchie and Hill echo the sentiments of the Task Force, as their study of the effect of self-esteem on leadership and achievement contended that self-esteem is a "significant variable in individual productive functioning and leadership effectiveness...." (501).

Certainly as Vasconcellos described, adults do indeed need a strong sense of self-esteem in order to assist in fostering a productive society. However, prior to reaching the stage of adulthood they, of course, must venture through the perils of adolescence. And as the literature indicates (Newcomb and Bentler 242-248), adolescents often carry their youthful emotional difficulties into adulthood. In addition, the adolescent period is plagued with peaks and valleys of self-esteem, as young people's self-concept and self-perception constantly evolve.

A critical stage in a person's psychological development occurs during adolescence. As the adolescent has one foot in childhood and another in adulthood, no clear demarcation separating the two exists. Inconsistent expectations from our society add emotional confusion, creating an excessive burden on this age group. The Western world offers precious little script or guide through this difficult transitional period. The rites of passage in the modern world (for example, high school graduation, Fasick, 16-23) are vague and confusing, leading to increased difficulties during adolescent social-emotional development. This period of transition, that is adolescence, is limited to the industrially advanced cultures as undeveloped countries move from childhood to adulthood with no apparent transitional period. These cultures clearly separate and define the adult world from the world of the child. Often school ends as work and marriage begin, occurring during the ages of what the

Western world defines as the adolescent period. In these cultures there is little confusion regarding children's roles. There is no true period of transition as the child moves from the world of the child to the adult world. But, in our society, adolescence serves as a "gap" or a holding ground between the two worlds of childhood and adulthood. Thus, moving from a climate of "play" and cared for by adults to becoming responsible and more adult-like jumbles or creates uncertainty for adolescents. This holding ground, according to Ruble, marks the beginning of the process of comparing the self to others for the purpose of self evaluation (Harter 94).

Prior to exploring the depths of the "self" it is necessary to shape a more complete picture of adolescence. Though many may dismiss the adolescent stage in human development as a forgettable period, today's adolescents are the future of our society. Why should we care about our youth? Why should we intervene in the lives of adolescence? Today's youth face more risks with health, their lives, and their future than at any other time in our history. Illegitimate births to teens have increased 50% since 1980. Arrests for murder and manslaughter are up 60% since 1980 (Danish and Nellen 100-113). Drug use by eight graders has doubled since 1991 from 11% to 24% in 1996, and tenth graders' use soared from 20% to 38% in the same five year span. Marijuana use among eight graders jumped from 6% to 18%, and for tenth graders there was a leap from 15% to 34% during this same period. Alcohol use among eight graders is up to 47% and 65% for tenth graders, with a reported 20% classified as "binge" drinkers (Gullotta, Adams, and Montemayor 471). Currently, the United States possesses the highest rate of drug use of all industrial nations.

Obviously, the adolescent plays a social and economic role in our society, but how do we determine the financial cost, as well as drained productivity of delinquent activities? Young adolescents who use drugs as a way of coping with stress risk the the ability to develop competent coping skills and responsible

decision making. Moreover, researchers have found that younger adolescents who use drugs are much more susceptible to long-term detrimental effects than those who use drugs in late adolescence. In short, the younger the experimentation and use of drugs occurs, the lower the odds of developing responsible and competent behavior. Often young adolescents do not develop adequate social emotional growth as they enter adulthood. Their use of drugs to cope with stress also contributes to failures in their adult roles of marriage and work (Newcomb and Bentler 247). But what is an adolescent? How much control do adolescents have over their lives and what are the adult expectations during this crossroad of life?

CHAPTER II

ADOLESCENCE & SELF-ESTEEM

The greatest emotional need of the teenager is acceptance. At no time in his life is his sense of identity so fluid as in adolescence. The boy or girl is no longer a child, but surely cannot be accepted as an adult. He or she feels a constant change in personality as well as bodily feelings and because they do not know how to cope with these, they puzzle and confuse those around them with the most inconsistent behavior (Schmitt 112).

Adolescence begins at the age of ten or eleven, moving through the teenage years, and climaxing into young adulthood in the early twenties. The word adolescence is derived from the Latin word, "adolescere," meaning "to grow to maturity." In sum, it refers to the stage when children grow into adults. Physically, this is a time of tremendous growth and change. The only period in life with greater physical growth is our first two years of life (Twiford and Carson 4-10). This period in our development is filled with stressful life changes: Biologically we develop through puberty; we move from childhood to adolescence to teenagers; and we are physically relocated from elementary school to junior high (Crockett and Petersen 368). During this stage adolescents are most influenced by their peers and school (Weissberg and Caplan 217). The physical changes, combined with changing social roles, create more confusion resulting in extreme sensitivity, emotional outbursts, restlessness, and rebellion. Adolescents move from the world of dependency to independence, relying on their peers for information regarding acceptable behavior and social acceptance. Well aware of how their peers view them, adolescents again are highly sensitive to praise and criticism offered by their peers. Thus, their peers become their new social group and they tend to turn to them for self identification. However, the convening of the physical changes and psychological adjustments due to these changes create major stress.

This "storm and stress" period, as defined by Hall (3-29), creates many ups

and downs for the adolescent. The paradox of peers' and adults' expectations creates a constant changing of social roles for the adolescent. For example, the early physically maturing girl often becomes unpopular with her peers. Conversely, the early physically maturing boy is often looked up to and becomes very popular with both girls and boys within his social group. Furthermore, the late blooming girl is socially accepted by her peers, yet the boy who develops late often becomes socially withdrawn and can adopt a feeling of inferiority. Many adults, including family members, teachers, coaches, and other significant adults attached to the lives of the adolescent, often judge and expect a higher level of maturity from them due to their physical appearance (Twiford and Carson 24). During this period of "storm and stress," adjustments are constant. Society expects adolescents to be more mature, independent, and responsible than children. Moreover, the expectation that emotional maturity match the level of physical maturity can have a tremendous negative effect on adolescent self-esteem (Twiford and Carson 25). Essential to the building of strong adolescent self-esteem is the formulation of a well developed psychological support system. According to Steffenhagen (60) and Riesman, family, significant adults, and peers are the foundation to this support system, as their influence will assist adolescents in their ability to cope with stress and help in the rejection of peer pressure. A closer examination of the "self" and self-concept will produce a better understanding of self-esteem.

As the self emerges, self-esteem also develops. However, as humans make the transition from childhood to adulthood they have had no opportunity to develop appropriate cognitive structures related to the self, as they are in a process of transformation (Katona-Sallay 97). The "self-system" (cognitive structures), according to Sherif and Sherif, is formed through interactions with the physical and social environment, establishing relations with the "me" (i.e., cognitive structures) and the experience of adolescence. Thus, the feedback adolescents receive from peers, family, and teachers plays a pivotal role in developing the "self." The

organization of the self-concept is dependent upon the interaction between psychological and social factors (Katona-Sallay 104). Adolescence is the first experience where one begins a closer examination of how individuals are different from one another. Competition, who is the "best," the leader, most athletic, popular, and physical appearance (particularly for girls) comes into the formulation of the self. In short, young people are judged via societal standards and how they compare to their peers (Harter 94).

Moreover, as one traverses the adolescent landscape, one's view of oneself changes according to social groupings, emotional development, and family support. According to Sherif (270), establishing stable, secure social ties with others is one of the strongest promptings of humans. Sherif reasons that it is necessary for people to have a dependable and consistent self-picture for daily continuity of self-identity. In order for individuals to experience themselves as the "same person" from day to day, they must establish stability of social ties. Without these ties the individual has increased difficulty in maintaining a clear self-identity. Further, once self-identity is developed, the removal of these ties can cause estrangement and uncertainty, followed by erratic and inconsistent behaviors (Sherif 270). Finally, social isolation or rejection as a permanent state becomes unbearable for most humans. We are an interdependent species, and with no personal identity, we can become lost in normlessness (Sherif 273). We need challenges requiring planning and action to test our acceptance or rejection, ultimately proving ourselves to others and excelling in the progress. When one is an active participant, and ego-involved, with an "indispensable role with others in things that all feel should be done," a positive self-image is fostered (Sherif 315).

Positive self-esteem is stimulated with encouragement, support, and approval (Twiford and Carson 34). Positive feedback, particularly from peers, family, or teachers, boosts self-esteem. An abundance of empirical evidence gathered from noted researchers such as Coopersmith, Harter, and Killeen, highlights

the importance of support and nurturing from parents and other significant adults in influencing adolescent self-esteem. Strong, nurturing parent-adolescent relationships provide "an arena of comfort" (Simmons 175) in the midst of the change so typical of the adolescent years. As Buri et al state:

When such an arena is available, adolescents are better able to cope with the uncertainty of change and to tolerate (and even master) areas of discontinuity in their lives (Buri et al. 541).

Moreover, those with low self-esteem are most responsive to positive feedback (Sonstroem 132). Social interaction affects the level of self-esteem generated (Fox 45). The magnitude of these levels, however, or the impact of the interaction, is dependent upon the amount of and by whom the feedback is given (Marsh 946). Adolescents who enjoy strong, positive relationships with parents, "in terms of parental acceptance, attachment and involvement, also have a more positive relationship with peers" (Dekovic and Meeus 166). Attachment theory also finds a strong association in the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship and feelings and expectations regarding others as well as the self (Holmes 435). Thus, adolescents with high self-esteem become more aware of and sensitive to the cues of others (Walster 248-253), enabling them to be more responsive and sensitive to those with whom they interact (empathetic). In sum, they are better prepared to develop friendships and bonds. Berndt and Savin-Williams found positive friendships with peers enhance adolescent self-esteem, lessen the likelihood of depression, and assist in adjustments to school (Field 137). Since the adolescent passage is filled with constant physical and emotional changes, crisis generally occurs, creating further emotional instability in an already confusing environment. Thus, adolescent identity (personal identity), which Erikson contends is "the major developmental task of adolescence," is constantly in flux (qtd. in Twiford 33).

Consequently, in this adolescent world of confusion, grasping for and maintaining emotional stability is a constant quest. Erickson refers to this period of

"identity diffusion" as being "temporarily unavoidable." He also contends that failure to resolve this problem may result in "serious psychological problems in which the sense of self is distorted, volatile, and unstable" (Twiford 34). Perhaps a line from Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" written in 1865 best sums up this adolescent period: "Who are you?" said the Caterpillar. Alice replied, rather shyly, "I-I hardly know, Sir, just at present-at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I must have changed several times since then."

Early studies by humanists Alfred Adler and William James indicate self-esteem is an important concept in understanding human behavior (Steffenhagen, and Burns 20). Self-esteem, according to James, is the ratio of successes to goals or aspirations. Adler claimed that self-esteem is "the basic motivating force of behavior; the goal of the individual is to build, or at least protect, self-esteem (qtd. in Steffenhagen and Burns 20-21). One historical scholar of the self, C. H. Cooley, stipulated that the origins of self-esteem are social in nature. He coined the phrase, "looking-glass self." By looking into the social mirror one can view the opinions of "significant others" (whom one values for their opinions) toward the self. Thus, the appraisals of others are then incorporated as the self. Continuing this theme, G. H. Mead termed all the judgments of the significant others in one's life as the "generalized other" (154). Consequently, if many hold an individual's self in high regard, naturally, his or her own sense of self-esteem will be elevated. However, the corollary is if others have low regard for that self, one's self-esteem will deflate (Harter 87-113). Since positive self-esteem acts as a catalyst to positive growth and development, children who have little faith in their ability tend to become their own worst enemies (Purkey, Cage, and Graves 979-984). As such, they seldom perform beyond the upper limits of their own self-evaluation. If self-esteem is an overwhelming denominator in the success and failures of an adolescent, what can be done to ensure its infusion into our adolescent population?

Many social scientist, including Coopersmith, agree that two of the most

important sources of social support contributing to adolescent self-esteem are relationships with parents and peers. Coopersmith's quantitative study was based on assessments from interviews with boys and their mothers. The following list of correlational data relates to parental action which serves to boost adolescent self-esteem. The list, in order of strength of importance, reflects the significance of parental involvement or association with their adolescents.

PARENTING ATTRIBUTES

1. Expression of affection
2. Concern about the boys' problems
3. Harmony in the home
4. Participation in joint family activities
5. Availability to give competent, organized help to the boys when they needed it
6. Setting clear and fair rules
7. Abiding by these rules
8. Allowing the boys freedom within well-prescribed limits

Self-esteem, according to Lazarus, can be raised when adolescents face their problems and utilize coping skills rather than avoidance and denial (Santrock 321). A positive self-evaluation induces self-approval and ultimately a strong sense of self-esteem. Physical appearance, according to Harter (98-99), contributes to self-worth, which she maintains to be the strongest predictor of self-esteem, followed by peer social acceptance (Lord & Eccles further substantiate Harter's claim). Harter also found that the strong association between perceived appearance and general self-worth holds from early childhood through middle age.

Steffenhagen's paradigm on self-esteem incorporates the theories of James, Cooley, Adler, and Mead into the totality of the individual's construct of self: "self-

concept (mental), self-image (physical), and social concept (cultural)" (Steffenhagen and Burns 28). How one views oneself mentally, physically, and one's social status among peer groups all play pivotal roles in self-esteem development.

Early studies (Shore, Massimo, and Ricks 212) indicate competence elevates self-concept, resulting in higher self-esteem. High self-esteem generally results from adolescents performing competently in areas important to them. Therefore, it is important for adolescents to identify their areas of competence (Santrock 321). Achievement, Bednar contends, can improve adolescents' self-esteem (Bednar, Wells, and Peterson). The importance of achievement parallels "Bandura's cognitive social learning, concept of self-efficacy, which refers to individuals' beliefs that they can master a situation and produce positive outcomes" (Santrock 320-321).

Status also plays a large role in one's self-identity. Status within a peer group is also important to building self-esteem. An athlete or cheerleader may hold the title of captain, thereby obtaining status. Obviously, attaining the support of one's peer group is a safe and enviable position. Those possessing little to no outstanding attributes leading to special status, however, may suffer from lower self-esteem. Thus, those wishing to enhance their self-concept and self-esteem may obtain status via delinquency. In Delinquent boys: The culture of the gang, Cohen claims many adolescents, due to their longing for self-concept and self-identity, will turn to negative risk taking and negative attention in their quest for status. In fact, Maslow suggests that the protection and enhancement of one's self-worth is a universal human desire (Maslow 162).

Important features in the complexity of self-esteem are courage and flexibility. Courage has many interpretations in this context: Having valor, bravery, and the "courage of one's own convictions" play a key role in our society. Furthermore, those who are more able to cope and adjust are better prepared for the future. Our culture invites rapid change yet this also leads to alienation. With

increased change taking place in the immediate environment, one must exercise social flexibility. Modern society calls for increased flexibility, improvisation, and adaptation. Those who cannot adapt often suffer from low self-esteem.

To reiterate, as Dea discovered, the absence of a well developed self-esteem in the adolescent often results in "acting" out and behavior problems in order to compensate for a poor self-image (Steffenhagen and Burns 56). Steffenhagen further concludes that "the lack of self-esteem is the most important psychological variable in the etiology of deviance" (57). He concludes that the process of rehabilitation must address and nurture the development of one's self-esteem.

A short examination of potential casualties directly related to poor self-esteem is necessary to understand the relevance of programs granting adolescents the opportunity to foster a better self-image, and consequently higher self-esteem.

RAMIFICATIONS OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM

There are staggering social problems plaguing our nation as a result of low adolescent self-esteem. High school dropouts, according to research conducted by Ekstrom et al. (367), show a strong prevalence toward a "lack of interaction into the social network of school." Valverde's ethnographic study (42-57) discovered dropouts lacked support groups and suffered a sense of disconnectedness with school. The primary predictor of drug use patterns in the individual is self-esteem (Steffenhagen and Burns 61.) Anorexia nervosa accompanies low self-esteem in girls. Females battle self-image issues at greater rates than boys during adolescence (Simmons and Blyth 65). According to Connell et al., leaving childhood, girls are much more self critical and less accepting of themselves contributing to low levels of self-esteem (Harper and Marshall 801). Furthermore, they emerge from adolescence with a poorer self-image than boys (Simmons and Blyth 69). Dyson & Szirom explain these findings as a reflection of the evaluation of women by a society promoting "masculine over feminine attributes" (qtd. in Harper

and Marshall 806).

Depression and suicide, according to Fenzel's study are closely associated to those suffering from poorer quality friendships and low self-esteem (Santruck 320). The rates of suicidal behavior in adolescents is near epidemic proportions (Ellickson and McGuigan 566). Hopelessness often accompanies low self-esteem and often serves as one of the final stages prior to suicide (Bedrosian and Beck 90). Weiss found those suffering from loneliness generally have low self-esteem, and are deficient in social skills (Brage, Meredith, and Woodward 685) due to prolonged absences of relationships resulting in social isolation. In short, they lack a sense of integrated involvement and become alienated. Alienation often dominoes into depression, drug addiction, alcoholism, or workaholism. If adolescents lack parental or positive peer guidance, comfort, and social support and are unable to control their emotions, many will associate with peer groups involved with drugs and subsequently find acceptance and identity through continued negative risk-taking activities (Brook 138). Loneliness, according to Rook,

...is defined as an enduring condition of emotional distress that arises when a person feels estranged from, misunderstood, or rejected by others and/or lacks appropriate social partners for desired activities that provide a sense of social integration and opportunities for emotional intimacy (1391).

Indeed, investigators and theorists have suggested that loneliness is rampant and particularly intense during adolescence (Brennan, T. 274). Finally, Sullivan's The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry theorized that the dominant motivation of human behavior is the battle to overcome loneliness. The most cited factor contributing to suicide, according to Pfeffer, is depression (652). Lewinsohn, Rhode, and Seeley argue that hopelessness, high self-blame, and low self-esteem are key signals to teen suicide (297-305). Depression, claims Garber et al. (49-54), often transfers from adolescence into adulthood. Lau states that adolescents with poorer relations with parents and school often associate with delinquents (201). Conversely, a

positive relationship between adolescents, their parents, and peers substantially reduces drug abuse (Myers, Wagner, and Brown 76).

Support systems must be in place to guide adolescents through this dangerous transitional period. A lack of parental academic support, low expectations, and little supervision adds to delinquency and school dropouts (Rumberger 625). Middle school students enter their new environments of learning wanting more opportunities for participation in classroom decision making. In addition, positive teacher expectations are associated with higher student achievement (Jussim and Eccles 947). In short, students need and desire to be encouraged, supported, challenged, and rewarded. How and what can be implemented to foster such needs and desires easing the journey from adolescence to adulthood?

Erik Erikson offers these words as a guide to teachers and the "generalized other" adults coming into contact with adolescents: They should be "mildly but firmly coerced into the adventure of finding out that one can learn to accomplish things which one would never have thought of by oneself" (qtd. in Santrock 46). Adolescent educator Stephanie Feeney believes meaningful learning takes place through trust, experimentation, and when adolescents are free to explore and make mistakes. Most researchers agree with the findings of Connors and Epstein that parental involvement in their child's schooling needs to continue and increase beyond elementary school. A framework for understanding how parental involvement in adolescent schooling can be improved is provided by R.C. Savin-Williams and D.H. Demo.

1. Families are obligated to provide for the safety and health of their adolescents. Schools can direct parents to areas where their adolescents can spend time away from home. Social service agencies and youth organizations can use school buildings as program sites.

2. Schools are obligated to communicate with families about school programs and the progress of their adolescents. Programs are essential in bridging the communication between teacher and parent.
3. Parent involvement at school needs to be increased.
4. The learning activities at home need more parental involvement.
5. Added parental involvement in decision making at school is necessary.
6. Collaboration and exchange with community organizations need to be encouraged.

The following table of behavioral indicators of self-esteem is provided by Savin-Williams and Demo, further assisting parents, teachers, and other significant adults in detecting or monitoring adolescent self-esteem. Perhaps these indicators can serve in appropriate decision making.

Positive Indicators	Negative Indicators
1. Gives others directives or commands	1. Puts down others by teasing, name-calling, or gossiping
2. Uses voice quality appropriate for situation	2. Uses gestures that are dramatic or out of context
3. Expresses opinions	3. Engages in inappropriate touching or avoids physical contact
4. Sits with others during social activities	4. Gives excuses for failures
5. Works cooperatively in a group	5. Glances around to monitor others
6. Faces others when speaking or being spoken to	6. Brags excessively about achievements, skills, appearance
7. Maintains eye contact during conversation	7. Verbally puts self down; self-

deprecation

8. Initiates friendly contact with others	8. Speaks too loudly, abruptly, or in a dogmatic tone
9. Maintains comfortable space between self and others	9. Does not express view or opinions, especially when asked
10. Little hesitation in speech, speaks fluently	10. Assumes a submissive stance

Many adolescents are left with psychological scars and are unable to cope effectively with the stress of modern life. Consequently, they never reach their full potential. Thus, the need to encourage adolescents to adopt healthier lifestyles, which can prevent further problems from occurring (Santrock 465). Without safe or healthy choices many become unhappy, sad, depressed, violent, poor school achievers and either turn to a life of delinquency or are referred to a clinic for mental health (Santrock 470). The middle school period, according to Dryfoos, is the best time for intervention programs.

POSITIVE RISK-TAKING

Since adolescents' health is often in danger due to their own risky behaviors, risk-taking among adolescents is of significance to researchers. (Moore, Gullone and Kostanski 369). Millstein and Litt claim "[I]n contrast to mortality among children and adults, adolescent mortality primarily arises not from disease but from preventable social, environmental, and behavioral factors. Behavioral factors also rank high among causes of morbidity in adolescents" (Feldman and Elliott 433). In fact, research often centers on deviant negative risk-taking ventures such as smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, sexual activity, and delinquency (Yates 96). Are there not positive outcomes associated with risks?

Though positive risk-taking, according to the literature, is encouraged during adolescence, scant research exists. Positive risk-taking can be defined as

opportunities engaged in which allow for active participation resulting in setbacks and advances leading one through the process of coping, compromise, and success, further defined in a study of Australian adolescents, "An Examination of Adolescent Risk-Taking Using a Story Completion Task":

By this we mean risky behaviour that has the likelihood of adaptive, healthy outcomes, but involves potential cost, such as social costs like embarrassment or failure. Examples could be trying new sports, making social overtures, engaging in creative pursuits or behaviours requiring new levels of independence. Such behaviours are important for adolescent development (Moore, Gullone, and Kostanski (377).

CHAPTER III

GROUP PARTICIPATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

There are many objects of great value to man which cannot be attained by unconnected individuals, but must be attained if at all, by association (Daniel Webster).

As researchers have long contended, during the teenage years, standards of acceptance for adolescents are established by peers. Moreover, as Coleman theorized, participation in peer-valued activities is associated with greater peer approval and higher self-esteem. Indeed, participation in extracurricular activities, both athletic and nonathletic, is associated with higher levels of self-esteem (Crain, Mahard and Narat 18). Scattered throughout the available literature are correlations between participation and educational aspirations (Spady 379), feelings of control over one's life (Burbach 344), and lower delinquency rates (Landers and Landers 299). On the other hand, lack of participation in school activities, according to Bell (249), is a characteristic of most dropouts. Additionally, control theory, according to Hirschi, suggests that a lack of commitment to school activities often precedes delinquent behavior (Fertman and Chubb 519). Furthermore, the data also conclude that previous involvement in school activities reduces future adolescent delinquency (Kulka, Kahle and Klingel 279). As Holland and Andre propose, "Participation may lead adolescents to acquire new skills (organizational, planning, time-management, etc.), to develop or strengthen particular attitudes (discipline, motivation), or to receive social rewards that influence personality characteristics" (438). Thus, if adolescence is deemed the appropriate time to experiment in order to discover more about one's self in relation to others and to form an identity as an adult, "...most adolescents will develop more fully, and in healthier ways, if they are encouraged to do their experimenting within the context of supportive, yet challenging environments" (Fertman and Chubb 518). Without extracurricular options adolescents often turn to gangs, drugs, sexual experimentation, "hanging out," and

watching television (Fertman and Chubb 518). Though parents may prefer their adolescents tuning into television over delinquency, studies reveal significant gaps in self-esteem between light and heavy television viewers (Tucker 415-425). Ultimately, if one of the chief goals of society is to prepare youth for adulthood, maintaining their involvement in activities provides a means for learning and practicing the skills needed as adults (Ianni 437-466). In researching delinquent behavior, Shoemaker discovered that during times of "stress and storm" and changes beyond the adolescents' control, young people may be more prone to disengage from their support groups, particularly if they are not involved in group activities (Fertman 524-525). If active participation increases sociability and group interaction, promoting self-esteem (Parrott and Hewitt 955-958), and as Homans (Andrea Brennan 447) postulates in his exchange theory, that all interaction comes with a cost to all participants, interaction resumes due to a mutually rewarding exchange. In short, when individuals communicate with others they take give and take risks with the hope of also receiving. Finally, Dalton (Andrea Brennan 447-448) in the same vein as James, Adler, and Cooley, suggests people participate and interact in groups only in anticipation of increases in self-esteem from that involvement. Yet another explanation as to why participation induces positive self-esteem is offered by Otto and Haller:

....students assess their achievement potential, set their own goals, and significant others provide encouragement to them on the basis of the youth's past performance in extracurricular activities as well as performance in the formal academic curriculum (891).

Hence, the literature on adolescence, self-concept, and self-esteem culminates in the overriding belief that adolescents who are supported by their families and challenged to develop their individuality and independence succeed at higher rates than those who receive only support, or only challenge, or neither (Cooper, Grotevant, and Condon, 43-59). Or as Rathunde asserts, "Students

need to continually raise their skill levels and their challenge levels, setting in motion a dialectic of continuing growth" (608).

SAFE RISK-TAKING

Several activities leading to discovery and fulfillment are available to adolescents. Growth and achievement can occur via these areas which incorporate many of the ideas previously discussed in the frameworks leading to positive indicators of self-esteem. Safe-risk-taking can lead to achievement and high self-esteem. Though safe-risk-taking may minimize physical injury, setbacks as well as accomplishments may result leading to a process of coping, compromise, and success, leading the adolescent to maturation. Group participation, documented in the following studies, provides positive results affecting self-confidence, self-concept, and self-esteem.

Athletic participation, for example, is associated with high involvement and self-esteem for both boys and girls (Holland and Andre 437-466). Jackson's (198-211) study indicates self-esteem rises when adolescents engage in sports and or physical fitness. Coleman further states that athletic achievement creates bonds to the school and community, leading to status for the adolescent. Sports is the primary outlet in most schools and communities for adolescents. However, the appeal to athletics is not for all teenagers. Thus, an array of activities is necessary to attract other segments of the adolescent population.

Participation in the Girl Scouts of America and or camping during early adolescence boost self-esteem (Royse 154-168). Studies by Stratton (334) and Russell (516-523) indicate music reduces stress and anxiety levels, respectively. In addition, while music enhances relaxation (Greenburg and Fisher 817-820; Scartelli 67-78) group singing fosters trust and cooperation (Anshel and Kipper 145). The psychological characteristics of music, including emotion and self-expression are closely linked to cognitive and intellectual functions (Payne 48-53). Moreover, according to Alvin's Music Therapy, music promotes strong communication,

identification, imagination, self-expression, and self-awareness. Finally, Ruud claims music provides opportunities for catharsis and the strengthening of the ego, leading to improved coping skills. These studies raise the question central to this thesis: What role do the performing arts play in the strengthening of adolescent self-esteem?

Throughout history, the art of drama ("to do") has been instrumental in the healing process. Drama has its roots in Greece in the fifth century B.C. and in the Great Mysteries of Eleusis. The initiation rites celebrated there are believed to have involved participation in the performance of powerful scenes. Initiates reportedly returned from these rituals transformed, full of joy and happiness, feeling satisfied. As drama developed, the theatre became an integral part of healing centers such as that founded by Asklepius at Epidauros. Richard Courtney's work in Re: Play Studies of Human Drama in Education reveals that there is every indication drama, to this day, has great therapeutic value.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review of the effects of theatre participation on adolescent self-esteem primarily revealed that additional research is necessary in this field. Scant data—qualitative or quantitative—are provided specifically addressing adolescent self-esteem and drama. An examination of related studies, however, illustrates a strong correlation associating drama and other positive student outcomes. Educators have also been urged to produce learning environments and student outcomes similar to those shared by those associated with theatre.

The United States Task Force of Education on Young Adolescence identified five desired outcomes for adolescents (Ryff 1069-1081):

1. Process information from varied sources and communicate clearly
2. Learn how to learn/adapt to different educational-working environments
3. Be a good citizen/involved with community action/feel for, connect to-and

wellness for others

4. Caring and ethical individual/know and act upon right and wrong
5. Be a healthy positive person

Indeed, each of these “desired outcomes” can be realized through the process of participating in stage production.

Additionally, the Province of Ontario's four goals of education, according to the 1984 Ontario Ministry of Education, coincide well with the unique opportunities offered by contemporary drama. “The curriculum will provide opportunities for each child to the limit of his or her potential” :

1. To acquire the basic skills fundamental to his or her continuing education
2. To develop and maintain confidence and a sense of self-worth
3. To gain the knowledge and acquire the attitudes that he or she needs for active participation in Canadian society
4. To develop the moral and aesthetic sensitivity necessary for a complete and responsible life

The Ontario Ministry of Education further claims that drama is a holistic form of learning, providing a foundation for the development of physical skills, oracy, numeracy, and literacy. Drama stretches across the total curriculum in the development of awareness, skills, concepts, and values relevant to participation in the human community. Anger and resentment can also be safely expressed through the vehicle of drama.

Though self-esteem may be elevated through participation in elaborate theatre productions, a positive self-concept and self-esteem can evolve through less intense dramatic activities. Research indicates that children who have poor communication skills tend to be less well-liked by others (Gottman, Gonso, and Rasmussen, 709-718), and that training in conversational skills can improve social standing with peers. As this study has shown, an important task nurtured and developed from childhood through adolescence is learning to form positive

relationships with others. Communication skills can and do contribute to these positive social relations. Indeed, communication skills can be heightened through drama games by expanding the adolescent's repertoire of ideas. The games help them put thought into action through a conscious process that is within their control (Dayton xiv). Perhaps more importantly, the art of drama enables people to be responsible for their own actions; consequently, they feel a relationship to their own inner needs. In order to be immediately effective, education must relate directly to the personality. Finally, activities incorporating drama are inherently self-motivating, leading to increased concentration, and an extraordinary sincerity and absorption of students of all ages (Courtney par. 24).

Many creative drama leaders point to the improved self-concept via drama. "Because self-expression has been encouraged and positive guidance rather than criticism has been the leader's method, the child who might otherwise feel rejected now feels that his or her ideas have importance. The self can stand taller" (Heinig and Stillwell 8). One study, by Irwin, highlights the effect of creative drama on personal growth, demonstrating that a large group of third graders receiving forty minutes of creative drama each week for fifteen weeks showed significant improvement in personal and social adjustment when compared to a control group. Conversely, those with low self-esteem are perceived to be less capable of resisting pressures to conform and less able to perceive threatening stimuli. Often this results in aggression, unrealistic attitudes, anxieties, and a display of deviant behavior. Stanley Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory Manual claims, "High esteem is related to personal satisfaction and effective functioning. Creative persons rank quite high in self esteem and are likely to assume active roles in social groups, express views frequently and effectively. They are less troubled by fears and ambivalence, less burdened by self doubt. They move more easily towards personal goals than those with low self esteem" (qtd. in skarsten@oise.utoronto.ca par. 52). Rory O'Hara, in support of Coopersmith's research, states, "On the

subject of predictive validity, Coopersmith found that SEI (Self-Esteem Inventory) scores were significantly related to creativity, academic achievement and willingness to express unpopular opinions" (qtd. in skarsten@oise.utoronto.ca par. 66).

Various dramatic techniques are employed to affect adolescent participation resulting in positive attitudes and the raising of their self-esteem. In 1993, a project was initiated which reported that improvisational drama and live theatre were used to assist high risk students in improving a number of life skills. The Living Stage Theatre Company of Washington D.C. conducted a project that used the art of improvisational theatre with special needs youth to affect social change. The result, according to Jennifer Nelson, was the changing of self perceptions and the elevation of self-esteem in teen mothers, aged 13-16. Yes Oh Yes Drama Outreach, based in Toronto, Ontario (since 1989), is another non-profit multicultural professional theatre company which delivers Playback Theatre workshops and performances to schools exploring such issues as violence, dropping out, racism, substance abuse, sexism, prejudice, and conflict in order to facilitate the discovery of new behavioral choices. In Annie Stirling's essay she claims Playback Theatre encourages decision-making skills, individual choices, empowers, and facilitates taking personal responsibility, leading to a positive affect on the self-esteem. A study conducted of Finnish adolescent musicians, artists, ballet dancers, actors, and baseball players, conducted by Mirja Kalliopuska, indicates a high level of mental agility, empathy, and self-esteem compared to the control group not active in the arts or athletics (Kalliopuska 122-131). Kalliopuska further contends "that an active interest in arts promotes the integration of personality. The general capacity to understand others, sensitivity, and creatively develop more strongly, and self-appreciation is increased" (130). Robert Rosen's article, "Inspiring News for High School Drama and Theatre Teachers!" in Drama/Theatre Teacher, indicates that dramatic activities and theatrical productions can positively affect high school students. He found statistically significant increases in oral communication skills, student attitudes toward self and theatre, and knowledge

and comprehension of a play (16-20). In a similar piece of research, a four day developmental drama workshop was held for twelve visually impaired adolescents at a rehabilitation center for blind persons. It revealed increased levels of individual concentration, increased interaction within the group and with friends and acquaintances outside the group, and higher levels of self-esteem (Bieber-Schut 340-341). Joyce Kennedy's study of elementary school students (grades 2-5) in a program using stage presentations to teach students emphasized the use of drama to empower those students. Her study concludes that the use of drama to actively involve students in learning builds self-esteem while developing interpersonal skills and self-confidence (184-186).

In Educational Research, Dennis Lawrence conducted a study of three hundred and seventy four eight year old readers from twenty-nine schools. Four different treatments, including drama, were utilized. At the end of the twenty weeks of treatment, the therapeutic treatments (drama) produced higher gains in reading and in self-esteem when contrasted with nontherapeutic treatments (194-200). Drama has also been utilized as therapy in reducing stress for chronically ill children. Carole Bousoukis, in her dissertation "Fairy Tales In The Treatment of Chronically-Ill Children (Stress Reduction, Drama Therapy)," indicates the results of her participant-observation study reveals that the use of fairy tales was an effective means of reducing stress in chronically ill children (1833). Another use of drama as therapy is chronicled in "Acting Out: A Pilot Project in Drama Therapy With Adolescents." Acting Out is a program serving adolescents by combining an expressive arts approach to group therapy. The use of improvisational exercises drawn from the work of Viola Spolin, according to creator and Director of Acting Out, Mario Cossa, builds a strong self-image and enhances ego development. Though the case studies indicated higher self-esteem emerged as a consequence of the program, Cossa writes, "Most of the measures of evaluation employed ...were subjective" (55).

The 1999 release of the GE/MacArthur Foundation Report, "Champions of Change: The Impact Of The Arts On Learning," contains a study by the Harvard Graduate School of Education on what effect arts education programs have and why these effects may occur. Dennis Palmer Wolf's multi-year study of the program "Creating Original Opera (COO)," enlists elementary students to form a company to write and produce an original opera. Qualitative approaches in collecting the data such as classroom observations, teacher and student interviews, and student ethnographic entries, logs of important activities and collection of student work were employed. Following a study of and coding the data, Wolf concluded that students in this opera setting "participate in more substantive ways in group interactions than students in alternative settings." The study concluded that in the writing process of creating an opera, increased student participation in problem solving resulting in what Wolf states is a "phenomenon of sustained and coherent collaboration." In addition, student understanding of the many-layers of meaning and the many modalities for conveying it (through their process of creating the opera) to the work of others is robust enough to transfer to other aspects of their life. Though self-esteem nor adolescence were focal points within this study, clearly self-esteem emerged in the context of participation and accomplishment (92-98).

Stanford University professor and senior scholar at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Shirley Brice Hall, claims her research in after-school arts programs reveals "that children in the arts use linguistic and cognitive thinking skills such as long-term planning, critiquing and focused attention that can reap positive social and academic benefits." Her ten year study included records of 30,000 young people (not in school programs) run by 124 youth organizations from Massachusetts to Hawaii. As the study indicates, however, these cases were unrelated to school and did not focus solely on drama. California state schools Superintendent Delaine Eastin called for a renaissance in arts education, as the 1997 task force she initiated reported, "Arts education in most (California) schools is

minimal or nonexistent" (Olszewski par. 13). Thus, such claims leave one puzzled. If indeed, "arts education" enriches and assists in the development of students why are more school children not exposed to the arts in their education? Perhaps academic subjects accompanied by measured testing are the fiscal and moral priority of the government and citizenry.

Nationally, interest in quality arts programs can be traced as far back as the Kennedy Administration. Qualified personnel providing solid educational experiences for student participants in dramatic exercises was expressed at the Golden Anniversary White House Conference (Mottet 269-273).

MUSICAL THEATRE

To all kinds of people everywhere comes the yearning to go on stage. The reasons are innumerable. For many who are far removed from Broadway itself, going on the stage seems like an extremely entertaining experience. When there is no question of regarding the theatre as a career or livelihood this may be a valid enough reason for participation in a theatrical venture. Taking a part in a musical show—singing in the chorus, acting a role totally unrelated to one's daily life, helping to paint scenery, even just marching across the stage in medieval armor (not though it may be) —carries with it a thrill not to be found in any other pleasurable pursuit. The appeal of the stage is a strong one...(Engel xi).

Thompson and John agree that:

Participation in dramatic productions is both educative and enjoyable. Drama can play a great part in promoting a child's awareness of himself and others. He is encouraged to co-operate rather than compete, to develop his skills for the benefit of the group as well as for his own satisfaction. Most of all, he is encouraged to use his imagination to extend and comprehend his experience of the world (60).

Upon closer examination of the dramatic art form of musical theatre, the inherent effects on student participants are clearly defined. Poisson, In Theater and the Adolescent Actor: Building a Successful School Program, discusses the positive and creative benefits of dramatic activities. In short, she is in allegiance with

Dewey's philosophy on education, believing students would benefit best if they were immersed in all aspects of production, tutored by professionals in the field, and their personal development was heightened (3, 5). Far too often the theatrical productions are judged or deemed successful or unsuccessful according to audience attendance. Indeed, the performance itself rather than the process is highlighted. Student productions, however, have much more to offer than simply reviews or box office revenues. Stern, for example, states in "School and Community Theater Management:"

It is easy to overlook the importance of theater education, because people tend to judge it solely by its productions. Its main purpose, however, is student development...Production work is merely a part of the teaching process (3).

As Dewey professed over fifty years ago, experience fosters true education and all experiences are not educative. Thus, how does student development progress, and what specifically is fostered from participation in musical theatre? The following pages, drawn from pertinent sources in the literature, attempt to summarize the effects of this involvement on student participants.

Many researchers concur that one of the chief attributes of musical theatre, and its requisite hands-on approach workshop-style, is the subsequent student learning evolving as students participate (Part II, Burnau 50-51; Catron 1-2; Gray, 4-5; Schmid 34-38). By collaborating in a total group effort (Hoffer 213-223) and "owning the work" (Horn 13), students are encouraged to work cooperatively as they confront the host of challenges, hurdles, and surprises which inevitably surface when staging a show together (Stern 24). This "community" effort leads the participants to focus on the process involved in striving to reach performance rather than the final product (White 27-28).

Though little empirical evidence exists regarding increased academic performance due to participation in the theatre, educators claim students learn the art

of time management. They report students are forced to budget their time and use it effectively. Consequently, these students generally do not fall behind in their studies and often increasing their grade point average (Catron 8-10 Hannahs 522-525).

As Purkey revealed in Self-Concept and School Achievement, adolescents who feel positively about their abilities and their self-concept are more prone to success. The restless energy of a student can be channeled into the theatre, resulting in a positive and creative project (Leist 22-23) satisfying his or her desire for mischief and adventure. Moreover, emotional release can be promoted via the theatre. Since students' life experience may be limited and they may experience difficulties confronting feelings and emotions, they may find insight within characters from a given production. Empathy may be shared from gaining this insight into themselves and others (Hodgson 238-246; Hylton 287-303). Thus, understanding how others feel, captured in expressions such as "put yourself in his shoes" and the "fellow-feeling: that he is like you," often follows (Levy 52, 157; Stern 15).

Play production has been promoted as an effective means for developing positive and productive individuals as early as Froebel's 1887 publication of Education of Man. Indeed, musical theatre can stimulate adolescent emotions through imagination, curiosity, and appreciation, thereby enriching the whole person (Gray 4-5). Ultimately, students learn, practice, and develop poise and self-reliance, increase their self-confidence, and find a sense of belonging (Catron 8-10; Leist 51).

Musical theatre provides adolescents an opportunity to develop cooperative learning skills by working on a group project (Leist 51). The needs of the production rather than individual interest are underscored (Bogard & Dietrich 22-24; Engel xi) as opportunities abound for participants to share their abilities and talents. This teamwork, or as Barrows refers to it, the "study in ensemble on a grand scale," (82) results in mutual respect, often the most important and relished aspect of involvement (Fields 10; Lange 14-15). Fields asserts:

The group activities of a musical production in high school offers some of the most effective ways of developing student cooperation, individual and group discipline, personal initiative, individual responsibility and fellowship. [There is] a sense of security in belonging to a group that has a definite responsibility for the success of the production (10).

Group success transfers to all members following success, thus everyone associated with the team is a success regardless of one's role (Larson and LaFasto, 122). Therefore, being accepted as part of a successful group gives adolescent participants the self-confidence, self-concept, and subsequently the self-esteem they may lack on their own.

A positive environment for practicing, nurturing, and building adolescent social skills is offered through performing organizations (Grashel 56-57). Moreover, Wendrich believes that within the group setting of the musical theatre, prestige and recognition are often achieved. Ultimately, as Poisson determined, self-worth and a sense of belonging often accompany this experience.

Participation in musical theatre encompasses far more people than the students and director. Included in the production process as well as performances are school administrators, teachers, parents, other family members and adults, and peers. Recognition for the school following a production often ensues, enhancing school image (Robinson 253-280). School, parent, and community relations develop as parents and community members become involved with the production (Hoffer 713-723). Consequently, the infusion of attention from teachers, administrators, family friends (significant adults or "generalized others"), family, and peers, contributes to increased adolescent self-esteem. Case studies examining such involvement and their effects can illuminate these assertions.

Though few studies match precisely the participants and approach of this researcher's study, a 1999 Ph.D. dissertation, "High School Musical Theatre And The Meaning Students Give To Their Involvement (Theater, Meaning-Making),"

provides a "holistic description of high school musical theatre by examining this activity from a 'student' perspective." Karen Van Houten combined quantitative and qualitative research techniques in her investigation of high school musical theatre programs in Westchester County, New York. Specifically, she describes the experiences and perceptions of students involved in three high schools. Over a ten-month period she conducted telephone surveys, interview, observed the production process, and examined pertinent written documents. As with much of the literature in this arena, self-esteem itself was not the focus or basis for the study; however, the process "positively affected the students."

Surprisingly, little attention has been given to the experiences of those directly affected by participation in the theatre, the adolescents themselves. Van Houten's study funnels desperately needed insight into the heart, soul, and mind of the adolescent theatrical participant. Regarding the frustrations, hard work, and sacrifices experienced by student participation, one performer involved in Van Houten's study described his feelings following a production:

[The show] is finished. . . and it was so damn good you can't put it in words. . . What a wonderful, wonderful feeling having everyone come up and tell you how great you were. . . The last three months of my life have been devoted to this play. I've done nothing but go to sleep with the soundtrack, go over scenes, practice my character, go to voice lessons, practice--and it all mightily paid off (188, #2/531).

In short, students felt the hard work, sense of accountability and personal contributions and sacrifices were worthwhile as they overcame adversities and received positive support from those they respected (379). Moreover, the positive feelings many derive from their experience in the theatre often invigorates "less satisfying aspects of their lives" (411).

TIME MANAGEMENT

The literature associated with academics and time management is supported in the Van Houten study as motivation and attitude were both affected by their

association with their production:

I find the more time I have, the less I do, because I'm always saying, "Well, you have more time later, later, later." When I came home at 2:25, I would just sit around, listen to music, talk to people, and stuff like that. Whereas if I go home at 5:30, then I'd be like, "Well, I only have a couple of hours to do my homework so you better just get it done now" (198, #2/158:1-13).

Van Houten further states that when students are participating in a musical they were "normally in a a better mood" (198, #2/472) and had "a good attitude about things" (198, #1/159:17). Thus, a more focused and productive student emerged. She also noted that student performers "learned to balance the show's demands and their schoolwork" (352). Another student substantiates Van Houten's claim:

I felt I was doing better in school because I had the structure. I knew my time . . . Otherwise, if I was going home after school, you sit down, maybe watch an hour of TV or listen to the radio or talk to a couple of friends. There's no structure. So, before you know it, it's 10 o'clock at night and you haven't done anything (352, #1/339:29-46).

SOCIAL TIES

Camaraderie grew and became the most rewarding aspect of the school production. New friendships and teamwork growing out of the rehearsal process were cited as highlights by many of her research subjects (201), improving many students' social lives. References to being part of "one big family" (#2/522) joining forces as a "whole mish-mosh of people from all the different social circles" (#1/414:10-12), and students having to "put up with each other" (#1/595:19) for the benefit of the show were noted by many of the participating students (201). Younger students also felt included, as they positively interacted with older students. A freshman commented, "Everyone of every grade really supported each other. It totally changed my view on how freshman would be treated in high school" (356, #2/394). One performer summed it up: "When you work on a common goal, you just end up having something in common with each everyone--no matter who they

are" (201, #1/307:16-21). Summarizing their musical experience, one student concluded:

The show is like a journey through a long tunnel. You go into the tunnel with 50 people who you don't know; you spend months walking toward the spotlight at the end of that tunnel. And when you get there, it feels great. But what most people forget is that the reason that spotlight is so bright--and that feeling is so great--is that you spent four months walking toward it. You spent four months working together and getting to know each other. So that when you reach the end of the tunnel, it's fantastic because you've completed the journey and you've made 50 new friends. That's what I love about musical theatre (287, #2/206-207).

Indeed, along with self-confidence, a sense of belonging and camaraderie emerges from these experiences (Catron 8-10; Leist 51).

EMOTIONAL RELEASE AND ATTENTION

As alluded to earlier, musical theatre can serve as a conduit from which social and emotional gains are achieved for participating students. Many of Van Houten's research participants expressed their feelings of euphoria experienced from being on stage and the applause which followed. Some compared it to a drug and how performing became an escape from reality (202, #1/369:28-32). They enjoyed portraying someone different than themselves, expressing another side of themselves. One student detailed her excitement gained from the production in terms of her association and experience with drugs:

The reason I do anything onstage is the rush I get while I'm in front of an audience. My heart goes faster, my alertness increases. Being onstage is like a natural high. The problem is it's not as easily obtainable as some other highs. It's real work to get to the point where you can exist in another person's shoes (even for only a couple of hours) and be that person. You have to work, because if you screw up, it's like a bad trip. A crash and burn (202, #2/445).

Another explained how the freedom of expression is encouraged through the production process:

It gives you a chance to express yourself, to open up without

embarrassment. On the stage, you can let everything out; and as long as you do as you're told, you won't be criticized for it. In other words, if you do well, you get applause. If you do badly, you can always blame it on the director! . . . It's a no-lose situation (275, #2/99-100, 195).

Attention gained from being associated with a musical production flows in the form of applause, compliments, and almost celebrity recognition from peers, family, and significant adults. One student stated he felt like a "movie star" (203, #1/232:18), and another confessed: "I loved the attention of the play, having people compliment me, having people applaud. I'm an attention addict" (203, #2/447). Yet another basks, "I love recognition. I love standing in the spotlight alone at curtain call, getting applause. I love having people mention it to me two months down the road. These are the things that I'll remember for years" (276, #2/205). One student mentioned visiting the elementary and middle schools following previews to "pick up a lot of praise" (276, #1/558:25-28) from the students and teachers. Obviously, positioned to "show off a bit of talent" (276, #2/174) helped to boost their self-esteem and allow them to "feel important and a part of the school" (277, #2/163). Many felt proud, more self-confident and possessing an added sense of self-worth. One student enthused, "It gave me a really good feeling about myself, and I was always happy!!" (358, #2/360). Self-identification crystallized for some: "Socially, it's a distinction that I can have. When I walk around the school, people know me as someone who's a real good actor or a good singer and does a good job onstage. It's my distinction" (358, #1/336: 43-54, 337: 1-5). For those adolescents who often feel disconnected from the more visible social circles one student pointed out:

A nice thing about doing it is a lot of kids aren't great athletes or maybe aren't the most popular person, so in the context of high school, it's nice. I mean if you do well in a sport, everybody knows who you are and you get attention from the teachers and the other students. And so doing a show once a year is nice 'cause sometimes the students come to see it. . . you get more attention, and there's something that you get to be known for (277, #1/407:44-54, 408:1-13).

Friends and peers of the performers supported them by attending performances and were given a glimpse of a different side of the student, affording new found respect. Though many often shunned their friends during the busy rehearsal process, one student summed up the support many received: "They know I enjoy this, so they back me up" (209, #2/559).

In one of her studies, Van Houten refers to a teacher/director as she detailed what students valued from their experience with him: ". . .Mr. Peters' program taught them about projection, confidence, being on time, maturity, listening, seriousness, dedication, and LIFE" (260). She quotes a student in this vein: "I think our director is a little rough on us, but he tries to teach us how the world will be once we leave high school—which is really good" 209, #2/161). With the success of a production came an appreciation by the students for the responsibility with which they were entrusted. A sense of pride swelled in the students, as one observed: "It makes going to school more than just going to school" (359, #2/214:8-9). In fact, the principal commented that the "team effort" (359, #1/108:12-13) inherent in such productions created a positive peer pressure on students to stay eligible (often students must maintain an academic standard of a 2.0 GPA and or no 'F's). One parent concluded that the theatre experience gave students "something to hang on to from November to March," keeping them busy and "feeling that they're important" (360, #2/215:7-8, 10-11). The musical theatre program, observed the principal, is "so non-exclusive that . . .there's always a place for a student to get involved" (366, #1/109:36-43). The parent echoed the principal's belief: "He's got every kind of kid in that production!" (366, #2/163:26-27).

SUMMARY

The successful development of the adolescent into a contributing member of adult society is dependent in large part on his or her self-esteem. We have reviewed much of the literature indicating positive steps we can take to enhance self-

esteem. Much of the focus surrounds the promotion of positive behavior. Indeed, those who don't hold positive future expectations, according to Catalano and his coauthors, are at high risk (Santrock 369). We as a society must offer opportunities for success. In order for adolescents to gain confidence and permanent control over their self and to become self-directing we must provide options that empower them, thus, enhancing their well-being and generating the promotion of healthy choices. Adolescents look for and desire direction in personal goal setting, leading to their achievement. The teaching of life skills, such as those fostered through participation in the theatre, enhances self-esteem, and applies to a multitude of adolescent environments (Ryff 1069-1081). This is where public schools can, and do have a responsibility in the total development of students (Comer 42-48). If we can teach young people how to be competent and successful they can plan their futures and become self-reliant (Danish 520-544). Once again, family, peers, schools, and communities are the key to building success and self-esteem in our adolescents. It is absolutely imperative that adolescents learn how to succeed, not only how to resist failure. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are simply not enough. Without the necessary life skills, far too much is lost in unrealized potential (Danish and Donohue 133-155). Sherif's advice still rings true in the twenty-first century, "We must reevaluate the opportunities for youth to grow in creative directions--not just opportunities for delinquent youth, but for all young people searching for their own places and contributions as adults" (Sherif 314). Furthermore, he adds that youth must feel they have a function in their development. Their participation and role must be valued and considered as important to the "generalized other."

The research clearly indicates challenging activities such as the arts, music, and sports provide positive risks for adolescents to assist in the building of their self-esteem. Communication skills and the ability to interact with others in a positive and successful manner is crucial in developing self-identity and, ultimately, an elevated self-esteem. Participation in the arts requires skill, concentration, and the ability to

successfully communicate. Joining groups or associations involved in constructive activities helps in the prevention of delinquency, as unlawful behavior offers intrinsic rewards this segment of the adolescent population is unable to obtain via healthy choices. Thus, we must continue to seek positive risk taking alternatives and actively promote them to our youth.

In reviewing the literature on adolescence, including the assorted tables defining self-esteem, the profiles of a healthy adolescent, and the educational outcome desired for our youth, it is clear today's adolescents, as with their predecessors, continue to look for connections, a group to belong to and to support them. Adolescence marks the first time in young people's lives when they must make real life choices, as their childhood was dominated by adults informing them what and how to conduct their lives. In the midst of puberty and the onset of sudden emotional and physical changes, rebellion and a questioning of authority also surface. This apparent absence of emotional balance serves to confuse and trouble the adolescent. This period induces inferiority, doubts of self-concept and self-esteem. Thus, early adolescence is the period of transition from elementary school to junior high and often harbors a down turn in self-esteem.

Early adolescence signifies a most vulnerable time for our youth. Those with an active interest in the arts show increased levels of self-esteem, coping skills, and respect and acceptance of who they are, regardless of negative or positive characteristics. Additionally, those with high self-esteem defend their rights when violated, communicate clearly, form strong relationships, and openly express themselves. Their self-assertiveness helps in their refusal to submit to domination by others, yet they don't consciously feel superior to others. Pride and satisfaction rather than superiority and selfishness are bolstered. Empathy is a part of the creative process. It allows an individual to adapt to certain situations, becoming sensitive to momentary identifications, inducing flexibility. After all, empathy is much like "putting oneself in someone else's shoes."

Involvement in theatrical productions obviously entails the incorporation of much that enhances self-esteem. In the absence of positive or safe risk taking behavior, excessive self-criticism, a feeling of personal inadequacy, and the loss of self-identity follows.

It is my contention that the research clearly reveals the potential of dramatic productions to strengthen adolescent self-esteem. Furthermore, active adolescent participation in full productions provides students a unique opportunity for engaging in positive risk taking in relatively safe environments, which also provides a setting allowing childhood to merge with adult responsibilities.

Finally, Steffenhagen's paradigm on self-esteem, identifying the three basic pillars of support needed by the adolescent, are all evident within the theatrical production process. Indeed, family, peers, and significant adults join in the support of adolescent self-image, self-concept, social-concept, thereby building adolescent self-esteem.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research technique to investigate and identify variables or factors influencing adolescent self-esteem and other significant outcomes of participation in musical theater through the examination of student journals. Deep descriptive meaning emerged utilizing this method as constant discovery was not limited through restrictive surveys or questionnaires. Thus, participants' meanings and perspectives assumed greater significance than might have been uncovered using frequencies and other counting (Altheide and Johnson 485-499). The study took place over a four month period, beginning in September and concluding in December when journals were turned in to this researcher. One month following the final performance of *Oliver* a follow-up essay entitled "Reflections of *Oliver*" was written by participants and included in the findings of this study.

The Location and Community

The San Lorenzo Valley community is set in the Santa Cruz mountains approximately ten miles north of the city of Santa Cruz. Three rural or "country-like" towns, Felton, Ben Lomond, and Boulder Creek provide the vast majority of students to the San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District. The vast majority of the residents are middle class caucasians with a wide cross section of occupations. In recent years, the "valley" has become a "bedroom" community to San Jose's Silicon Valley, as the commute over highway 17 is twenty to thirty minutes. Thus, many residents find the slower pace of the San Lorenzo Valley favorable to the urban atmosphere of San Jose. This study was conducted in a junior high setting utilizing seventh and eight grade drama students from San Lorenzo Valley Junior High School as active participants. Over the past ten years, the junior high school's student population has fluctuated between 600 to 700. The high school, located just 100 yards south of the junior high campus rarely exceeds 1,000 students. In

addition, seven high school students participated as part of the tech crew and three juniors were active members of the cast. Finally, one fifth grader was also a cast member. A total of fifty-six adolescents, predominately caucasian females, participated in the production of *Oliver*. Furthermore, twenty-two parents assisted in the birth, life, and closing of the production. Many helped with costumes, built sets, worked the concessions, box office, brought in baked goods, chaperoned backstage, cleaned, secured props, and helped strike the set. Student participants became active members of either the cast, production crew, or both.

Students were informed prior to auditions that they were responsible for obtaining journals and logging daily entries regarding their participation in *Oliver* as a requirement of participating in the production. Participants were free to use notebooks, diaries, actual journals, and or any lined paper that could be stapled together. During the process, including their first meeting with the director, the participants were responsible for logging in their journals following each meeting, rehearsal, and performance or at anytime *Oliver* entered their consciousness. Students recorded events, experiences, emotions, thoughts, and reflections in their journals. These narratives offer important and insightful views into the adolescent world (Bogdan and Biklen 100). Entries were neither restrictive nor were they required to be a certain length. When time allowed, students were given an opportunity after rehearsals and performances to record their thoughts into their journals. The participants delivered their journals to their director following strike, just prior to their cast party. Categories, themes, and patterns surfaced which were grounded in the data at hand (Janesick 209-219). I posit that their journals, read and decoded by this researcher, will add to the breadth of knowledge associated with drama and its value in increasing and intensifying adolescent self-esteem.

Since little evidence is available in the literature examining the effects of theatre on adolescence, specifically from the student perspective, this research should enlighten and encourage further research in this arena. Though studies have

been conducted by Zimmerman (elementary school music), Mills (high school band), Hylton (chorus), and Johnson (orchestra), regarding student related attitudes, precise data on student experience regarding self-esteem and the theatre process emanating directly from the students are sparse. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to examine the experiences, emotions, and feelings of adolescents participating in the musical theatre process from the student point of view.

CHAPTER V RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After careful reading, coding, cross checking, and analysis of student journals tables were formulated indicating variables associated with elevated adolescent self-esteem. Several constant themes emanated from this analysis. Due to adolescent involvement in the process of the production of *Oliver*, an overwhelming percentage of the participants experienced external support; a sense of belonging, hope and accomplishment; social interaction; perseverance and emotional release. The following tables are designed to provide a graphic overview of student confirmation, in their own words, of many of the arguments made in the existing literature on adolescent self-esteem. Briefly defined and listed below are 35 variables leading to increased adolescent self-esteem. These variables are grouped into 6 general categories which are key determinants in fostering self-esteem.

ACCOM/ACH: ACCOMPLISHMENT/ACHIEVEMENT STUDENTS FEEL
THEY HAVE GAINED THROUGH THE PROCESS

ADJUSTMENTS: STUDENTS MAKE ADJUSTMENTS IN SCHEDULE; ON
STAGE; BACK STAGE; IN THEIR INTERACTION
WITH PEERS, FAMILY OR DIRECTORS

ADVENTURE: STUDENTS FEEL THE PLAY IS LIKE AN ADVENTURE; AN
EXHILARATING EXPERIENCE; A RISK

AS ACTIVITY: PRODUCTION SERVES AS A KEY AFTER SCHOOL
ACTIVITY PROVIDING STUDENT WITH REFUGE
OR PLACE TO FEEL CONNECTED

ATTENTION: STUDENTS DESCRIBE THEIR FEELINGS FOLLOWING
AUDIENCE APPLAUSE OR APPRECIATION OF
ATTENTION DUE TO THEIR CONNECTION TO
THE PRODUCTION

BELONGING: STUDENTS FEEL CONNECTED TO THE PRODUCTION OR
THAT THEY ARE NEEDED TO INSURE A
QUALITY PRODUCTION

BONDING: STUDENTS FEEL BONDED TO THE CAST; A SENSE OF CAMARADERIE

CHALLENGE: STUDENTS MENTION THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH. . .

COOPERATION: STUDENTS COOPERATE WITH OTHERS

COMPETENCE: STUDENTS FEEL COMPETENT, CAPABLE TO TAKE RISKS

COPING: STUDENTS COPE WITH SETBACKS

COURAGE: STUDENTS ADMIT COURAGE FOR SELF OR OTHERS VIA THE PROCESS

FAMILY: STUDENTS IDENTIFY SUPPORT BY FAMILY MEMBERS OTHER THAN PARENTS (EITHER IN ATTENDANCE AT PERFORMANCES OR RIDES TO REHEARSALS/PERFORMANCES OR WORKING ON LINES/SONGS/CHOREOGRAPHY OR ASSISTING WITH COSTUMES, MAKE-UP ETC. . .

EMPOWERMENT: STUDENTS MENTION TAKING CHARGE OF A SITUATION OR HOW THEY FELT EMPOWERED THROUGH THE PROCESS

EMPATHY: STUDENTS EXPERIENCE EMPATHY FOR OTHER STUDENTS, DIRECTORS, OR PARENTS; THEY COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT ANOTHER PERSON ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRODUCTION WAS EXPERIENCING

EXCITEMENT: STUDENTS FEEL EXCITEMENT LEADING UP TO INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION (AUDITIONS TO PERFORMANCE)

FRUSTRATIONS: STUDENTS IDENTIFY FRUSTRATIONS RELEASED BY STUDENT REGARDING THE PRODUCTION (OTHER STUDENTS, DIRECTORS, OR THEIR BUDGETING OF TIME AND PROBLEM SOLVING)

GROUP SUPPORT: STUDENTS EXPRESS SUPPORT TOWARD OTHERS OR FROM OTHERS TO STUDENT (INVOLVED IN THE PRODUCTION)

HOPE-FUTURE: STUDENTS IDENTIFY A SENSE OF HOPE AND OR

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

NERVOUSNESS: STUDENTS FEEL ANXIETIES (FROM AUDITION TO PERFORMANCE)

PARENTS: STUDENTS IDENTIFY PARENTAL SUPPORT OR INVOLVEMENT TOWARD STUDENT DURING REHEARSAL OR PERFORMANCE PROCESS (ATTENDING SHOWS, GIVING RIDES, WORKING WITH PRIOR TO SHOWS, ASSISTING IN THE PRODUCTION ETC)

PEERS: STUDENTS IDENTIFY SUPPORT FOR THEMSELVES FROM PEERS(IN OR OUT OF SHOW)

PERSEVERANCE: STUDENTS PERSEVERE THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES FOR SHOW; MENTIONS IT IS DIFFICULT

PLANNING: STUDENTS MENTION THE PLANNING INVOLVED TO PARTICIPATE

PRIDE: STUDENTS EXHIBIT PRIDE IN SELF, OTHERS, OR THE PRODUCTION

PROBLEM SOLVING: STUDENTS PROBLEM SOLVES WITH PEERS, FAMILY, SIGNIFICANT ADULTS, TEACHERS, HOMEWORK, RIDES, THEM SELF, AND THEIR CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY: STUDENTS DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH DUTIES, JOBS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

REWARDS: STUDENTS BELIEVE THE HARD WORK WAS REWARDING

SACRIFICE: SACRIFICES MADE FOR SHOW DEMONSTRATED OR FELT BY STUDENTS

SELF-CON: SELF-CONFIDENCE; STUDENTS REACHE A PERIOD OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

SELF-DISCIPLINE:STUDENTS MENTION SELF-DISCIPLINE NECESSARY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN SHOW

SETBACKS: STUDENTS EXPERIENCE A SENSE OF EARLY SETBACKS (CASTING ETC)

SIGNIFICANT ADULTS: STUDENTS MENTION SIGNIFICANT ADULT PRESENCE/SUPPORT IN OR OUT OF PRODUCTION OTHER THAN FAMILY MEMBER

(TEACHER ETC)

SOCIAL INTERACTION: STUDENTS IDENTIFY SOCIAL INTERACTION GENERATED DUE TO THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION

TIME MANAGEMENT: TIME MANAGEMENT BY STUDENT INCLUDING ACADEMICS AS WELL AS RIDES, FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND OTHER FACTORS ARE IDENTIFIED

CATEGORIES INDUCING ELEVATED ADOLESCENT SELF-ESTEEM

With the reviewed literature as a guide, 6 categories were devised, each including a selection of the appropriate variables listed above. Table 1, for example, "Emotional Outlet", contains variables best associated with emotions adolescents may need or desire to release. The responsibility variable as the exception, these emotions are emitted unwillingly, naturally, as most emotions are not premeditated. Pride, nervousness, excitement, and frustration are all emotions adolescents experience as part of the maturing process. Each of the "Emotional Outlet" variables, including empowerment often lead to other variables within the remaining 5 categories.

The "Inner Drive" category reflects adolescents as they strive to further themselves. Unlike the variables of emotion shown in table 1, respondents made concerted efforts to experience these variables. Though adolescents may experience frustration or nervousness they also display hope, look to the future, develop self-confidence, and work toward accomplishment and achievement.

The "Confronting Reality" category (Table 3) has variables which require respondents to react to new situations, favorable as well as unfavorable to them. Often these reactions include working with others (cooperation), making personal choices regarding sacrifice, perseverance, adjustments, setbacks, and coping. In short, respondents were forced to take control of a host of situations. Thus, frustrations experienced by respondents in Table 1 often lead to hope in Table 2,

coping and perseverance in Table 3, and various support as listed in Table 4.

Lumped within the "External Support" category (Table 4) are the key variables essential to elevated adolescent self-esteem: Family, friends, non-family adults, and support given to each other (those involved in the production). The after school activity variable indicates respondents who expressed a need for a provided activity following regular school hours in which they could participate.

Though the "Responsibility" category (Table 5) could have been integrated into all categories, this category refers specifically to respondent initiative regarding belonging, time, and obligation. A majority of respondents, for example, clearly stated their use of planning (62%) and problem solving (67%). The rewards (67%), however, outweighed personal sacrifice, as respondent's ability to manage time undoubtedly paid dividends in the end.

Other variables instrumental in elevating adolescent self-esteem fall within the "Comaraderie" category (Table 6). The literature is exhaustive in relation to adolescent socialization: The more adolescents interact, join groups, make friends, exchange emotions (positive and negative), exchange support, and foster connections, the stronger their self becomes and the better their odds are at increased self-esteem. Subsequently, increased social interaction results in a stronger sense of belonging, bonding, as well as empathy and added attention.

The following tables provide the number of the journal (1-45 represent the 45 students who completed the journal task) listed in the far left column. The subtitle of the category is at the top of the table, and each variable has a box containing either a 0 or a 1. The 1 represents a 'hit' or positive response by the student. Simply, if students mention that variable in their journal a 1 is placed in the appropriate box. The 0, on the other hand, represents a non-response or not described by the students in their journal. At the bottom of each column the total number of responses is listed. Accordingly, the percentages are also tallied and placed in the appropriate box. Rather than list the frequencies of each student

response this study focused only on response or no response. Thus, with 45 journals analyzed, the maximum of responses would be 45.

Following the self-esteem variable tables and bar graphs are demographics of the 45 participants. The demographics included within Table 7 are gender, age, ethnicity, grade point averages of both quarters students were enrolled during the production process, parent educational level, and occupations of parents. As the table indicates, most participants were caucasian females from middle income families. Moreover, nearly half of the participants have at least one parent with a college degree and over 80% of the parents reported their highest education level attained as "some college." Though the grade point averages slipped minutely in the second quarter (grades were due one month following the final performance), overall the decrease was negligible. A host of factors play a role in student academic achievement during the first semester of school: Many teachers are generally more forgiving and lenient during the first quarter of the new school year, whereas in the second quarter most tend to expect and demand more of their students; and as students move through the second quarter they become more social, carefree, and they begin to explore and cross new boundaries.

Respondent Demographics							
Journals	Gender	Age	GPA 1	GPA 2	PEL	FO	MO
1	F	13.4	3.67	3.67	CG	Mechanic	Jeweler
2	F	10	3.87	3.87	AD	Teacher	Librarian
3	F	13.9	3.83	3.67	HSG	PAC Bell	Bus Driver
4	F	13	4	3.8	CG	House Painter	Teacher
5	F	13.11	3.33	3.5	AD	Facility Mgr.	Self-Employed
6	M	13.1	2.5	2.5	SC	Sales Mgr.	Homemaker
7	F	13	3.83	3.67	AD	Attorney	Teacher
8	F	14.2	3.83	3.83	AD	U.S. Census Bur.	N/A
9	F	12.09	2.17	2.33	SC	N/A	Office Tech.
10	F	13.6	3.83	3.67	CG	Water Maintenance	Homemaker
11	F	13.2	4	4	AD	Acupuncturist	Teacher
12	M	13.6	3.83	3.67	SC	UN	Office Mgr.
13	F	13.1	3.83	3.83	CG	Rehab Adm.	Homemaker
14	F	12	4	4	CG	N/A	Computer Tech.
15	F	13.6	3.83	3.83	SC	PG&E Linesman	Homemaker
16	M	13.5	3.83	3.83	CG	City Mgr. Assessor	Sp. Ed. Asst.
17	F	13.1	3.83	3.83	SC	Dental Technician	Sales
18	F	13.1	4	4	CG	Manufacturing Mgr.	Office Adm.
19	F	13.6	3.67	3.5	SC	Construction	Accounting
20	F	13.1	3.67	3.83	SC	N/A	Office Mgr.
21	F	14	3.67	3.67	CG	SR. Engineer	Homemaker
22	F	12	4	4	CG	Sales Mgr.	Homemaker
23	F	12.4	3.83	3.33	CG	Sheriff	School Registrar
24	F	13.1	3.33	3.5	SC	Engineer	Homemaker
25	F	13.6	3.67	3.67	HSG	Self-Employed	Rehab. Counselor
26	F	12	4	3.8	AD	Self-Employed	School Nurse
27	F	13.1	4	4	CG	Mnt.State Parks	Guide
28	M	13.6	2.67	3	CG	Electr. Inspector	Self-Employed
29	F	12	N/A	3.85	N/A	Sales	Homemaker
30	F	13.8	N/A	3.33	N/A	Self Employed	Self Employed
31	F	14.1	N/A	4	N/A	Residential Care	Sales
32	F	14.8	N/A	3.66	N/A	Roofer	Accounting
33	M	14.3	2.83	3.2	HSG	Carpenter	Day Care Provider
34	F	14.1	3.33	1.8	SC	Pro. Scheduler	Homemaker
35	F	14.6	3.33	3.4	SC	Plasterer	Phlebotomist
36	F	12.1	4	4	CG	Sales Mgr.	Interior Design
37	F	12.9	4	4	SC	Gardener	N/A
38	F	13	2.5	2.5	AD	Judge	N/A
39	M	12.2	2.5	3.3	SC	N/A	Cosmetologist
40	M	13.3	3.67	3.67	SC	Lumber Yard	Credit Mgr.
41	M	13	3.5	3.5	CG	Internet Mgr.	Sales
42	F	12.8	2.5	2.5	SC	Sales Mgr.	Sales
43	M	13	3.71	3.86	SC	N/A	Nurse
44	M	13.9	3.5	3.17	AD	Digital Eng.	Homemaker
45	F	12	3.5	3.5	CG	Director At Motorola	N/A

Respondent Gender

Ethnic Identity

Emotional Outlet						
Journals	Pride	Empowerment	Nervousness	Excitement	Frustration	Responsibility
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	0	0	1	1	1	0
3	1	0	1	1	1	1
4	1	0	1	1	1	1
5	1	0	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	0	0	1	1	1	1
8	1	0	1	1	1	1
9	0	0	0	1	0	0
10	1	1	1	1	1	1
11	1	1	1	1	0	0
12	0	1	1	1	1	1
13	0	1	1	1	1	0
14	0	0	1	1	0	0
15	1	0	0	0	1	1
16	1	0	1	1	1	0
17	1	0	1	1	0	1
18	1	1	1	1	1	1
19	1	0	1	1	1	1
20	1	1	1	0	1	1
21	1	1	1	1	1	1
22	1	0	1	1	1	1
23	0	1	1	1	1	1
24	1	0	1	1	1	0
25	1	0	0	1	1	1
26	1	0	1	1	0	0
27	1	1	1	1	1	0
28	1	1	1	1	0	0
29	0	1	1	0	1	1
30	0	0	1	1	1	1
31	0	1	0	1	1	0
32	1	1	1	1	1	1
33	0	0	0	1	1	0
34	1	0	1	1	0	0
35	1	0	1	1	1	0
36	1	0	1	1	1	0
37	0	0	1	1	1	0
38	1	0	1	1	1	1
39	1	0	1	1	0	0
40	1	0	1	1	1	1
41	0	1	0	0	1	0
42	0	0	1	1	1	0
43	1	0	1	0	1	0
44	1	0	1	1	0	1
45	1	0	1	1	1	0
TOTAL	31	16	39	40	36	24
0%	69%	60%	67%	56%	82%	20%

TABLE 1

Emotional Outlet

INNER DRIVE							
Journals	Accom/Ach	Competence	Courage	Adventure	Hope/Future	Challenge	Self-con
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
3	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
4	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
5	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
6	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
7	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
8	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
9	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
10	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
11	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
12	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
13	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
15	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
16	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
17	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
18	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
19	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
20	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
21	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
22	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
23	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
24	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
25	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
26	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
27	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
28	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
29	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
30	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
31	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
32	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
35	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
36	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
37	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
38	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
39	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
40	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
41	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
42	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
45	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
TOTAL	35	17	10	9	39	11	28
0%	78%	38%	22%	20%	87%	24%	62%

TABLE 2

Inner Drive

Confronting Reality						
Journals	Cooperation	Perseverance	Sacrifice	Adjustments	Setbacks	Coping
1	0	1	1	1	1	1
2	0	0	1	1	0	0
3	0	0	1	0	1	1
4	0	1	1	1	1	1
5	1	1	1	1	1	0
6	0	1	1	1	1	1
7	1	1	1	1	1	1
8	1	1	1	1	1	1
9	0	0	0	0	1	1
10	1	1	1	0	1	1
11	1	1	1	1	1	0
12	1	1	1	1	0	0
13	1	1	1	1	0	0
14	0	0	0	1	0	1
15	1	1	0	0	1	1
16	0	1	1	0	0	0
17	1	1	1	1	1	1
18	1	1	0	0	0	1
19	1	1	1	1	1	0
20	1	1	1	1	1	1
21	1	1	1	1	1	1
22	1	1	1	1	1	1
23	1	1	0	0	0	0
24	1	0	0	1	1	0
25	1	1	1	1	1	1
26	1	1	1	0	1	0
27	1	1	1	1	1	1
28	0	0	0	1	1	1
29	1		1	1	0	1
30	0	1	1	0	1	1
31	1	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	0	0	1	0	1
33	0	0	0	1	0	0
34	1	0	1	0	0	0
35	0	1	0	1	1	1
36	0	1	0	0	1	1
37	0	1	0	0	1	1
38	1	1	0	1	1	1
39	1	1	0	1	1	1
40	0	1	1	1	0	0
41	0	0	0	1	1	1
42	0	0	0	0	1	0
43	1	1	0	0	1	0
44	0	1	0	0	0	1
45	0	1	0	1	1	1
TOTAL	25	32	25	29	31	29
0%	56%	71%	56%	64%	69%	64%

TABLE 3

Confronting Reality

External Support						
Journals	Parents	Family	Peers	Significant Adults	Group Support	AS Activity
1	1	1	1	0	1	0
2	0	0	0	0	1	0
3	0	0	0	1	1	0
4	1	1	1	1	1	0
5	1	1	1	1	1	0
6	1	1	1	0	1	0
7	1	0	0	0	0	0
8	1	1	1	1	1	1
9	0	1	0	0	1	0
10	1	0	1	0	1	0
11	1	0	1	1	1	0
12	1	1	1	1	1	0
13	1	1	1	1	1	1
14	1	1	1	1	1	0
15	1	1	1	1	1	0
16	1	0	1	1	1	0
17	0	1	1	1	1	0
18	0	1	0	0	1	0
19	1	0	0	1	0	1
20	1	1	1	0	1	0
21	1	0	1	1	1	0
22	1	1	1	1	1	1
23	1	0	1	1	0	0
24	1	1	1	1	1	0
25	1	1	1	0	1	0
26	1	1	1	0	1	0
27	1	0	1	1	1	0
28	1	1	0	0	1	0
29	0	0	1	1	1	1
30	0	0	0	0	1	1
31	0	0	0	1	1	1
32	0	0	0	0	1	1
33	1	1	1	1	0	0
34	1	1	1	0	0	0
35	1	1	0	0	0	0
36	0	0	1	0	1	0
37	1	1	1	1	1	0
38	0	0	0	0	1	0
39	0	0	0	0	1	0
40	1	1	1	1	1	0
41	1	1	1	0	0	0
42	0	0	0	0	1	0
43	0	1	0	1	1	0
44	1	1	1	1	0	1
45	1	1	1	1	1	0
TOTAL	31	27	30	25	37	9
0%	69%	60%	67%	56%	82%	20%

TABLE 4

External Support

Journals	Responsibility				
	Time Management	Problem Solving	Planning	Rewards	Self-Discipline
1	1	1	1	0	1
2	0	0	0	0	0
3	1	0	1	1	1
4	1	1	1	1	1
5	1	1	1	1	1
6	0	0	0	0	0
7	1	1	1	0	0
8	0	1	1	1	1
9	1	1	0	0	0
10	0	0	1	1	0
11	1	1	1	1	0
12	1	1	1	1	1
13	0	0	1	1	1
14	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	1	1	0
16	0	0	1	1	0
17	1	1	1	1	1
18	1	1	1	1	0
19	1	1	1	1	0
20	1	1	1	1	1
21	1	1	1	0	0
22	1	1	1	1	0
23	0	1	1	0	0
24	0	1	1	0	0
25	1	1	0	1	0
26	0	1	0	0	0
27	0	0	1	0	0
28	0	0	0	0	0
29	1	1	1	1	0
30	0	0	1	1	0
31	0	0	0	1	0
32	1	1	1	1	0
33	0	0	1	1	0
34	0	0	0	1	0
35	0	0	0	0	0
36	1	1	0	1	1
37	1	1	0	1	0
38	0	1	1	1	0
39	0	1	0	0	0
40	1	0	0	1	0
41	0	0	0	1	0
42	0	0	0	0	0
43	1	1	1	1	0
44	1	1	1	1	0
45	1	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	23	26	28	30	10
0%	51%	58%	62%	67%	22%

TABLE 5

Responsibility

Comaraderie					
Journals	Social Interaction	Belonging	Bonding	Empathy	Attention
1	1	1	0	1	0
2	1	0	1	1	0
3	1	1	1	1	0
4	1	1	0	1	0
5	1	0	1	1	1
6	1	0	1	0	0
7	1	1	0	0	0
8	1	1	1	1	1
9	1	1	1	0	0
10	1	1	1	1	1
11	1	1	1	0	1
12	1	1	1	0	1
13	1	1	1	0	1
14	1	0	0	0	0
15	1	0	0	0	1
16	1	1	1	0	1
17	1	1	1	0	1
18	1	1	0	0	0
19	1	0	1	0	0
20	1	0	1	0	1
21	1	1	0	0	0
22	1	1	1	0	1
23	1	0	1	0	0
24	1	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	1	1	1
26	1	1	0	1	1
27	1	1	1	0	0
28	1	1	1	0	0
29	1	1	1	0	0
30	0	1	0	0	0
31	1	1	1	0	0
32	1	1	1	0	0
33	1	0	0	0	0
34	1	1	1	0	0
35	1	1	1	0	0
36	1	1	0	0	0
37	0	1	0	0	0
38	1	1	1	1	1
39	0	0	1	1	1
40	0	0	0	0	0
41	1	0	1	0	0
42	0	0	1	0	0
43	1	0	1	1	1
44	1	1	1	1	1
45	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	38	29	30	13	17
0%	84%	64%	66%	29%	38%

TABLE 6

Comaraderie

Parent Educational Level

DEMOGRAPHIC LEGEND

J#	JOURNAL RESPONDENT NUMBER
G	GENDER
AGE	AGE OF RESPONDENT AT OUTSET OF STUDY (FIRST MEETING) 13.4 REPRESENT THIRTEEN YEARS AND 4 MONTHS OLD
E I	ETHNIC IDENTITY ACCORDING TO SCHOOL REGISTRATION
AI	AMERICAN INDIAN
A	ASIAN
F	FILIPINO
H	HISPANIC
B	BLACK
C	CAUCASIAN
GPA 1	GRADE POINT AVERAGE AT END OF FIRST QUARTER (MIDWAY POINT OF PRODUCTION PROCESS)
GPA 2	GRADE POINT AVERAGE AT END OF SECOND QUARTER (ONE MONTH FOLLOWING CLOSING NIGHT OF PRODUCTION)
PEL	PARENT EDUCATION (HIGHEST LEVEL BY PARENT
HSG	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE
SC	SOME COLLEGE
CG	COLLEGE GRADUATE
AD	ADVANCED DEGREE
FO	FATHER'S OCCUPATION
MO	MOTHER'S OCCUPATION
PTR	PAINTER
MGR.	MANAGER
NA	UNAVAILABLE

As the director and teacher of this production of *Oliver*, it was clear to me that each of the participants experienced all of the 35 variables listed in the above tables. In fact, I believe each of the variables were experienced in a multitude of ways on a daily basis by each participant. However, if students did not write about these variables in their journals no positive response was recorded in the appropriate table's box. In my thirteen years of teaching and directing it comes as no surprise that adolescents would refrain from detailed writing on a daily basis. Many, if not most students failed to log into their journals as a daily routine. Moreover, a majority of the students, particularly the boys, simply described the activity of the rehearsal or performance rather than their reactions or feelings regarding their experience. Many of the girls, on the other hand, ventured into experiences unaffiliated with the the production. By examining the "Camaraderie" table we see that 84% of the participants describe their Social Interactions with others due to their involvement in the production. We also observe that 56% made sacrifices under the "Confronting Reality" table and 62% responded to planning within the "Responsibility" table. It is inconceivable that one could participate in such a production without making sacrifices, planning one's schedule, and interacting with others. Yet, as the data reveal, many abstained from writing about those variables. Perhaps it was obvious that such variables were experienced and they thought it was unnecessary to spend time writing about such matters. Furthermore, participants were not instructed to write about specific emotions or issues. Again, no efforts were expended in leading or directing the participants regarding their entries. Thus, the data remain untainted and are indeed extracted directly from the adolescent mind.

As the literature indicates, the adolescent stage is filled with emotional trials and tribulations, manifesting themselves through a variety of outlets. After hours of review and studying the 45 journals it became apparent that many variables manifest themselves within one passage or journal entry. As such, each category of

variables can easily be viewed as a channel of emotional release. However, the "Emotional Outlet" category best includes the variables: Pride, Empowerment, Nervousness, Excitement, Frustration, and Responsibility. In order to give the reader a more insightful view of the data collected, journal entries, in the precise language of the students are provided. As the reader absorbs the language own of the adolescent (their own spelling, grammar etc. . .) it may become clear how these self-esteem variables co-mingle. Thus, rather than attempt to provide samples of adolescent responses in a sequential manner correlating with the tables I will simply allow the reader to make these associations. Following each respondent's quoted entry, the number of their entry as well as the number of the journal is included. Thus, the reader is afforded the opportunity to cross check the entry with the demographic table on pages 52?

Regarding pride, one eighth grade girl cast in the ensemble wrote:

The show went sooooo great , I'm so proud of everyone. It was so fun and I hope its as good as todays was. My parents wen't in the audience, because she was working backstage, but I know everyone else loved the play because it was a full house and everyone was cheering really loud. I loved it! (30 #15)

Consequently, this passage lends itself to pride, parental support, accomplishment, and attention, all variables in the self-esteem formula. Another eighth grade girl shares her nervousness, accomplishments, adjustments (flexibility), support for others, and pride:

I performed "Consider Yourself" for the first time on stage. I was so nervous my hands were all jittery. Then the next one I did was "I'll Do Anything" I didn't mess up this time. I was so proud of myself. I bet Casey feels like a lucky guy, to get kissed by on the cheek by 2 girls. Then on "It's a Fine Life" I messed up! The one dance I knew really well too. The solo that I was suppose to sing, I started to sing a whole

different part of the song. But what I did do was kept going on. That's one thing I'm happy I did.....Wow. "Who Will Buy" is such a pretty song. All those girls have good voices. That song makes my eyes water! (16 #17)

An eighth grade boy professes:

Man, my addams apple hurts! We were matching our voices with the piano. I tried to go really low, then high, and in the middle I am proud of myself. When I was doing some Fagin stuff, it hurt so bad. But, I tried my best, and I nailed it (3 #20).

Thus, sacrifice, pride, accomplishment, and competence were experienced.

One fourteen year old girl rejoices after receiving a gift from a fourteen year old boy following a performance:

Tonight I was so proud of myself. I thought I did really well. Also Miles bought me a thing of flowers. They were pink carnations! They were so pretty! Oh I just love him (21 #45).

Apparently, community pride and living up to the town's expectations were paramount to one eighth grade girl:

I was so worried we would get up there and disappoint the community they expect so much from us they expect a wonderful show a perfect show. Our school is known for some of the best in the county. We work so hard for those expectations and we had to keep them (6 #25).

Yet another girl exalts her joy and pride for another cast member:

Although yesterday was terrible today was wonderful. Probably because I was Nancy! Well, I'm not too sure about that, ok I am. I am so happy-Bryer-yes Bryer was wonderful I am so proud of him. He pulled through he was totally awesome. I got alot of flowers. I remembered my lines, my blocking, and my songs. My mom and everyone said I did great (40 #5).

It should be pointed out that the young man she refers to was a concern to all

associated with the production, as his commitment and dedication to the show were constantly in question up to opening night. As one might deduct, her brief passage is filled with self-esteem variables (pride, support for a fellow cast member, family and peer support, accomplishment, attention, and competence).

One fourteen year old boy describes his nervousness, his sense of accomplishment and competence, as well of pride in himself:

Last night we had opening night. It went great!

At first I felt like I was going to throw up but I didn't. I did good in my scene except on my song I have to speak up more. The play was dedicated to Dustin because he's not going to do [vocal directing] any more Jr. High plays. I feel really good and proud of myself (18 #6).

Subject 39, a boy, referred to previously regarding dedication and commitment did indeed come through and he was very excited and proud of his efforts:

This was my first time and I kick ass soo hard!
So did everyone else. I'm very happy! (13 #39)

He later states:

I heard my name in the Valley Press [local weekly newspaper]. Excitement runs through my body. I hope Mr. Guilford will save the paper because when Drew, Katelyn, Gen, Andrea, Sawato, Matt and Myself will be famous actors and Actress. Some day (15 #39).

Again, more than pride emerges from this exaltation (attention, excitement, future, and support for peers). Finally, one girl, prior to auditions, mentions her desire for a principal role thereby impressing her family:

I really want a good part in the play you know make my family proud Blah Blah (2 # 8).

Her first entry describes her anxieties as well as her desire to use drama as an escape:

Today was my first day of drama and I am so psyched (sp?) to be here. I am also a little nervouse, I've never been able to sing in front of more than 2 people. Ok well I'll just have to get over that. It's really strange, I never thought I could be in this class, I don't have the most self-esteem. But I truly am happy to be here. I have always loved to act. I love the attention. I am actually am very comfortable on stage, it's like a way to get away for me (1 #8).

Early in the process many of the students expressed their fears and hopes of overcoming their anxieties. One girl summed up the emotions experience by many of the cast members:

I'm stressing about Drama so much. You always stress about school the first weeks but not this much. I don't like gettin up in front of people that much but I chose Drama for a few reasons. One, I need to get more comfortable about being in front of people. Two, I like being the center of attention. Three, It sounded like fun. I have no acting experience and I don't know a thing about the Drama class. I think I'll get more comfatable with time but still I will be nerves (3 #18).

A host of variables emit from the third entry of a rather shy fourteen year old girl:

. . . I got so imotional I almost started to cry. I felt like such a fool, but when I walked up to the stage everyone was cheering for me, I was so nervous and it felt food, really good. I then felt like I can do this! I was still shaking so I lost my spot but still went on. When I stoped and just was so happy and relieved! ahh! yes! I can do this! (3 #45).

A seventh grade boy describes his opening night jitters:

It was opening night. I was so nerves. Then I hear "Laides and getlemen. . ." now I was really nerves. As the lights darkened we walked up the stairs on the set. Then the curtain open, and without warnining the lights came on and the music started. We sang and danced. The crowd

loved us. After the first scene I wasn't as nervous
(22-23 #40).

Over one-third of the participants described their efforts either to take or were given responsibility/empowerment regarding the process of the production or the factors leading to attending rehearsals and or performances. One twelve year old girl proudly informs us of how one of her ideas was validated and incorporated into the show by the vocal director:

. . . And the fun part was that we can make suggestions on things to change and if Dustin like it he used it like I suggested having Oliver at the end to sing so long farethe well pip pip chereo we'll be back soon solo with the one extra tune for that part at the end & Dustin used it (3-4 # 23).

Though one of the leads was frustrated with another cast member who also portrayed the same role and missed several rehearsals, she did take the time to assist her with blocking and songs: "I just taught Hannah as long as he Needs Me. She did ok (26 #8)." Thus, this girl experienced cooperation, support, responsibility competence, self-confidence, achievement, and empowerment.

A freshman girl who appeared in her last play as an eighth grader assisted as the microphone-girl backstage. She too, experienced many of the emotions exhibited by cast members:

I was taken through the process of the microphones. Being the first time I had ever worked with them, I was kind of nervous but they didn't seem too complicated. Travis never actually showed me how they work or how to hook them up, but I'll learn at some point. Everything went fine, besides the usual chaos (1 #32).

She continues to discuss her frustrations, adjustments, responsibilities, and how she felt empowered:

Today Is Our First SHOW!! Oh my gosh.
Okay, so I get there today and the sound

guy gives me this whole new list for the people with mics and there changing everything. I'm so confused now. I don't see what was wrong with the old. . . Now, they're telling me I have to switch this one mic in like a second; as soon as Oliver gets off I have to be there with Fagin waiting so we can switch them because we have like 5 seconds and then Fagin has to come on stage. NO PRESSURE! Well, it didn't go well because Oliver never came off stage so, doing the only logical thing I could think of, gave Fagin the spare microphone I had with me at the time, everything worked out after I informed them about that, which was very relieving (3 #32).

Regarding taking charge and perhaps rehearsing future life skills she further states:

One of the characters didn't come to me for their mic, which hasn't been happening, so he went on stage without it. Who got blamed. . . me, but then it worked out. Tomorrow I'm going to make an announcement that all people with mics need to come and find me because it's not happening (5 #32).

One seventh grade girl cast in the chorus explained the importance of working on her own:

Today I learned the dance to Food Glorious Food. It's kinda fun but don't like the beginning since it's so slow. I think I should work on my solo. I'm gonna get a blank tape so I can rehearse on my own (3 #22).

Another freshman who appeared in both junior high productions last year (*The Sound of Music* and *Under The Big Top*) was a member of the stage crew and she too voiced her frustrations as well as a sense of responsibility:

So. . . Nicki & I still wanted to be a part of your shows (still non-acceptant of "getting older" and "moving on"), so we thought after the PJ Game was over, we'd do backstage. I didn't know I'd be getting myself into "Maureen, will you fix my hair?" "Maureen, will you pin my costume?" "Maureen, will you find my prop?" "What scene is it?" "What song is next?" "Have we messed

up yet?" "Do you know where--name goes here--is?" "Why aren't the mics working?" "Can you ask Mr. Guilford why he hates me?" "Maureen, should I change before I do this scene?" "What do I do in this scene?" "Is it almost intermission?" "What is intermission?" "Will you go buy me something?" "Can I go outside?" "Why does Tiffany [stage manager] get so angry?" "Are you SURE I look okay?" AYE!!!! (1 #29).

The young woman takes her role a step further as she also feels empowered to assist the cast in ways other than acting:

I like teaching them things; not about drama as much, but about life, I guess. I guess since I'm the oldest in my family I have a tendency to want to do that (9 #29).

She notes to the side of this passage, "I think it's the whole FAMILY thing again." In closing this particular entry she also adds, "Why is it that musical always leave you with that something that other shows don't? Hmm. . ."

The light operator, also a former junior high actor, concerned about the possibility of an unsuccessful opening night describes the sense of team, we, and accomplishment:

Oh my. We open tonight and we are so not ready! The audience is probably going to laugh us off the stage. No one knows what they're doing! We're doomed. We did it! We did it! It was awesome! Holy cow, I can't believe they saved this one! They were awesome! (2 #31)

An early entry by a fourteen year old boy indicated he experienced a sense of accomplishment following a mini-audition (students must perform a portion of a in front of their peers in class in the absence of the vocal director). He states:

I was nervous today when we sung a song (solo) but when we finished I felt good about my self because I thought I couldn't do it (3 #28).

Moreover, he later claims self-confidence, "Today is Dec. 4 and we are doing the show for Quail Hollow [elementary school]. I feel more confident than ever (20 #28)." A fourteen year old student, a big Brittany Spears fan, wrote, "I was really nervous @ first (when we had to sing in front of the class) But now all I want to do is sing in front of people (5 #7)."

One fourteen year old girl with little experience on the stage describes the joy she discovered after experimenting early in the dramatic process:

At the beginning I was so nervous to be on stage, it was really exciting. I love acting its so fun! I just regret that I never tried it earlier. But its not to late, to start. I'm really happy I got to discover that feeling of being on stage. Now that I know about acting, its only the beginning for me (7 # 17).

Another shy girl writes:

I have been thinking of how good it will feel to be up on stage having everyone clap for you! (5 #11)

An eighth grade girl explains the feeling and excitement of being on stage:

OH MY GOD!!!!!! It was the funnest time I've ever had, from the First time I see foot on stage to When I took My bow it was all magical. I loved it. Allison, Jen, Andrea, and everyone else did so Wonderful! (20 #38)

In an earlier entry she refers to the auditions: "I think everyone did really good Cuz it takes so much courage to go up their @ all (6 #38)." Following auditions another girl realized the power she had by simply auditioning:

Today was try-outs! I think I did so bad cause I was totally off the music + I couldn't hear it but other then that I gave it my Best! Well probably not really my Best but I gave something + I'll get something by actually having the courage to get up in front of people + sing!

She continues, "Anyways, I'm really exited to just be in the play 'cause I never

thought I would be able to act in front of people. . . (5 #3)."

Hope and looking to the future are both important to self-esteem and many of the participants included these in their journals. A twelve year old boy, who early on in the rehearsal process was scolded by his director and cast members about missing rehearsals:

The choreography and lyrics are fun but not easy to learn. I no longer feel nervous at all and actually look forward to rehearsals (sometimes). It's fun to tell my friends at school that I'm in a production they couldn't believe it. Mr. Guilford doesn't I repeat doesn't go easy on you if you miss a rehearsal but I suppose you have to be tough (3 #44)

Often, just prior to a performance, the cast was informed another cast member

was ill or could not participate in the show that night. Indeed, this led to increased anxieties as others stepped in and performed with little preparation. Following one such occasion, a twelve year old boy exclaimed his emotions after meeting the challenge:

I did it. I was really nervous. The costume was a little big. I remembered most of my lines. The one I forgot I adlibbed and it went fine (13 #40).

As the literature states, the ability to be flexible and make adjustments are necessary in today's society in order to accomplish, build, and maintain self-esteem. Indeed, adolescents constantly practice such life skills during the production process. A lead actor in the show proudly announces his new nickname bestowed upon him by his peers:

Today's show went alright but I had to really improvise today. During one of my scenes Dodger didn't come in and he had a lot of lines and I had to really improvise. They call me the "improv masta." (31 #12).

The show must go on. . . a phrase which aptly applies to the theatre. One hour prior to our fourth performance this director received a phone call from the mother of the actor who portrayed Oliver. The message was clear and irreversible: our little star was ill and would not be appearing in this performance. The young lady who embraced the challenge and made the necessary adjustments must have had incredible self-confidence and courage as she accepted her new responsibility. In her own words she details the events as they unfolded that morning:

I stepped out of the truck and only walked a few feet when I saw a crowd of people storming towards me. They brought news, which was: "Caseys sick, Guilford wants you to be Oliver." At first I thought that they were kidding, but they weren't. I was so surprised. I learned his part in 20 min. then I had to find his costume. It was funny. Everyone was so proud of me. I hope the next show is dedicated to me, but if it isn't that's O.K. (16 #24).

Clearly, numerous emotions and self-esteem variables were experienced by this adjustment. In fact, the young eighth grader didn't miss a beat as none of the teachers nor the students in attendance realized she wasn't originally cast as Oliver.

The domino effect often accompanies such last minute adjustments. Indeed, in the theatre, if one actor is forced to make changes or adjustments in their character or role for a particular performance others must also alter their performance. One such incident occurred during a performance when the above young lady fell ill in the middle of the first act. Another young lady was directly affected, and she expresses her feelings:

The next exciting thing that happened in a play was I got to be the strawberry seller. Mr. Guilford asked me because Andrea was sick and I emedity said yes! After saying that I got really nervouse I new I had to study up During entermision and I got into that beutiful costume I always wanted to wear. When the

song started and I got into the wings and it seemed so quick that I had to go on. When I did I sang and thought I cracked. I missed a part and was so embarrassed. It was finally over and I went back stage and started crying I thought I did horrible. But then I realised I did great for not listening to the music before I went on (9-10 #25).

Finally, in most performances something goes awry and on the spot adjustments are inherent to the process. A twelve year old seventh grader who portrayed a Fagin kid and also the Milkmaid shares such an experience:

Oh, this morning we had a show for S.L.E. My friend Thresa gave me a bouquet of red carnations. Oh my gosh, I almost forgot, my pails fell off for "Who Will Buy?"! Well, the wooden thing that goes around my neck just fell backward so it was dangling behind me. I just bent down, set down my pails, and stood up again (with my pails back on of course!) I didn't even break character. . . (23-24 #4)

Though just over half the respondents communicated sacrifice through their entries one fourteen year old boy cast in a lead role stated:

I have been to a lot of rehearsal. I think they are cool but they suck when I have to give up stuff for them (18 #12).

He continues to share his frustration with:

Today I had to go to rehearsal for songs I know so I had to miss one of my soccer games. We were undefeated but we lost. That kind of pissed me off but I made a commitment to the play. I hope the play will be good I think it will (19 #12).

A thirteen year old girl informs of her perseverance and sacrifice:

I'm suppose to be at the play right now but I'm sick. This is the 2nd day I've been sick. I won't go to school but I will go to the play (41 #10).

One of the freshmen stage crew members indicates frustration, coping, and sacrifice regarding the freshmen stage manager:

Tiffany does yell @ me ALL THE TIME though.

I HATE it. But she's my manager, so I have to obey (1 #29).

In the margin she drew a stick figure representing the stage manager with the caption, "What The hell are you doing?" Beneath the angry facial expression of the stage manager is the sad faced stage crew member with "me" place beneath as the caption reads, "I'm sorry."

Setbacks and the ability to cope are key variables in adolescent growth and subsequently their self-esteem. Life is filled with setbacks, and adolescents, considering their emotional swings, can be devastated by seemingly minute rejections. Thus, those who have the inner resource to cope and move on increase their likelihood of success, accomplishment, and eventual higher levels of self-esteem. A fourteen year old girl describes one of her setbacks during the rehearsal process:

In the dance Bet & Oliver did they had to hold hands and Bet had to Kiss Oliver's cheek!! The sad part was that I kind of Messed up on the dance. But that's OK everyone Makes Mistakes. I Just Kept Working with it, and it turned out fine. I love Drama!! No Matter how many times I rehearse on one song, it's still really fun for me. It's like I can't get enough of it. I just want to do it over and over again. It's sort of like adrenalin for me. I am so thankful I took up Drama. If I didn't I would never know how fun it is!! (15 #17)

Thus, this young woman accepted her mistakes, moved on, experienced success, and obviously appreciated the balance of setbacks and successes. Moreover, as the play's run was nearly complete she states:

Even though I hated the downs in the play, I remember the ups and the happiness and friends I made and the people I met. This play is a big part of my heart. I don't want to stop doing plays, singing and acting. I'm not going to let anything stop me in pursuing what I like to do. I know I've had doubts and unhappiness within the play, but I never regretted doing the

play. Sundays play [closing] is going to be really, really fun and very sad. I guess you never can have just happiness, you have to go through the Sadness as well. But we are gonna party!! Tomarrow I hope is going to be a good ending to another chapter of my life (29 #17).

Another eighth grade girl put it more succinctly: "So I sang, I sucked, I lived. I did ok I guess but I could of done better....I'm glad i did it (5 #18). Yet another girl, in anticipation of the forthcoming casting, qualifies or justifies her acceptance of her role:

Today Mr. Guilford is going to tell us our roles, and I feel that what ever role I get I will be satisfied. Because I think that no role is small and that you just need to have fun (10 #19).

Not all cast members, however, were able to absorb their setbacks as easily. One thirteen year old eighth grader, for example, had high hopes for a principal role and had been led to believe so by her supportive peers. Thus, her fall was somewhat longer and hard felt. She describes her emotions as she looks back on what may have been one of her largest setbacks to date within the school environment:

In the beging of Drama I thought I had a great shot at a lead part. My dream was shattered when Mr. Guilford anovnced the parts. I sat there waiting anocly for my name to be called. Part by part was givin out to other people. tears began to run down my cheeks, people exchanged me worried looks and more and more tears wealed up in my eyes. Then I was given the part of an orphan and fagin kid. Then when everyone eles celebrated and began to practice songs and lines. I ran to the bathroom and cried. My friends came and talked to me. I fealt so cheated so undercasted I really thought I should have gotten a better part. My friends said they thought the same and I belive they told me the truth (1-2 #25).

She later doubts her abilities as an actress and rebounds with, "But then I snapped out of that and regained my self-confindence I know I do have a good voice and I'm

a good actress." Finally, she concludes her journal by describing the excitement and sense of adventure experienced when on stage:

Theres just something about being up there. out in the light in front of all those people its the best feeling. People that dont do theater dont understand. Next time someone asks me this is how I'll explain it. Its like winning in a sport for me running. you go out there and theres so much pain and concentration in it but you keep on going even though it hurts you don't give up. In theater you win the hearts of the audience they love you even if you mess up they dont care. But in this sport everyone gets 1st place (10 #25).

Hard work and perseverance obviously play an important role in the theatre as well as in every day life. Though adolescents tend to strive for more immediate gratification the shared process of staging a theatrical production forces them to cooperate and persevere. Though adolescent actors may not always desire their plight they often realize the importance of team work and cooperation. For example, when a double cast actress is ill but also discovers her double is also ill, choices regarding sacrifice, perseverance, and cooperation arise:

I feel like I'm dying! I can barely breathe out of my stuffy nose, my throat hurts, and when I stand up I feel dizzy. And the worst part of it all is that I'm the widow come tonight. I stayed home from school today and wasn't planning on being able to go to the play, but then Andrea called me and made sure I was coming. Well I'm going to sleep for an hour before I have to leave (29 #21).

Physical sacrifices also accompany involvement in a play as one chorus boy claimed:

Today we rehearsed I'll do anything. We finished it. One part we dragged our knees. This gave me a rugged burn. I hope I don't get splinters on the stage (11 #40).

He did however, manage to make use of his time at rehearsals: "Not much to say.

O! I got alot of hw. done at rehearsal" (14 #40).

Though only 56% of the students clearly alluded to cooperation in their journals it is safe to assume all students had to cooperate at some level in order to participate in the process. One eighth grade girl describes a prop and how it was problem solved:

Tonight is opening night. The last few rehearsals have been hell as well as a lot of fun. I also have been video taping the rehearsal. I'm having so much fun with the new video camera my family got. I gave Guillyford a necklace with 3 locket and he lost it. So I have another locket and Laura really nice is bringing a gold chain because none of my gold chains fit through th loop-hole (21 #13).

In her next entry she shares her cooperation and support for her double cast actress:

I promised Kalisa I'd watch her scene from the wings. I did, it was really cool and I gave Kalisa a hug when she came into the wings...I helped Kalisa out of the costume. . .(22 #13).

Regarding homework and cooperation during rehearsal:

I was really mad, because I couldn't do my hmwk shile waiting to sing, because I didn't have my Science or Math books. But thats okay, I helped a friend of mine out on her homework (19 #17).

She also emotes regarding her double cast:

Last Saturday Jazz was Bet and she missed her cue for "It's a Fine Life," so I came in and sang her parts for the song. It was so scary, but I'm happy I covered for her (27 #17).

As more and more students fell ill they took matters in their own hands and reworked their performance schedules as many were double cast:

Today Natty is supposed to be Mrs. Bedwin But she said I could be because I feel better and able to sing (29 #19).

She later confesses that the production fulfills her day following school, thus it became and after school activity she looked forward to each day:

I'm really happy to be in the play because it gives me something to do after school, and it's also a good way to get your homework done. I think when I'm alone at home I procrastinate to do my homework, but when I'm at rehearsals I get my homework done right away. Actually being in Oliver has actually gotten me to raise my grades from a B- to an A- in many classes (24 #19).

The light operator expressed her desire to be somewhere other than home after school:

Luckily I'll be busy with the show, I've been getting cabin fever being at home so much. I love doing lights (1 #31).

One girl, disappointed in the role she was cast in exclaimed her reactions to this setback:

I can't take it anymore! Whenever I sing at home I'm sad I don't have a solo. Just because I had a stuffy nose at callbacks doesn't mean I couldn't handle a better part. My career in acting is NOT over! Just because you wounded my ego doesn't mean I'm not going to keep trying (39-40 #1).

As the literature indicates and the data from this study reveal, external support is one of the leading factors in elevating adolescent self-esteem. Again, due to this researcher's personal involvement with adolescents, specifically with this group of participants, I conclude that each and every member of this cast and crew experienced support from either parents, peers in or outside of the production, other family members, or a significant adult (or 'generalized other'). The support came in a variety of forms as we shall now take a closer examination of these forms.

One introverted fourteen year old boy sums up his feelings as well as offers a glimpse into the impact the production had on his relationship with his family:

The play is over and we all are sad. I am also. Before, in the middle of the play, we couldn't wait for it to end. We all wish we could have at least one more performance. I do to. This play brought our dialouge in our family way up. It is a very interesting change (25 #28).

A twelve year old seventh grader cast in the ensemble, though frustrated with her apparent sacrifice, enjoyed the special performance provided to the elementary school she attended the previous year:

We performed for SLE. I was mad because we had to get up early on a late start day [frowny face] oh well all the teacher and student loved it. Me & Laura went to see our old teachers who were there after (21 #37).

In her following entry peer or group support, parental support, and significant adult support emerge:

I think that our show was really good tonight. I think it was one of Hanahs best shows. She did a really good job. My mom and her friends came and they really loved it (22 #37).

Following another special performance for a nearby elementary school one girl commented on the local newspaper review of the show as well as feedback from the 4th-6th graders attending the performance:

The Valley Press did a very good show review. All the little people at Quail Hollow loved us and they gave Guilford letter that said how much they liked it! (39 #11)

In recalling reading the elementary students' feedback to the cast, I distinctly remember the sense of pride, acceptance, bonding and connection cast members emoted during and after the reading. Thus, throughout the run of the show adolescents were receiving positive feedback and support ranging from eight year olds to great-grandparents.

An eighth grade girl triple cast in a lead role explains the joy she experienced from positive support from her director and her family:

Today Mr. Guilford congratulated me. I was so happy. I guess he was happy for me. That makes me very proud. At this point I am very happy. Today everyone kept on telling me what a great job I did. I wanted to blow everyone away, and I did! No one had seen me at my best now a

whole bunch of them have. That makes me extremely happy. Thank-you Mr. Guilford-once again-for showing me how to become a great actress (41 #5).

Beneath her entry she drew what appears to be a tiger standing with arms up and out holding balloons with the caption above stating, "Don' Just Stand there..... Celebrate." Later she discusses how the production provoked dialogue between her grandmother, her aunt, and herself:

Today I did better than I thought I'd do--
YEAH! My grandma--Nannie said I got
all my talent from her she said she didn't
know that I was that great of a singer or
an actress. It was really cool. My Aunt said
it was better than any High School show
she ever saw-cool! Best show she ever
saw me in-She absolutely loved it Yippee!
Both of them said I was a Great Actress-
Excellent-FABULISTIC-Awesome-Blossom-
Coolnes-That's all of my different sayings-
(44 #5).

Support from adult production staff such as the vocal director as described by the following seventh grade girl also bolsters self-confidence and self-esteem:

For the Milkmaid I have a solo sing part!
ahh! I'm really nervous about that, but if
Dustin thinks I can do it, then it's fine. I
think it's going to be super fun! (2 #4)

She also comments that following opening night:

My mom brought me a purple rose. I put
it in my room, it's really pretty! The only thing
my mom said that we should work on was
to project and speak clearer. She said she
could barly understand Dodger and Fagin.
I have to go to bed now, I'm really tired.
Good-night. P.S. After the show my mom
took Kim [cast member] and I out for ice cream
after the show (24 #4).

Peers outside of the production also play a pivotal role in pushing the self-esteem

button. This same young lady describes the activity following a performance:

I just got back from the show tonight. I really liked this performance! It was really fun, and I thought "Who Will Buy?" was really good. Mr. Guilford said he thought it was the best one so far. After the show Greg gave me a bouquet of fire and ice roses. Greg goes to my church and it's not like he "likes me," (oh, no!) he's just really friendly. He gave me a hug and said I did a good job and then this 8th grader looked at me, no more like glared at me and said, "Is Greg your boyfriend or something?" I was like, "No," and she seemed all relieved. I wonder what she would do if I said yes. Probably bight my head off. Oh ya, these little girls came back stage and wanted everyones autographs. They were so cute! (36 #4)

Indeed, support, pride, accomplishment, attention, and social interaction all emit from this passage.

Another seventh grader sums up moments of support she received during process of the production:

Wile I was in Oliver my parents helped a lot by bringing me to practeses and performances. My friends all thought it was neat that I was in the play and came to the show to support me. I greatly enjoyed being in the play and made a lot of new friends threw it. It was like having a second family and it felt good to be a part of it. I miss performing now even though it was a lot of hard work it was a lot of fun (23 #23).

One fourteen year old girl who explained to the director that her mother had never attended any of her activities since she could remember (she has lived with her father since the parents divorced years ago) was overwhelmed with emotion when her mother attended one of her performances of *Oliver*. She briefly describes how important it was for her to have her family support her:

Family was another strong point I had to deal with during Oliver. I have always wanted to make my sister proud of me

because she is the one person I can always relate to and I can tell her anything. I was so happy when she did actually tell me, I did great. My mom was also some one I wanted to make proud of me. It felt so good to see her in the audience. She was so happy for me when she saw me backstage (25 #45).

After commenting about his peers attending performances one twelve year old boy described his reactions to a performance for his previous elementary school:

Were performing for my old school which I have to say is pretty nice to see my old teachers watching me perform and congratulating me when it's over which is encouraging and I like it and it's fun to see kids who I know watching and hopefully enjoying the show (24 #44).

Friends not associated with the production, however, did create dialogue as one cast member stated:

Today after school, before I got on the bus, I told my friend Stephanie that I couldn't get together. She said "Why?" I said "Because I have rehearsal." She thought it was weird to have two rehearsals in one week. I don't think it's weird. Today I showed the paracel dance to my mom and she was amazed. She had never heard of a "Pa-da-ber-a" before. Neither have I (11 #22).

An eighth grade boy describes the process of singing in front of the class prior to the formal auditions:

Today we sang in front of the class. Wow, most of the girls in our class, and Caysy are incredible singers. If I tried maby I'd be o.k. But probly not. What was cool though, is that everybody was real supportive and Thursday I will try really hard to sound good. All you have to do is just do it and don't stop and you'll be good (2 #20).

In reference to parents assisting backstage (chaperones or those helping with costumes) he states:

I have lost all of my jitters on stage. The mom-helpers are complimenting me on improvements but I know it's just to be nice (34 #20).

Issues of empowerment, accomplishment, hard work, rewards, hope and excitement are all divulged as he exclaims:

Yes, I'm coming out of the bushes. I have some solos. I've worked pretty hard, and I guess I have something to show for it. I have two solos in "Be Back Soon," where I sing "A wallet fat." And then at the end of the song I get to whistle the toon. I just hope I hold on to what I hope I'm going to do. Then I have one of those solo words in "Food Glories Food." But people still need a lot of work on their motivation. I'll give it to them (12 #20).

Once more a student reports of bonding with a parent and classmate due to her involvement with the production:

Yesterday while me and Jzsmine were making Gingerbread cookies for S.S. Jzsmine and my mom were singing songs from the play. It was so embarrassing because people kept calling, and I would have to answer the phone, then they would hear this weird singing. Also later that night Jzsmine and I went running. It was 9:00-10 o'clock and we sang really loud all the songs from the play. Well I have to go and do some homework (17 #21).

Students not only depended upon their parents for emotional support but also for rides to and from the theatre as well as trips for food and supplies. This same girl counted on her mother to complete her costume:

Today my mom is going out to get my boots and tights. I still need a fan (20 #21).

One lead commented on peers as well as on his delight in knowing when friends or family are in the audience:

Our second week has started and I'm ready for more shows. I like to talk about the play with my friends and they told me that they will come and see it. I love the beginning where we are singing food glorius food so we can see

if we know anybody in the audience (29 # 16).

Many of the girls expressed their joy when boys they knew attended the performances. One girl cited a particular evening following a performance:

Today was a great show. Congrats to CJ who filled in for Scott as Mr. Noah Claypool "and your under me" He really put on a great show and it really "Milked it" Not only was it a great show but a great day. Chris -My huge crush- was watching

it today and it was great. I love CK After words Travis gave me a branch off a bush he picked from outside of the PAC [theater]. It was really funny. But going back to the show, CJ was great and so was the Mr. and Mrs. Bumble. Daniel and Tessa were great, they both "milked it" and made it good (22 #150).

The "improv master" who earlier boasted of his new nickname was also pleased that family and friends attend the performances:

All my family loves the show. My mom really love the show and she brings all her friends (34 #12).

A seventh grade boy cast in the ensemble also displayed his pleasure following a performance:

The performance went great I am so happy I had all my frineds come. They were all watching me. I even had my teach Mrs. Breeden I like her a lot but she gives out a lot of homework. This week we had no homework for two days (9 #33).

A member of Fagin's kids reflects on the sacrifices of he and his parents:

Being in a play is hard work, but it's worth it! When we had rehearsals some times I had to miss fun events. A few times I missed my soccer practice, and once I missed my friends charismas party. I was not the only one that was making sacrifices. My parents had to drive me everywhere. My mom made 18 orphan hats for the play. It took a lot of her own time to make them (33 #40).

As one might imagine, responsibility took on many forms throughout the process. One boy, though shy and relatively quiet and well behaved in class and throughout the rehearsal process was involved in planning closing night pranks:

Today is closing day and I'm very excited.
I'm planning a couple of pranks that I know
are acceptable. This is going to be the
best day ever, but I'm going to miss some
of the people in drama since I have art next (35 #16).

Self-discipline manifested itself in a variety of ways:

When Bryer says "go home Bet," I don't
know, it makes me laugh. Its more funny
than scary. But when Adam says it, he's
actually scary. Because he's a big, weird, high
schooler!!! I've been keeping my laughter
inside when Bryer does it. It hasn't been showing
up on the outside, but inside I'm cracking up.
I am so sad, i didn't even get to see the play,
from an audience point of view. Thats OK
though I'll just get a video. Theres so much
drama inside Drama. There has been so much
stuff happening its weird and confusing (28 #17).

A double cast actress problem solved when she was forced to miss rehearsals which would directly affect her upcoming performance: "I'll just ask Natty to show me what they did when I get back" (11 #19). One boy felt the pressure of his commitment to sports and the play: I

I'm no longer nervous I'm just doing my
best to learn the songs and juggling my
time between soccer and rehearsals (2 #44).

An eighth grade girl who longed for a lead role took it upon herself to plan to get professional help from a voice coach prior to the formal audition:

Today we talked about casting in the play Oliver!
I'm excited but, kinda nervous about auditions.
I said I want an extra large part in the play. I
want to be Nancy because she has the most
time on stage thats a girl part. I think I'll call Karen
and Music Music Music for lyrics and accmp. (2 #240).

Some cast members keep an active schedule after school. One ensemble

girl discussed her busy schedule and the decisions she faced:

I am not very happy because tommarro I have gymnastics, play practice and I need to take care of 2 horses. Gymnastics is from 3:30-5:00. Horses is from 3:00-4:00. Play Practice is from 4:00-5:30. So I either go to gymnastics then horses or horses then Play practice. It is my choice but I can't decide (30 #11).

She then makes her decision with:

I am going to play practice. I don't want to miss gym but I have committed to the play. So I will go to the horses then to play practice (31 #11).

Camaraderie, particularly social interaction, was a key factor in leading to a sense of bonding and ultimately belonging. One girl who expressed a keen interest in wondering if there were any "kissing parts" in the play (she mentioned her desires for boys quite often throughout her journal) made her final journal entry:

I am really going to miss everybody in the play. I know I'll still see some people, but it won't be the same, all of us together in one big project. It rally is like we've become a big family. You know what, when I'm in High school (I'll being going to Monte Vista, not San Lorenzo, I'm really going to miss everyone because I've know most of them from 3rd grade or 7th grade) I'll throw a cast reunion of the play Oliver, hopefully I'll remember that. I really am going to miss everyone, just being altogether dang, i hat it when a project, play school or camp ends, because that means I'm leaving a lot of friends and people that I have gotten fond of everyone, it's like the end of an era. I love everyone in the play Oliver (32 #13).

When a boy brought all the girls flowers she took it to heart:

The play was last night! I'm so tired! Josh (Dodger) is so sweet! He bought a rose for every girl in the play. Mine is being pressed at home (22 #13).

A girl who did not wish for a male cast member to misinterpret her intentions

explained her dilemma:

...I feel bad about the whole Casey thing cause he likes me & I don't like him. Andrea loves him to death & I don't kiss him on the cheek anymore cause I don't want him to like me more & think I like him! (21 #3).

Boys too, had more than the play itself on their minds:

The mic lady is really nice, a hotty. I want to get to know her better. The other stage crew seems to be cool (26 #12).

In her last entry one inexperienced actress summed up her feelings:

Wow is officially the last journal entry I'm really glad & relieved, but sad on the other hand. I can not believe the play is over. It's kind of like we grew in theater, (at least the least the less experienced ones) together. It's so sad right now, the helping parents are now taking apart the set. Pieces of this great play are scattered in everyone's memories....I'm going to miss building my scedule around the play (not), But I will miss the people, my part, and last but not least the happy times I've had and shared with others. I'm happy we got to do the journals because it actually made me think about everything envolving the play (30 #17).

Earlier she refers to self-discipline, attention, sacrifice, nerves, excitement, hope and the future, competence and rewards:

I've been really busy with hell week & getting ready for Opening night, which is today. I'm really excited, but so nervous. I feel I've gotten everything down. This play is so fun. I love the feeling I get when I'm on stage in front of the audience. It's like a huge rush. I am definitely planning on doing future plays. Well, rehearsals have been what the name is (hell). They are really fun, but so long and boring when your not doing anything. I wish we could eat in our costumes. I know with all the yummy food, I'll want some. But don't worry Guilford I won't eat any food. I can't even believe that Opening night is here all ready (23 #17).

Those who were not directly involved in the backstage adventures, nonetheless, were captivated:

The Dram behind the Drama!!!! Goodness.
Blah bla kissed so and so. No way, yes way,
Gosh, what a Bitch. AHH, I Hate him, I love him
so much. How sweet And that's just a brief
example of what goes on back stage. There's
two things that are good about it. One it's
entertaining two-none of it included me so I get
to set back and watch. But there is one bad thing
it's all with the highschoolers. So it makes me
kind of scared for when I become a highschooler
(30 #18).

Yet another perspective from an eighth grade girl:

Everyone has been Obsessing over CJ.
Yeah he's hot, but he's also the most conceded
guy Ive ever met. i have to admit that he
is a really good actor, and makes the play
alot better. But he has caused most of the
girls back stage, including Tiffany (stage manager)
to become extremely annoying. All they
do is follow him around and try to flirt w/him.
It all makes me want to puke (28 #21).

One fourteen year old boy expressed fear with:

What's cool is that I am meeting new people.
So I guess thats pretty scary everyone will
know me (19 #20).

He later revealed through his journal that a budding romance was flamed, however, it was extinguished before it ever ignited.

The romance bug didn't have quite the same impact on seventh graders.

One twelve year old girl displayed excitement at friends bonding through the songs at home:

Mary-Lynn and my friend Stephanie were
at my house. We were having so much
fun! We were makeing kind of a rap to
"As Long As He Needs Me." We were
sliding in our socks and dancing on the kitchen
floor (16 #22).

A lead boy in the show and one who, quite frankly, is rather extroverted disclosed:

My favorite part about the play was the family I created in drama. I had new friends and didn't feel so alone. . . (25 #41).

A somewhat shy girl appreciated closeness between new friends that emerged throughout the process:

I really love drama. The unity of the cast as a family is the best part. I feel I could talk to anyone of my castmates about anything. A feeling like that is rare to have (40 #27).

Often the school climate tends to segregate seventh and eighth graders, however, group activities which mingle the two grades encourage cooperation and acceptance. A soft spoken seventh grade girl noted, "I have made so many new friends an it includes 8th graders! (29 #26).

Furthermore, junior high inherently is plagued by cliques and students are not always welcomed into the different subgroups. The theatre assists in breaking down these barriers. One girl mentions another 'popular' girl as "being really nice to me. She is such a sweetie." She then explains:

It's really weird, I'm not used to all the popular people being all nice to me and hanging out w/me. It's cool (15 #18).

She explains how exciting it is to socialize with the boys backstage:

You know what's really fun? being in the boys dressing room. They're so much fun in there, and all the guys are funny. The girls room is boring they just put on make-up. The guys talk about cool stuff (37 #18).

It also must be pointed out that there were three high school boys cast in the show which could explain why the junior high girls enjoyed socializing in the boys bathroom (dressing room). New girlfriends were also important to this young lady as she states:

I've made so many new friends. Like

Jasmine, Tessa, Laura and Michelle and like a trillion more, they made it so much better to do this, cause they're going through the same thing (41 #18).

There were, however, a couple of the seventh grade girls who also had ideas of romance floating in their heads. An ensemble girl exclaims, "Today Scott asked me out! I'm so excited!" (3 #9). Her friend proudly states:

We had another practice today. It was so much fun! Everyone said I was flirting with Eric. I think Scott and Bree would make a really cute couple. I know they like each other. All during practice they kept checking each other out. . . Wow, Eric gave me a hug!! Right after practice I was so happy!! I already can't wait till next years play, and this one's not even over (2-6 #34).

Though most of the technical crew were high schoolers only one or two grades removed from the majority of the cast, they adopted more of a big sister demeanor throughout the run of the show. The light operator shares her fondness of the cast:

I'm having a lot of fun with Drew, Scott, & Matt. They joke around with us & don't really treat us like "high schoolers." We're just more people to them. I like it. Scott's a sweetie. He can't act worth beans, but he tries! He's such a gentleman. He'll ask how my day is & when I strike up a conversation, he brightens up like you've just made his day. What a sweetheart! (7-8 #31).

Limitations

Though musical theatre productions flourish in countless junior high and middle schools across the country, this researcher examined only one school's production. Additionally, quantitative methods were not employed. Pretests, surveys, questionnaires, and interviews were dismissed in favor of narratives provided in student journals. Depending on twelve to fourteen year olds detailing housed

emotions, feelings, and insights without leading the participants in their entries, allows for unexpected twists. For example, not all students who participated in the study consistently recorded their entries on a daily or even weekly basis. In fact, some participants failed to complete a journal and a parent of one student refused to allow his child's' journal to be utilized for this study. Thus, data collection was limited to journals written by forty-five students as seven participants failed to deliver journals to this investigator and as already noted, one student's journal was excluded from this study. Students logged in their journals from the outset of the production process through closing weekend with a follow-up "Reflections of Oliver" essay one month following the final performance. Perhaps a more stringent policy by the researcher would have increased the likelihood of a higher percentage of detailed journals logged more thoroughly. At all times, however, the key concern was to promote an untainted and thus a true account of student thoughts, reactions, and feelings.

DISCUSSION

This study showed adolescent involvement in the theatrical process of staging a musical production significantly increased the adolescent's ability to contract the key ingredients bolstering self-esteem. The study itself did not intend to measure self-esteem but rather to detect whether the foundation of self-esteem, according to the literature, could be built through the use of theatre. The tables, as well as the journals, written in the words of the adolescents themselves, clearly demonstrate this to be true. Through this researcher's thirteen years of teaching seventh and eighth graders (social studies and drama), one theme remains constant: adolescents seek, need, and thrive on connections which lead to elevating their self-esteem. External support offers a host of areas building inner strength in adolescents, enabling them to cope with the demands and adjustments bestowed upon them by an ever changing society. Indeed, the setbacks they encounter are

for more frequent (than for adults) and possess the capability to do further damage as adolescents grow into adulthood. Their relatively short life time at this juncture leaves them vulnerable as many are ill equipped to battle the barrage of hurdles confronting them on a daily, if not hourly basis. Moreover, since our society offers little in the way of planning or preparing for the setbacks facing young people, they must engage their fears and troubles with an inadequate defense mechanism. Unfortunately, as the literature review warns, adolescents unable to elevate their self-esteem through safe-risk-taking can and often do turn to negative-risk-taking creating additional stress and danger to themselves and those around them.

Though the data extracted from this research are rich, several of the participants failed to log in their journals regularly and many did not offer sufficient evidence to be considered a positive response in all the variable boxes within the six tables boosting self-esteem. However, it was obvious to this researcher that each and everyone of the adolescents engaged in the *Oliver* production experienced all thirty-five variables. Personal contact, overheard conversations, and communication with their family members provoke such a bold statement. From these teaching experiences, as well as directing and producing thirty adolescent productions, no other experience have I discovered offers adolescents such a wide variety of practicing or honing life skills leading to increased adolescent self-esteem.

The overriding concern facing educators, in my opinion, is how to keep young people motivated, positive, and a productive, contributing member of society. Many schools are underfunded and do not offer drama as an elective class or as an after school activity. Those that do must depend on charitable contributions or teachers who are willing to fundraise, direct and produce, often at a personal and financial loss to themselves and their families. One question that requires an answer: Is adolescent self-esteem a priority of our government, and if so, how far is it prepared to go in order to insure adequately prepared adolescents? Perhaps the dramatic arts will become an elitist institution, available only to those wealthy enough

either to pay for private participation or for those fortunate enough to live in affluent school districts still offering such opportunities. This study by no means exhausts the research required to answer these troubling questions. Further studies are necessary, perhaps by a government or business task force, increasing discussion from various backgrounds, viewpoints, and perspectives. Moreover, this research centered on a musical and the ramifications evolving from that specific process. However, will differences emerge in the process of staging a non-musical? Are the results of this study isolated to a small rural setting with a vast majority of the participants being caucasian females? Will similar findings emit from data extracted from an overcrowded urban environment with a heterogeneous participant population? Are there correlations between academic achievement and adolescent participation in theatre arts? Was this study an anomaly regarding grade point averages? Are students who participate in theatre more motivated, responsible, and self-directed prior to participation or do they learn and cultivate these qualities through the process of play production? Indeed, the more widespread the debate, hope increases for opportunities enabling adolescents to reach their full potential.

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San Lorenzo Valley Junior High School
Fall 2000 Drama Production
Mr. Guilford
335-4452
wguilford@earthlink.net
8/31/2000

APPENDIX A

OLIVER

The 2000 theatrical production of SLVJHS will be the musical *Oliver*. Over the past ten years we have discovered theatrical productions, specifically musicals, have created a healthy and supportive climate for our students. In charting and measuring adolescent growth in this area it is of great value and importance to have students participate directly and in the most honest fashion possible. Thus, as a requirement of participation in *Oliver* each student must keep a daily journal recording their thoughts as they pertain to their involvement in the production.

Each student must possess a Drama journal/notebook in which they will log their thoughts as they pertain to the production of *Oliver*. Following each audition, rehearsal, class meeting, thoughts and discussions revolving around *Oliver*, or every time *Oliver* enters students' consciousness, they are to note the event, and what meaning it may or may not have had for them (if any). Prior to the cast party and following closing night in December, students will be required turn in their journals (price of admission to the party) to their director.

Thank You

Will Guilford

Director

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE _____

APPENDIX B

SAN LORENZO VALLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

7179 Hacienda Way Felton, CA 95018
(831) 335-4452 Fax (831) 335-3812

Michelle McKinny, *Principal*

Jane Eagan, *Assistant Principal*

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Will Guilford

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: Effects of Theatre on Adolescent Self-Esteem

1. My child has been asked to participate in a research study investigating adolescent self-esteem and theatre.
2. My child will be asked to record his/her thoughts in a journal following auditions, rehearsals, performances, and whenever "Oliver" enters his/her consciousness.
3. No foreseeable risks are involved. The journals and identity will remain confidential throughout and following the study. However, recordings within the journals that would otherwise bind a teacher to adhering to state and federal laws will be adhered to.
4. No discernible benefits to the participants are expected. However, the release of emotions and thoughts may be therapeutic and rewarding to a student. Regardless of this study, the same requirements of the class would be implemented as part of regular classroom activity.
5. The results of this study may be published but no information that could identify the participant will be included.
6. Other than class credit and intrinsic rewards no compensation will be awarded to participants.
7. Questions about this research may be addressed to Will Guilford, (831) 335-1037. Complaints about the research may be presented to Dr. David Kahn, Graduate Advisor, TV, Film, Radio, Theatre, San Jose State University, and (408) 924-4540. Questions about research, subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Nabil A. Ibrahim, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, Ca 95192-0025 or (408) 924-2480.
8. One is free to refuse to participate in the study and is free to withdraw at any time without prejudice to one's relationship with San Jose State University or SLVJHS.
9. Yes, I have received a signed and dated copy of the consent form.

The signature of a parent or guardian on this document indicates approval for the child or ward to participate in the study and a statement that the child or ward is freely willing to participate.

Name of Child or Ward	Parent/Guardian's Signature	Date
Relation to Child or Ward		Date
Full Mailing Address		
Investigator's Signature		Date

SAN LORENZO VALLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
REGISTRATION FORM
MUST BE FILLED OUT BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN

APPENDIX 01/02
C

Student Name _____ Age as of 9/1/01 _____

Sex: M F (circle one) Last First Middle Grade: 7 8 (circle one) Birthdate (mo-day-yr) _____ - _____ - _____

At what grade level did your student enter SLV Unified School District K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (circle one)

Mailing Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

Home Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

e-mail address _____ Home phone _____ Cell/Pager number _____

Father's Name _____ Work phone () _____ ext _____
Step-father or guardian (first, last) (If other than home phone)

Father's Occupation _____ Employer _____

Mother's Name _____ Work phone () _____ ext _____
Step-mother or guardian (first, last) (If other than home phone)

Mother's Occupation _____ Employer _____

CHECK ONE - living with: mother & father __ mother only __ father only __ shared custody __
mother & step-father __ father & step-mother __ guardian __

Do you want dual notification of: _____ Grades _____ Discipline _____ Health Issues
Duplicate notification sent to: Name _____ Address _____

Required for state funding - Ethnic Identity (check one): American Indian __ Asian __
Pacific Islander __ Filipino __ Hispanic __ Black __ Caucasian __

Parent education (highest level attained by either parent/guardian) - please check appropriate level:
____ not high school graduate ____ college graduate (B.S. or B.A.)
____ high school graduate ____ advanced degree
____ some college (including AA degree)

Name of last school student attended: _____

Special Education: Does student have current Individual Education Plan? Yes No (circle one)

Place of birth _____ First time in California school? Yes No

Number of children in home ____ Please list names and ages of sisters and brothers in our district:
Name _____ age _____ Name _____ age _____

Local people to whom we may release your child in case of emergency (include older brothers and sisters)

Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____
Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____

Physician's name _____

In an emergency, may we call any doctor? Yes No (circle one) or may we release your child to a person known to school personnel? Yes No (circle one) O.K. to give first aid? Yes No (circle one)

Special health considerations - Please circle: Asthma, allergies, bee stings - Mild Severe Carries
inhaler/bee sting kit Other: _____

Signatures: mother or guardian AND father or guardian Date _____