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## An Investigation of Social Acceptance as a Function of an Extra-Curricular Formal Dramatics Program Involving Sixth Grade Students

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AN INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AS A FUNCTION OF  
AN EXTRA-CURRICULAR FORMAL DRAMATICS PROGRAM  
INVOLVING SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Larry B. Bowen  
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Dedicated to students of the Colonial Heights Elementary School Drama Club, Stockton, California, who have made this study possible.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

There has been much debate as to the social value of formal dramatics in the elementary school. Some educators have claimed that only creative dramatics should be used at this level. Others in elementary education have stated that memorizing lines for a formal presentation is a valuable experience for the elementary school child. The writer could find no experimental or empirical research measuring the social value of formal dramatics as a worthwhile activity in the elementary school.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this investigation to discover whether participation in formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity in the elementary school affects the social acceptance of the children involved. The experiment was carried on in the Colonial Heights Elementary School, Stockton, California. It was the intention of the writer to discover whether sixth grade students would be accepted socially more readily after participating in formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity.

Importance of the study. One of the most important needs in the life of an elementary school child is social acceptance by one's peer group. Students often place more value on social status than academic achievement. A child who spends most of his time outside of school studying, has little opportunity to belong to school organizations and work with those in his peer group. Ruth Cunningham points out the importance of social acceptance in the book, Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls when she says,

The need to belong in a group is a powerful force. Some psychologists claim that it is an innate, basic human need. Others point out that it is culturally developed. Whatever its origin, all agree that it furnishes strong motivation for behavior. In our society, every individual attempts to find himself belonging in some group.... It is important for the development of most boys and girls of school age that they find belonging in groups of their peers. [7:108]

Being accepted by the children in their own classroom is of prime consequence to elementary school pupils. Social acceptance is gained in several ways. It may be gained through active participation in organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, or Little League. Some children have developed a friendly attitude toward their peers, and because they are so thoughtful of others, are well liked and accepted by their peers. Active participation in school sponsored groups such as school patrol, band, orchestra, or dramatics, is another way children gain social acceptance.

Participation in a play provides an opportunity to become better acquainted with one's peers and to gain acceptance as a member of that group. By working with other children on a large undertaking such as a dramatic production, it is possible for the children to make new acquaintances or find out more about the friends they already have.

The use of formal dramatics in the elementary school has been a controversial topic among children's theatre leaders and educators. Most authorities in this field of education believe that the creative approach to dramatics should be used in preference to the formal approach. Some have had experiences with children being unable to memorize long parts. These directors concluded that all children were like these few with whom they worked in their school. Formal dramatics has been used successfully by teachers as a class project. The use of formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity has been primarily one that has been used on the secondary school level.

However, the writer was concerned with the social acceptance of the children involved in the dramatics program as an extra-curricular activity.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Extra-curricular. This refers to an activity that is undertaken outside of school hours. The activity may or may not be under school jurisdiction. In the Colonial Heights Elementary School Drama Club organization, the activity was sponsored by the school, but most of the work was done outside of school hours.

Formal Dramatics. A group experience where those involved memorize lines, build and utilize scenery, use makeup and lighting, and prepare a play for public presentation.

Peers. The children in the sixth grade at Colonial Heights Elementary School, Stockton, California. Ordinarily the term, "peers" refers to any person on the age level of a particular grade in school. However, for the use of the word in the study, it relates to the immediate classroom of these children, during the time of the study.

Social Acceptance. The relationship the children had toward one another. Being accepted as a part of the group is a favorable acceptance; being rejected or disliked by the peer group is not being socially accepted.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written about the use of creative dramatics in the elementary school as a method of promoting better social relationships with one's peer group. Very few studies have been made in the field of formal dramatics in the elementary school because most advocates of formal dramatics frown on this type of activity for this age level. However, none of the studies so far published have shown social acceptance as a function of participation in formal dramatic productions.

### HISTORY OF CHILDREN'S DRAMATICS

Children have performed in pageants and plays since about the second century B.C. Although no written record has been made of the time when children began working or acting in the theatre, authorities in this field believe children were used in many of the early pageants, especially in the religious ceremonies. In the fifth century, B.C. the Greek Theatre was of great importance in the theatre world. Children saw many of the Greek plays, but did not understand much about them. The Romans put on great spectacles, that were seen by children, though it is doubtful

the children knew the meaning or significance of these exhibitions. Winifred Ward, in writing about the early theatre for children concedes that the early theatre was for the adults and not for the benefit of children. [33:10]

Theatre for children has been an evolutionary affair and has grown with the history of the theatre. It has only been within the last thirty years that children have really had an opportunity to take an active part in plays for the public. Some children have had the opportunity to perform in church school plays, school talent shows, summer camp programs, and classroom plays. A few of the best actors among the children have been in community theatre plays. Hollywood and Broadway have used children in plays and movies, but this is not in the realm of educational theatre, but in the professional theatre.

Children's dramatics is made up of formal dramatics, which is called "children's theatre," and informal dramatics, which is called "creative dramatics." As Dr. Geraldine Brain Siks mentions, "These two forms are in harmony as they provide for enjoyment and childgrowth. Children's theatre provides strong impressions, while creative dramatics provides for strong expressions. A child needs both to satisfy his desires." [28:92]

## CHILDREN'S THEATRE

The children's theatre serves a wide range of people. There are as many different types of children's theatre organizations as there are theatres in existence. One reason for this is that nothing definite has been established for this phase of the theatre. To clarify the meaning of "children's theatre" in this study, the writer refers to Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins:

A children's theatre exists whenever a production of a written script is directed specifically for the child audience. The players may be children or adults, but preferably they are a combination of both--adults in adult roles, children in child roles. If children are used in the cast, they should be children who are ready to take part in an activity in which "the play's the thing" and the director is not necessarily concerned with the plays therapeutic value to his actors, but rather with its dramatic value to his audience. [8:18]

One of the most successful children's theatres in operation today with children producing plays for children is the Palo Alto Children's Theater, Palo Alto, California. The age range of participants is from six to sixteen, but the most active students are from the fifth and sixth grade. Through participation and attendance in the children's theatre, these boys and girls are developing a critical attitude toward entertainment and are becoming intelligent theatre-goers. By getting a working knowledge of some of the problems of production, the children involved in this type of community program will appreciate good theatre when they see it.

The children do most of the work for the plays, such as student directing, acting, making costumes, designing and building sets, and publicizing the plays. There are several adult directors helping these boys and girls learn how to do these assignments. The educational value of the Palo Alto Children's Theater is expressed in the book, Children and the Theater:

It provides opportunity for experiences contributing to all-around growth. It fosters individual development of the kind which makes for successful social living. It embodies the principle of learning by active doing and considers it important that the goal be achieved with maximum efficiency and understanding. [11:3]

The value of a children's theatre in a community depends to some extent on the administration. Palo Alto has met with the approval of both teachers and parents. It provides further situations in which good manners, correct grammar, vitalized history, and elementary mathematics, as well as manual training, domestic science, art, and physical education all receive attention. [11:10]

Educators are in favor of the children's theatre when it fulfills the needs of the child. Some administrators oppose the idea of theatre for children in the schools for reasons such as the cost being too prohibitive, children already having too many activities, and children's theatre not being the responsibility of the school.



According to Caroline E. Fisher and Hazel C. Robertson, in their book Children and the Theater, they say:

The children's theater in the educational scheme of the twentieth century is yet a pioneer movement and has traveled but a short way in comparison with the well-traveled roads in education. Yet because it has met the four essentials sought in education, in that it develops the whole child, creates situations where "learning by doing" prevails, offers a laboratory for testing new theories, and contributes measured results that meet educational tests, the children's theater has already served its apprenticeship. [11:7]

There are no child "stars" in the children's theatre. The children soon learn that the cooperation of all involved in the production are necessary for a successful play. The understanding of other people gained through working on a children's theatre production, will be very helpful to the child in later years of his life.

In the United States of America, the American Educational Theatre Association was organized to help provide leadership for those interested in better educational theatre. This group has an annual meeting that brings together interested persons from all parts of the nation to meet and discuss the various problems confronted by theatre personnel. The Children's Theatre Conference (a division of the American Educational Theatre Association) is held in conjunction with the American Educational Theatre Association Conference. The primary concern of the Children's Theatre Conference is the improvement of children's theatre programs in the nation.

Conference delegates approved the following statement of purposes at their annual meeting in August of 1957:

- A. To promote the establishment of Children's Theatre activities in all communities by educational, community, and private groups.
- B. To encourage the raising and maintaining of high standards in all types of Children's Theatre activities throughout America.
- C. To provide a meeting ground for Children's Theatre workers from all levels through sponsorship of an annual national meeting, and of regional meetings and conference committees throughout the year.

[36:8]

Other nations are also using children in the theatre, and many have provided programs related to the schools to help establish an interest in the theatre. In Germany, the theatre provides entertainment for the entire family, and the price of admission is reasonable so most people interested in seeing theatre productions can afford to attend. This is in contrast to the United States of America, where admission rates are much more than the cost of seeing a movie. In the Oriental countries, children have an opportunity to perform in ceremonies and dances at an early age, and learn early in life to perform before an audience. Winifred Ward mentions that theatre by children has been highly approved by the educators in France. They use creative dramatics with the younger children and formal dramatics is used for boys and girls fourteen and older. [33:28]

When children watch a play put on primarily for them, they like the "good" side to win and the "bad" side to lose. As Winifred Ward says, "They are bored by aimless fooling. They hate cheating and injustice." [33:24] Some adults think that if a group of actors will get up on a stage, hit each other with slapsticks, crack a few jokes, and be silly, children will love it. Although children may laugh at the actors in a situation of this type, they will no doubt think the acting is foolish. A play that is well acted and well directed will hold the interest of the children in the audience, if it is on the child's level of understanding.

A director of children's theatre plays is quite often faced with the "problem child." It may be that a child is not doing well in academic pursuits, is having problems at home or is not interested in anything. The opportunity provided to be in a play and portraying someone else, rather than himself, is sometimes the one thing that changes a young child's outlook on life. In her book, Theatre For Children, Winifred Ward gives an example of this:

A child's whole attitude is sometimes changed for the better by the experience of playing successfully in a children's theatre. Perhaps he hasn't had a great deal of self respect; his schoolmates have not thought highly of him, his teacher may have been doubtful about the wisdom of allowing him to take a part. Because he seems so promising for a particular character, he is permitted to do so. He is treated with respect by the director, does a fine piece of work. He rises in the estimation of the other children in the cast and then wins praise from the audience. [33:228]

A great concern among leaders of children's theatre has been how to improve the quality of theatre for children. In a recent article in Theatre Arts Magazine, Miss Ward mentions that drama lags behind the other arts in professional entertainment for young people and that children will sit through a poor production, rather than be deprived of seeing live theatre.

[44:53] Although television has helped to partially satisfy his hunger for the theatre, it can never replace the experiences live theatre offers.

Charlotte Chorpenning (a leading children's theatre playwright) claims that the answer to better theatre for children may be in the writing of better scripts, so more directors will select these plays. Her poem concerning this new era of children's theatre is one of timely thought:

We stage our plays where children's laughter rings,  
 And see them live our actors' pain and joy  
 As if they were in truth that girl or boy  
 Around whose fate our moving story swings!  
 And are we always sure our story brings  
 To light, with all the danger with alloy  
 Of fun and happy ending we employ,  
 A presentation of the truth of things?  
 May we who write for children, not forget  
 That buried memories of plays may live  
 To times and scenes we dream not of as yet,  
 And may emerge in harassed days to give  
 Ideals to follow, like a flag unfurled.  
 Yea, children are the future of the world. [6:112]

## CREATIVE DRAMATICS

The value of creative dramatics in the elementary school as an effective way to help children overcome fears has been shown by Dr. Siks, Winifred Ward, and Agnes Haaga, leaders in the field of dramatics with children. The work these people have done has stimulated others to continue with the creative approach to dramatics, which is to let the child feel himself as someone else, rather than to "copy" the ideas of the teacher. As Geraldine Siks points out in her book, "Creative dramatics emphasizes participation rather than product. Its chief aim is experience; experience that fosters child growth and development." [28:21]

In creative dramatics, the child has no lines to memorize. The lines are made up by the children as the play unfolds when they act it out. Usually the teacher will read a story to the children. Then, after discussing the story sequence, characters, and scenes in the tale, parts may be assigned. Following this, the children might dramatize the story, making up the plot as they recall the sequence of action in the story. Ruth Strickland believes there is more value to the creative approach to dramatics when she reaffirms,

Building their own plays has far greater value than selecting a ready-made play and producing it. Not only will the background building and the creation of plot and sequence have educative value, but the play will actually be better produced. Children can do well only what they can put themselves into with loss of identity

or the submerging of self. This is not possible until the play or the role has become a part of the child.  
[30:330]

The classroom teacher may use creative dramatics to review a story in reading. She may have the reading group select a cast and work out the story from the reading book. The children do retain the story longer if they dramatize it, whether it be through the creative or the formal dramatics approach. These two approaches to dramatics often overlap. A reading group that prepares a play to present to the others in the class may make up the lines from the story as a creative project. However, if they use costumes, makeup, and scenery, they are making the play a formal production. Some teachers will use creative dramatics to act out historical events that may seem quite uninteresting to the children, until dramatized. An elementary school teacher may use creative dramatics in any subject in school, limited only by the imagination of the individual teacher.

One problem that teachers or leaders using creative dramatics have found is that of locating useful material. Robert Kase has compiled a book of Stories for Creative Acting, an excellent guide for someone desiring to find stories of interest for younger children. In the introduction to his book he says:

Directors find that children, especially the younger ones, perform better in Creative Dramatics, than in formal

plays. A major problem for those engaged in Creative Dramatics is to find stories which will arouse the interest of and stimulate the imaginations of the unpredictable children. [19:VIII]

Another excellent book that is filled with stories and poems suitable for use with elementary school children is Arbuthnot's Anthology of Children's Literature. The leader of creative dramatics must decide for herself the best way to use these stories. What works for one person may not work for another. Therefore, it depends on the group with which one is working as to the best approach for using creative dramatics.

Helen Louise Miller, leading playwright for PLAYS Magazine (a monthly publication of one-act plays) feels that children who are forced to recite lines that have no meaning for them, or to portray characters they do not understand, are hopelessly unconvincing. [21:3, 4] C. A. Kwiat also believes that memorized lines for a play are not worthwhile for children when he states in an article, "Values of Dramatization,"

Lines are not to be memorized, since they become more stilted with each rehearsal. A spontaneous line does more for personality development, sounds more sincere and dramatic, ---whereas, a forgotten line that was memorized does damage to the little actors personality development. It would be far better not to participate in a play at all than to have too much demanded from the child. [41:465]

Creative dramatics is often used as therapy for children as well as adults. An example of using unrehearsed drama as therapy for adults was cited in an article, "Dress Rehearsal

For Real Life," when the author pointed out that this approach helps people understand others by acting out their feelings.

[39:83] This is closely related to "role-playing," a method used by psychologists to have people pretend they are someone else so their true feelings can be expressed. Harold McCuen, director of a school for mentally retarded children in Mansfield, Ohio, uses creative dramatics in his school to help these children better understand themselves.

Winifred Ward summarizes the creative dramatics picture when she relates that primary age children belong in creative dramatics classes, but that children of ten or eleven may do quite well in formal dramatics with proper guidance.

[33:202]



## SCHOOL DRAMATICS

In the elementary school, dramatics usually is a part of the language program. Since each school is distinct in the way this is administered, the teachers must use dramatics where it best fits into their class programs. Children need to learn to enjoy working with language since many children dread this subject. It is the prime responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide the leadership in making language interesting so the children will learn to enjoy it.

Children naturally love to act. There is immeasurable value to be derived from the cooperation which is necessary in producing any worthwhile school dramatization. The production of a play is essentially a cooperative undertaking. Authorities in the field of formal dramatics do agree that the child is the important factor to keep uppermost in mind when doing school productions. Evelyne Hilliard wrote in 1917 that "the very heart of educational dramatics is the development of the player." [15:2] Following this same philosophy, in 1934 Jessica Childs relates, "if we can satisfy the child's desire for thrills during the adolescent and pre-adolescent years by giving him thrills of the wholesome sort, the crime wave among the youth of the country may be circumvented." [5:29] Many leaders in education, psychology, and the theatre do believe that the value of school dramatics is underrated

by too many people. So much emphasis has been placed on the athletic programs of the school that little time is left for work in dramatics or theatre arts. Once a school has started a program of dramatics, it usually continues to grow. The big problem facing those interested in this program is getting it launched at first. Some school administrators are opposed to the idea of a dramatics program as an extra-curricular activity in the elementary school because they feel the children have too many other activities taking their time.

The school play should be a part of the child's educational experience. Helen Louise Miller mentions that children "take great pride in achievement; they enjoy a sense of teamwork and will work hard toward a common goal." [21:8] Too often, adults underestimate the abilities of elementary school children. If given an opportunity to prove what they can do, they surprise their teachers, parents and other students. Not only are these young thespians loyal and devoted to the goal of a production, but they sacrifice many other activities to attend rehearsals. Some extra-curricular activities that conflict with dramatics include Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Little League, Camp Fire Girls, music lessons, and religious instruction. During the time a play is being rehearsed, arrangements usually can be made between the director and children to minimize conflicts arising from other group functions.

Children find great fun in producing plays. The secret behind a successful school production is to make the best of what is at hand. This challenge is in itself most worthwhile and allows a child to become a resourceful person. Many adults involved in theatre work today think that to have a play with merit, even at the elementary school level, there must be rented costumes, professionally painted scenery, and makeup that is done with all the finesse of a Hollywood makeup artist. This is not a requisite for plays put on by children. Experience gained by the students in building sets from large cardboard containers, helping their mothers design and make a costume, and learning to improvise from inexpensive materials is beneficial training. The children are learning to work together with others, which is of prime importance in our society. They take greater pride in their production when they make use of their own ingenuity.

Out of a dramatic production innumerable activities evolve that enable the individuals, with the director's help, to find some phase of the production in which they can participate and to which they can contribute. They can derive maximum benefit from the undertaking only if they cooperate in backstage, as well as onstage, activities. Into play production come many skills --- reading, arithmetic, speech habits, and factual information pertinent to the production. Some of the production crew jobs include painting

scenery, building the set, working with makeup, serving as ushers, preparing and listening to music to be used for the production, and making posters to advertise the play. Jack Simos points out in his book, Social Growth Through Play Production, "Although there exists ample related activities to occupy anyone who cares to be so involved, it is true, however, that most of the members of a dramatic group are primarily interested in an opportunity to act." [29:15] Some children are capable of student directing, and when given this responsibility, do an admirable job.

Using formal dramatics in the elementary school is relatively new in educational theatre. There are two types of formal productions: (1) Classroom Dramatics, done in conjunction with reading, history, or language arts (2) Extra-Curricular Dramatics, when the play is produced outside of school hours. This second type is the form used for the investigation in this study. Dagny Hanson Blanchard wrote the following concerning formal dramatics in the elementary school:

Should all children be exposed to formal dramatics, especially in the higher grades? This writer feels all children should most certainly be given the opportunity and should be encouraged to participate. Not all children will do well in formal dramatics just as there are failures and those of mediocre ability in all fields of learning and activity. However, latent abilities, may be lying dormant in some timid soul. How rewarding for the one who taps these hidden resources and brings them to life. [45:13,14]

In discussing school plays, as compared to children's theatre plays, it should be noted that there is a difference between the two types of dramatizations. Winifred Ward explains this difference by saying,

School plays, to which parents and children are invited, are an entirely different matter from children's theatre plays. Though standards should be high, the entertainment value need not be so strong a consideration. The play takes on something of the nature of a demonstration of school work, and the audience sees it from that point of view. Children who could never play in the children's theatre may take part on such occasions, with a sufficient degree of success to make it a satisfactory and educationally valuable experience. [33:221]

The extra-curricular play could be said to be a cross between the curricular play and the children's theatre play, since it is not related directly to work being done in school.

When a director is having tryouts for a play, it is very important that every child be given an opportunity to try out for a part. Some directors have found that giving children an opportunity to list their preferences for parts in the play makes the job of casting an easier task. Most actors desire the leading roles. However, when it is explained to them the importance of the other characters in the play and that competition is keener for the leading parts, students often select roles other than the leads. It also helps if the director knows something about each child's reading ability and willingness to accept responsibility. A child may be an excellent oral reader, but may have difficulty memorizing lines.

Most plays put on by elementary school children are performed in the formal staging style, seating the audience in rows of chairs. A recent innovation by directors of some children's plays is the use of arena productions. An arena theatre places the audience on all sides of the acting area. The advantages of this type of staging in preference to the conventional staging are; (1) the actors can be heard better, (2) elaborate scenery is not necessary, (3) the actors do not need to worry as much about their backs facing the audience. Glenn Hughes, former director in charge of the dramatics department at the University of Washington, experimented with this type of staging with high school and college students and discovered it to be most successful. Agnes Haaga, University of Washington Drama Department, directed a group of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in an arena play, "The Knave of Hearts" at the University of Washington Penthouse Theatre during the summer of 1958. These boys and girls performed for the Children's Theatre Workshop. One of the most prevalent objections to arena productions is that so few people can be accommodated at each performance, the play needs to be presented several times.

Some play directors use a prompter backstage during a performance. The writer does not use this method, as it gives the young thespians a "crutch" to lean on, hoping it helps them in the play. If children know there will not be

a prompter backstage to help them, they take the memorization of lines more seriously, and will also take the time to study the sequence of scenes in the play, so they can "ad-lib" if necessary during the performance when a line is forgotten.

The director of a school production must work out his rehearsal schedule with the children involved in the play. The production dates should be set early enough so the cast members have time to inform their parents, friends, and relatives of performance times. Arrangements for use of the stage facility are also necessary, especially in larger elementary schools, where the stage is used quite extensively. The number of rehearsals depends on the play selected, the availability of the stage, as well as the number of characters in the play. Usually, five or six weeks will allow time to rehearse a play for production. It is important that both the director and children are prompt at rehearsals, because the morale of a drama group can fall quite rapidly when there is "wasted" time at rehearsals.

During the final week of rehearsals, a director will usually try to have the play far enough advanced so the day preceding the first formal production, the cast and crew can have a "dress rehearsal." This is a final rehearsal for the entire cast and crew to discover any details that may have been previously overlooked. This should be as much like a "live" performance as possible. There is some disagreement

among play directors as to the value of a "dress rehearsal." Some feel that the term "dress" refers to the costuming of the play. Helen Louise Miller states, "the dress rehearsal is a rehearsal to accustom the players to their costumes." [21:48] In contrast to this point of view, others feel that the "dress" refers to the production as a whole. Winifred Ward expresses, "the final dress rehearsal should be as much like the regular performance as it is possible to make it." [33:214] It is actually up to each director to use the method that best suits his situation. The writer has discovered that the most successful way to use the dress rehearsal with elementary school children is to have the final dress rehearsal as much like the real performance as possible. The children do need time to become acquainted with the feel of the properties they use and the costumes they wear, so quite often a director will have them begin using them several weeks before the play is to be produced. This is done so the children will be able to use the properties naturally and will feel comfortable in their costumes. As E. O. Harbin says concerning this phase of the production of a play, "A dramatic performance may easily become a painful display of peacock-strutting participants." [14:517]

Formal dramatics has been used successfully as a curricular activity in some schools, and as an extra-curricular activity in others. An example of formal dramatics being used



to act out the story of "The Selfish Giant" by a group of fourth graders was cited in Marion Nesbitt's book, A Public School For Tomorrow. She relates that the creative approach was combined with the formal approach to dramatics, since the children did make the scenery and costumes. The boy who played the part of the giant was known to the primary children as the "giant" and any chance to meet him in person on the schoolground after the play had been performed, was a real thrill for them. [23:45-46]

#### SOCIAL GROWTH THROUGH DRAMATICS

Children between the ages of nine and twelve are quite concerned with their peer status. At times they place more emphasis and importance on social acceptance than on academic accomplishment. The need to belong to a group, gang, club, organization or clique is of prime importance to a fourth, fifth, or sixth grader. As Dr. Siks points out:

The childhood years are social years. Gangs and clubs come into high vogue. Esprit de corps is vital to almost every child, for he values his peers and his place among his companions. Although each child is a strong individualist, he needs to belong to a gang, a club, an organization at school or in neighborhood areas. [28:360]

The peer group is much more important to the child than many parents realize. David Riesman shows in his book, The Lonely Crowd that being popular is probably the greatest single factor in a child's school life in his relation with other

children. [27:22] Teachers are recognizing the need for stressing the skills involved in social adjustment and group interaction as well as those essential to mastery of the academic subjects. Almost any textbook dealing with teaching in the elementary school today has a chapter relating to this important phase in the life of the elementary school child. Through the medium of dramatization the teacher has an opportunity to help children develop better attitudes, by observing the reactions of the children as they act and react in a play.

If students can become aware of good plays that are written, they will broaden their viewpoints about life in general. Simos explains the importance of this phase of teaching by stating:

Contact with good plays introduces us to places and people different from ourselves yet containing the element of universality in which we all can find identification. Constant probing into ideas and themes begins to develop in the participants a philosophy of life. Interests broaden and expand. Social responsibility, then, broadens and expands. A value system begins to be implanted. [29:140]

Children having an opportunity to express themselves through acting, are able to gain self-confidence which can be achieved, only by "putting one's self into someone else's shoes." A shy child is often helped by dramatics, and will often surprise the director and the students by performing so well in a play. As Bernice Carlson states, "Acting is for everyone. It is for the person who naturally likes to entertain a group. It is also for the person who is shy or awkward." [4:13]

## CHAPTER III

### THE MATERIALS USED AND GROUPS TESTED

Hypothesis To Be Tested. Sixth grade students will achieve greater social acceptance as a result of participation in formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity.

Prediction. The students in the experimental group (those participating in formal dramatics) will achieve greater social acceptance than the students in the control group (those not participating in formal dramatics).

### TEST MATERIALS AND METHODS USED

Procedures Used in the Study. In the fall of 1961, all sixth grade students were given the Classroom Social Distance Scale and the Guess Who Questionnaire sociometric measures. Following this, tryouts were held for the three one-act plays that were to be presented by the Colonial Heights Elementary School Drama Club. These were open tryouts<sup>1</sup> for all fifth and sixth grade students. The plays were then cast. Eight boys and eight girls were chosen for the experimental group. These were picked from the cast and crew members having a major part in producing the one-act plays. Eight boys and eight girls

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<sup>1</sup> open tryouts mean that any student interested in the plays may tryout, with the opportunity of getting a part.

were picked as the control group, by matching scores as closely as possible with students from the experimental group. There were two sixth grade classes in the school. One was taught by Mr. Johnson and the other was taught by Mr. Bowen (the writer). Students were matched with others from their respective classes to minimize the variables. Table I shows the scores received by Mr. Johnson's students on the Classroom Social Distance Scale and the Guess Who Questionnaire. Table II shows the scores received by Mr. Bowen's students on the Classroom Social Distance Scale and the Guess Who Questionnaire. Table III shows the comparative scores of the students in the control group and the experimental group.

Population and Samples. During the time of the investigation there were two fifth grade classes and two sixth grade classes in Colonial Heights Elementary School. There were thirty-one students in each of the two sixth grade classes. These sixty-two students comprised the population from which the experimental samples were drawn. Since only students in the fifth and sixth grades were involved in the formal dramatics program at this time, the writer used students from the sixth grade for the investigation.

The following three tables indicate the recorded scores upon which this study is based.

TABLE I

RESULTS OF CLASSROOM SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE  
AND GUESS WHO QUESTIONNAIRE  
MR. JOHNSON'S CLASS

<u>Student</u>	<u>CSDS-Before</u>	<u>CSDS-After</u>	<u>GWQ-Before</u>	<u>GWQ-After</u>
K.A.	1.454	1.560	37	32
B.D.	3.000	2.206	- 2	- 9
P.F.	3.761	3.333	-13	-24
J.G.	2.318	1.846	- 4	- 9
D.H.	2.545	2.000	4	7
T.J.	2.850	2.454	-18	-12
M.L.	2.538	2.208	4	- 2
E.P.	3.105	2.956	- 7	- 4
P.H.	1.947	2.208	3	1
M.R.	1.681	1.818	- 3	-19
D.W.	2.272	1.576	- 2	0
D.S.	1.863	1.391	3	13
E.S.	2.227	2.153	5	4
M.S.	2.409	2.800	- 1	6
K.W.	2.625	2.115	-18	- 6
R.Z.	2.636	1.833	- 9	- 4
P.C.	2.150	2.043	4	- 5
P.R.	2.000	2.375	- 1	- 4
S.C.	2.380	2.272	- 5	- 1
L.D.	2.238	3.047	4	- 1
K.G.	2.250	2.130	- 1	- 1
C.H.	2.421	1.818	29	30
S.K.	3.250	3.173	-12	-12
K.L.	1.761	1.521	20	47
D.R.	2.409	2.416	7	3
M.T.	3.100	2.521	-18	- 4
S.T.	3.142	3.160	- 7	-10
V.V.	3.333	3.000	- 6	-17
N.W.	2.454	2.833	16	10
K.Z.	2.500	2.000	- 6	-10
S.W.	1.857	1.840	6	2

Note: CSDS-Before refers to results of the Classroom Social Distance Scale before the one-act plays. CSDS-After refers to results of the Classroom Social Distance Scale after the one-act plays. GWQ refers to the Guess Who Questionnaire before and after the one-act plays. Students at top of table are boys, students at bottom--girls.

TABLE II  
RESULTS OF CLASSROOM SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE  
AND GUESS WHO QUESTIONNAIRE  
MR. BOWEN'S CLASS

<u>Student</u>	<u>CSDS-Before</u>	<u>CSDS-After</u>	<u>GWQ-Before</u>	<u>GWQ-After</u>
V.B.	1.925	1.607	21	23
J.C.	3.344	3.192	-46	-44
K.C.	1.607	1.607	6	14
S.L.	2.285	1.928	5	-1
J.D.	2.680	2.071	-2	3
E.D.	1.833	1.821	1	2
S.F.	2.500	2.000	10	11
J.L.	2.080	2.517	-3	2
J.M.	1.807	1.785	19	11
D.O.	2.192	2.107	7	-1
P.P.	2.172	1.928	1	2
T.P.	2.535	2.285	-3	-7
A.P.	2.629	2.370	-2	0
C.R.	2.571	2.178	-7	5
D.T.	2.111	1.928	-11	-3
B.S.	2.076	1.888	3	3
S.J.	1.916	2.185	14	3
J.B.	2.148	2.337	1	3
K.F.	2.423	2.307	-4	0
J.H.	2.370	2.275	1	-1
B.H.	2.259	2.206	4	6
D.E.	1.720	1.740	-5	-5
P.J.	1.653	1.827	-3	-8
L.K.	3.160	3.625	-27	-24
L.T.	2.320	2.535	1	2
L.M.	1.607	1.655	2	7
S.M.	2.851	3.692	-12	-25
S.P.	1.461	1.592	6	6
K.P.	1.666	1.678	28	32
L.R.	1.653	1.700	5	-1
K.S.	1.845	1.888	5	6

Note: CSDS-Before refers to results of the Classroom Social Distance Scale before the one-act plays. CSDS-After refers to results of the Classroom Social Distance Scale after the one-act plays. GWQ refers to the Guess Who Questionnaire before and after the one-act plays. Students at top of table are boys, students at bottom--girls.

TABLE III  
 EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS  
 SHOWING RATING DIFFERENCES  
 FOR SIX WEEK INTERVAL

<u>Student</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>CSDS-Diff.</u>	<u>GWQ-Diff.</u>
K.C.	M	E	Bowen	.000	8
P.C.	F	E	Johnson	.107	- 9
D.E.	F	E	Bowen	-.020	0
K.G.	F	E	Johnson	.120	0
M.L.	M	E	Johnson	.330	- 6
S.L.	M	E	Bowen	.357	- 6
K.P.	F	E	Bowen	-.012	4
S.P.	F	E	Bowen	-.131	0
C.R.	M	E	Bowen	.393	12
L.R.	F	E	Bowen	-.047	- 6
B.S.	M	E	Bowen	.188	0
D.T.	M	E	Bowen	.183	8
M.T.	F	E	Johnson	.579	14
D.W.	M	E	Johnson	.696	2
S.W.	F	E	Johnson	.017	4
R.Z.	M	E	Johnson	.803	5
J.B.	F	C	Bowen	-.189	2
L.D.	F	C	Johnson	-.809	- 5
D.H.	M	C	Johnson	.545	3
P.J.	F	C	Bowen	-.174	- 5
J.L.	M	C	Bowen	-.437	5
K.L.	F	C	Johnson	.240	27
J.M.	M	C	Bowen	.022	- 8
L.M.	F	C	Bowen	-.048	5
D.O.	M	C	Bowen	.085	- 8
P.P.	M	C	Bowen	.244	1
T.P.	M	C	Bowen	.250	- 4
P.R.	F	C	Johnson	-.375	- 3
E.S.	M	C	Johnson	.074	- 1
K.S.	F	C	Bowen	-.043	1
S.T.	F	C	Johnson	-.018	- 3
K.W.	M	C	Johnson	.510	12

Note: M refers to Male; F refers to Female; E refers to Experimental Group; C refers to Control Group; CSDS-Diff. refers to difference in rating on the Classroom Social Distance Scale at six-week interval; GWQ-Diff. refers to difference in rating on the Guess Who Questionnaire at six-week interval.

The students reside within a one mile radius of Colonial Heights School, a suburban residential area in North Stockton, California. This community surrounding the school has been developed within the past twelve years. Approximately 95% of the residents in the area are Caucasian. No negro children attended the school at the time of the investigation, although there were a few oriental families with children attending the school. Only Caucasians were used as participants in the investigation.

Limitations of the Study. Certain limitations of the investigation should be taken into consideration. New friends were being formed daily. Groups or cliques were formed from week to week and changed constantly. If disagreements were taken seriously by the students involved in the experimental or control groups, this may have affected their scores on the two sociometric measures. A possible reason for a higher marking by the students after the one-act plays is that some students may have discussed how they marked their first papers. This could have influenced the higher ratings. Boys may have rated the girls lower on the Classroom Social Distance Scale since boys do not have as much interest in having girls as friends as they do later on in school.



History of Colonial Heights Elementary School Drama Club. In the fall of 1960 when the writer began teaching sixth grade at Colonial Heights Elementary School, Stockton, California, several students expressed an interest in organizing a school drama club so they could participate in play production. After consulting with the administration and securing approval, the group was organized. The first plays produced were three one-act Halloween plays. These were done in arena style, with the audience seated on all sides of the acting area. Following this, the drama club put on a Thanksgiving play during the fall of 1960. In January, 1961, the Parent-Teacher Association persuaded the students to put on the Founders Day Play. In the spring of 1961 the group put on a talent show, another arena play, "A Stone in the Road," and a one-act western. In the fall of 1961 the drama club produced the three one-act plays used for this investigation. They also performed another Founders Day Play for the Parent-Teacher Association in February of 1962, followed by a talent show that same month. The first royalty play produced by the group was "Tom Sawyer's Treasure Hunt," written by Charlotte Chorpenning. This was produced in April of 1962.

Classroom Social Distance Scale. [7:401] This sociometric measure was used to discover the degree to which individuals were accepted by their peers. In the original administration

and scoring of the test at the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute, students also rated themselves. However, since the main purpose in using this measurement was to discover how well students were accepted socially by their peers, this part of the scale was not used. The teacher's name was not inserted in the scale, as is sometimes done when giving this to students in a school situation. Each student rated others in his own classroom using the Social Distance Scale, with categories ranging from one to five. The five headings the students chose from to check each classmate were: (1) would like to have him as one of my best friends (2) would like to have him in my group but not as a close friend (3) would like to be with him once in a while but not often or for a long time (4) don't mind his being in our room but don't want to have anything to do with him (5) wish he weren't in our room. The students were instructed to leave the column opposite their name blank. This was done so the examiner would know who filled out each paper. The students were also informed that "him" refers to either a boy or a girl.

Guess Who Questionnaire. This is a modified form of the Social Analysis of the Classroom Questionnaire used by the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute. There were twenty items that were to be filled in by the students, with a name with someone from their class. The questionnaire items were so worded that

the odd numbered items were examples of favorable hypothetical social situations, such as "Here is someone who is generally cheerful, jolly and good-natured, laughs and smiles a good deal. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_." The even numbered items gave situations of someone exemplifying unacceptable social behavior, such as "Here is someone who gets angry often and easily. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_." The students were told they could put a name down more than once if the example fit the person's description.

Stability of the Measurements Used. According to a study made by Eldon E. Jacobsen [46] the stability coefficients of the two sociometric measures used in the investigation, were as follows:

Guess Who: (five to six week interval) first grade (.76 $\pm$ .04), third grade (.90 $\pm$ .02), fifth grade (.94 $\pm$ .01), seventh grade (.80 $\pm$ .03), ninth grade (.86 $\pm$ .02), eleventh grade (.92 $\pm$ .02).

Classroom Social Distance Scale. (five to six week interval) first grade (.87 $\pm$ .02), third grade (.78 $\pm$ .04), fifth grade (.83 $\pm$ .03), seventh grade (.74 $\pm$ .04), ninth grade (.81 $\pm$ .03), eleventh grade (.63 $\pm$ .08).

Since this study did not measure scores of **sixth** grade students, it can be assumed their scores would be in relation to the coefficients of the students in the fifth and seventh grades.

Thompson and Powell [43] studied the classroom rating scale and the partial rank-order scale using sixth grade students in four classrooms of a metropolitan city. They discovered the rating scale approach (such as the Classroom Social Distance Scale) to be more stable for relative stability of social preference scores when given at four or five week intervals. The rating scale procedure as a research instrument was said to have definite merits not potentially present in the partial rank-order scale.

Joseph Justman and J. W. Wrightstone [40] concluded that naming children for positively and negatively described roles in a hypothetical play situation measures different aspects of pupil status than does a scale similar to the Classroom Social Distance Scale, where students rate each other on a five-point scale. They compared the Casting Character Scales (similar to the Guess Who Questionnaire), the Modified Ohio Acceptance Scale (similar to the Classroom Social Distance Scale), and the Modified Moreno Approach in their study.

Since the Classroom Social Distance Scale and the Guess Who Questionnaire correlate only moderately, it can be assumed they do not measure the same variable. The reliability for the Guess Who Questionnaire is higher than the Classroom Social Distance Scale. [46]

The Guess Who Questionnaire measures a definite positive or negative change, whereas the Classroom Social Distance Scale measures degrees of acceptance.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Classroom Social Distance Scale. The Classroom Social Distance Scale was used to measure the social acceptance of the students as rated by their peers. Students in both sixth grade classes were given the rating sheets to complete. Students only rated those in their respective classrooms. Names of the members of each class were listed on the left column of the rating sheet. The scales were scored using the following point system: one point for each check in column one, two points for each check in column two, three points for each check in column three, four points for each check in column four, and five points for each check in column five. Using this point value, the mean score would be 2.5. When referring to the social acceptance scale this means a student would be rated between: [would like to have him in my group but not as a close friend] and [would like to be with him once in a while but not often or for a long time.] The lower the score (the nearer to 1.000) the more accepted the student. In other words, the closer the social distance. An example of how a scale would be scored can be shown by using one student's score from the experimental group: L.R. (a female) scored the following:

Item or Column 1	---	12 checks.	Therefore	12 x 1	12
Item or Column 2	---	12 checks.	Therefore	12 x 2	24

Item or Column 3	---	1 check.	Therefore	$1 \times 3 = 3$
Item or Column 4	---	1 check.	Therefore	$1 \times 4 = 4$
Item or Column 5	---	0 checks.	Therefore	$0 \times 5 = 0$

The total score from this sheet would be 43. This number, divided by the number of students rating her (26) comes to 1.653 or 1.7 when carried to the nearest tenth. After the formal dramatics experience (six week interval between ratings)

L.R. received the following scores:

Item or Column 1	---	16 checks.	Therefore	$16 \times 1 = 16$
Item or Column 2	---	10 checks.	Therefore	$10 \times 2 = 20$
Item or Column 3	---	1 check.	Therefore	$1 \times 3 = 3$
Item or Column 4	---	3 checks.	Therefore	$3 \times 4 = 12$
Item or Column 5	---	0 checks.	Therefore	$0 \times 5 = 0$

The total score from this sheet would be 51. This number, divided by the number of students rating her (30) is 1.700 or 1.7 when carried to the nearest tenth. There was no apparent gain for L.R. according to the results shown here. The reason for a different number of students rating L.R. on the two tests is that some students failed to check each name. If a student was not rated by each student, then their total number of persons rating them was lowered. One rating sheet was thrown away because column 5 was checked for each individual in the class. When asked to do it again, this boy said he didn't like anyone and didn't want to take the time to do this rating scale. All the scores were tabulated after the first scale was given to the students. From this list, the experimental and control groups were picked. A test of significance was then used to see whether a significant gain

was shown by those in the experimental group, as compared with the control group. The results of this t of 15 test are shown below:

$$t = \frac{\bar{D}_E - \bar{D}_C}{\sqrt{\frac{s_B^2}{N_E - 1} + \frac{s_C^2}{N_C - 1}}}$$

$$t = \frac{\sqrt{.0675 + .11}}{15 \quad 15}$$

$$t = \sqrt{.0118}$$

$$t = .109$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{N} - M_D^2}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{2.08}{16} - (-.25^2)}$$

$$\sqrt{.13 - .0625}$$

$$\sqrt{.0675}$$

$$t = \frac{-.25 - (-.002)}{.109}$$

$$t = \frac{(-.252)}{.109}$$

$$t \text{ of } 15 = 2.3$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{N} - M_D^2}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{1.77}{16} - (.002)^2}$$

$$\sqrt{.11 -}$$

To be significant at the 5% level of confidence with fifteen degrees of freedom, the t value must be 2.13 or more. Since the t of 15 was -2.3, this showed a significant gain in the experimental group over the control group. A difference of -2.3 was actually an "improvement" in classroom social distance for the experimental group over the controls, since the highest possible score was 1.000 rather than 5.000.



TABLE IV  
 EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS  
 SHOWING DIFFERENCES (D) AND DIFFERENCES SQUARED (D<sup>2</sup>)  
 FOR SIX WEEK INTERVAL

<u>Student</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>CSDS-Before</u>	<u>CSDS-After</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>D<sup>2</sup></u>
K.C.	E	1.6	1.6	.0	.00
P.C.	E	2.2	2.0	-.2	.04
D.E.	E	1.7	1.7	.0	.00
K.G.	E	2.3	2.1	-.2	.04
M.L.	E	2.5	2.2	-.3	.09
S.L.	E	2.3	1.9	-.4	.16
K.P.	E	1.7	1.7	.0	.00
S.P.	E	1.5	1.6	.1	.01
C.R.	E	2.6	2.2	-.4	.16
L.R.	E	1.7	1.7	.0	.00
B.S.	E	2.1	1.9	-.2	.04
D.T.	E	2.1	1.9	-.2	.04
M.T.	E	3.1	2.5	-.6	.36
D.W.	E	2.3	1.6	-.7	.49
S.W.	E	1.9	1.8	-.1	.01
R.Z.	E	2.6	1.8	-.8	.64
Totals		34.2	30.2	-4.0	2.08
J.B.	C	2.1	2.3	.2	.04
L.D.	C	2.2	3.0	.8	.64
D.H.	C	2.5	2.0	-.5	.25
P.J.	C	1.7	1.8	.1	.01
J.L.	C	2.1	2.5	.4	.16
K.L.	C	1.8	1.5	-.3	.09
J.M.	C	1.8	1.8	.0	.00
L.M.	C	1.6	1.7	.1	.01
D.O.	C	2.2	2.1	-.1	.01
P.P.	C	2.2	1.9	-.3	.09
T.P.	C	2.5	2.3	-.2	.04
P.R.	C	2.0	2.4	.4	.16
E.S.	C	2.2	2.2	.0	.00
K.S.	C	1.8	1.9	.1	.01
S.T.	C	3.1	3.2	.1	.01
K.W.	C	2.6	2.1	-.5	.25
Totals		34.4	34.7	.03	1.77

Note: G refers to group of student; CSDS-Before refers to Classroom Social Distance Scale before one-act plays. CSDS-After refers to Classroom Social Distance Scale after one-act plays. D refers to difference in two scales; D<sup>2</sup> is this difference squared.

Guess Who Questionnaire. This questionnaire was used to discover the favorable or unfavorable social acceptance of those students involved in the experimental group. The students in both sixth grade classes were instructed to fill in the blanks of the questionnaire with names of students from their own class. They were told a name could be used more than once. In scoring the tests, the odd-numbered items (such as 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9) received one plus point. The even numbered items (such as 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10) received one minus point. The scores were then totaled algebraically to arrive at a score for each student. If a student's name did not appear on any of the papers turned in, his score was 0. Using L.R. as an example, she scored plus 5 on the first rating and a -1 on the second rating. This gave her a difference of -6 between scoring periods, an interval of six weeks. The first time the questionnaire was given, her peers used L.R.'s name eleven times for the odd numbered items and six times for the even numbered items. After the one-act plays, her peers used L.R.'s name on ten odd numbered items and eleven even numbered items. The Guess Who Questionnaire was measuring a positive or negative factor, rather than any latitude between the two poles, as the Classroom Social Distance Scale measures. In comparing the experimental group with the control group, the same formula as shown for the Classroom Social Distance Scale was used to

arrive at a  $t$  and determine the level of significance. The value of significance was below the 2.13 level of significance using a table of fifteen degrees of freedom. The  $t$  of 15 was .68. The results of the Guess Who Questionnaire are shown here:

$$t = \frac{\bar{D}_E - \bar{D}_C}{\sqrt{\frac{S_E^2}{N-1} + \frac{S_C^2}{N-1}}}$$

$$t = \frac{1.375 - 1.188}{2.752}$$

$$t = \frac{.187}{2.752}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{42.985}{15} + \frac{70.580}{15}}$$

$$t \text{ of } 15 = .68$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{113.565}{15}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{7.571}$$

$$t = 2.752$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{N} - M_D^2}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{N} - M_D^2}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{1151 - (1.19)^2}{16}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{718 - (1.375)^2}{16}}$$

$$\sqrt{72 - 1.42}$$

$$\sqrt{44.875 - 1.89}$$

$$\sqrt{70.580}$$

$$\sqrt{42.985}$$

Therefore, statistically, the students in the experimental group did not gain school adjustment more readily than did the controls, when rated by their peers on the Guess Who Questionnaire.

TABLE V  
 EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS  
 SHOWING DIFFERENCES (D) AND DIFFERENCES SQUARED (D<sup>2</sup>)  
 FOR SIX WEEK INTERVAL

<u>Student</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>GWQ-Before</u>	<u>GWQ-After</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>D<sup>2</sup></u>
K.C.	E	24	32	8	64
P.C.	E	22	13	- 9	81
D.E.	E	13	13	0	0
K.G.	E	17	17	0	0
M.L.	E	22	16	- 6	36
S.L.	E	23	17	- 6	36
K.P.	E	46	50	4	16
S.P.	E	24	24	0	0
C.R.	E	11	23	12	144
L.R.	E	23	17	- 6	36
B.S.	E	21	21	0	0
D.T.	E	7	15	8	64
M.T.	E	0	14	14	196
D.W.	E	16	18	2	4
S.W.	E	24	20	- 4	16
R.Z.	E	9	14	5	25
Totals		<u>302</u>	<u>324</u>	<u>-22</u>	<u>718</u>
J.B.	C	19	21	2	4
L.D.	C	22	17	- 5	25
D.H.	C	22	25	3	9
P.J.	C	15	10	- 5	25
J.L.	C	15	20	5	25
K.L.	C	38	65	27	729
J.M.	C	37	29	- 8	64
L.M.	C	20	25	5	25
D.O.	C	25	17	- 8	64
P.P.	C	19	20	1	1
T.P.	C	15	11	- 4	16
P.R.	C	17	14	- 3	9
E.S.	C	23	22	- 1	1
K.S.	C	23	24	1	1
S.T.	C	11	8	- 3	9
K.W.	C	0	12	12	144
Totals		<u>321</u>	<u>340</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1151</u>

Note: G refers to group of student; GWQ-Before refers to Guess Who Questionnaire before one-act plays. GWQ-After refers to Guess Who Questionnaire after one-act plays. D refers to difference of scores; D<sup>2</sup> is this difference squared.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the intention of the writer to investigate the hypothesis that sixth grade students would achieve greater social acceptance as a result of participation in formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity. It was predicted the experimental group (those participating in dramatics) would achieve greater social acceptance than the students in the control group (those not participating in dramatics).

Creative dramatics has been used in schools to help promote social acceptance and has been proved helpful through the research of Dr. Geraldine Siks and other leaders in this field. The rapidly expanding Children's Theatre movement in the nation has resulted in further experimentation with using children as young actors in dramatic presentations. One of the best examples of this is the Children's Theater in Palo Alto, California, designed to give children from six to sixteen the opportunity to produce their own plays, with adult leadership.

Formal dramatics has been used successfully in schools as a curricular activity (such as reading group plays). The use of formal dramatics as an extra-curricular activity has been relatively new to the field of educational theatre. Very little evidence of this type of work in drama could be found.

The group used for the investigation was the sixth grade students in Colonial Heights Elementary School, Stockton, California. This school was located in a new residential area in North Stockton, California, in a rapidly growing metropolitan community. In the fall of 1961, all sixth grade students were given two sociometric measures, the Classroom Social Distance Scale (used to measure social distance among peers) and the Guess Who Questionnaire (used to measure school adjustment among peers). The three one-act plays for the Colonial Heights Elementary School Drama Club were then produced. In December of 1961, the students were given the same two sociometric measures again. Scores from the first ratings were used to divide the students into the experimental and control groups. Eight boys and eight girls were chosen for the experimental group. Matching the scores as closely as possible and attempting to keep the variables to a minimum, the controls were chosen from the remainder of sixth grade students. The scores were then tabulated and presented as data of the investigation.

The students in the experimental group showed a significant gain in social acceptance over those in the control group on the Classroom Social Distance Scale, showing students participating in formal dramatics lower their social distance among classmates. They are chosen as desired friends and thus may be accepted more readily among their peers.

The students in the experimental group did not show any statistically significant growth on the Guess Who Questionnaire. This suggests, when rated on a positive or negative basis of being chosen on favorable or unfavorable characteristics, no change in school adjustment is perceived by their peers.

This study has suggested formal dramatics was a contributing factor to the social acceptance of sixth grade students involved in an extra-curricular formal dramatics program, as measured by the Classroom Social Distance Scale.

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APPENDIX

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ad-lib. Original lines improvised by members of the cast; lines not written in the script.

Cast. The actors in a given play.

Children's Theatre. An experience where children participate as members of an audience to enjoy a theatre performance.

Creative Dramatics. A group experience in which every child is guided to express himself as he works and plays with others for the joy of creating improvised drama.

Crew. The members of a formal dramatic presentation engaged in a non-acting capacity of a production. Such members would include stage manager, makeup girls, ushers, and light technician.

Non-Royalty Play. No fee is charged by the author or publisher of the play for the use of his material.

Prompt. To remind the actor on stage of forgotten lines by whispering the lines from the wings of the stage.

Rehearsal. A time set aside to work out the action of the play so the actors know where to move on stage and to review the sequence of the play.

Script. A copy of the lines spoken by one actor in the play, together with cues for each line.



## GUESS WHO GAME

This is a guess-who game or test. It has nothing to do with grades in school. This guessing game is one way of helping teachers understand students better and the cooperation of every student is needed. Do your own guessing and do not let others know how you make your guesses. Read each of the statements carefully. Guess who in the room the words best fit. Who does it most sound like? Print the name on the blank line after the statement. A name may be used more than once, if you think the same student fits more than one statement. Just read the statements and print in the name of some classmate in this class.

1. Here is someone who is generally cheerful, jolly and good-natured, laughs and smiles a good deal. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Here is someone who generally seems rather sad, worried or unhappy, who hardly ever laughs or smiles. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Here is someone who works hard all the time. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Here is someone who is very easily discouraged - gives up easily. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



5. Here is someone who is generally very friendly, understanding and helpful. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Here is someone who is not friendly, not understanding, and not helpful. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Here is someone who doesn't get angry easily. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Here is someone who gets angry often and easily. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Here is someone who seldom worries. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Here is someone who always seems worried about something. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Here is someone who trusts almost everyone. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Here is someone who never trusts anyone. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Here is someone who does not get excited easily. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Here is someone who gets upset and excited often. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.

15. Here is someone who is usually willing to cooperate with others. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Here is someone who never seems to cooperate with others. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Here is someone who can be trusted and depended on. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Here is someone who can't be depended on or trusted. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
19. Here is someone who is quiet when the group is trying to work. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Here is someone who is often noisy in class. Guess Who \_\_\_\_\_.

## CASTS FOR ONE-ACT PLAYS

## "A Matter of Conscience"

George Payne.....B. S. \*

George's Conscience.....M. L. \*

Judith Payne.....M. T. \*

Dora Mason.....L. R. \*

Mrs. Payne.....P. C. \*

## "Common Clay"

Judge.....S. L. \*

Jane.....S. P. \*

Mason.....D. W. \*

Policeman.....C. O.

Steve.....C. R. \*

Clerk.....K. G. \*

Mother.....K. P. \*

Detective.....D. T. \*

## "The TV Set"

Bill.....K. C. \*

Jane.....D. E. \*

TV Voice.....L. C.

\* Sixth grade students in the experiental group.

PRODUCTION CREW FOR ONE-ACT PLAYS

Stage Manager.....	R. Z. *
Lighting.....	A. P.
Tickets.....	P. J.
Publicity.....	M. S.
Makeup.....	S. W. *
Music.....	K. W.
Programs.....	C. H.

Only the students taking an active part in the production were included in the experimental group. Crew members working only during production week were not included in the experimental group.

\* Sixth grade students in the experimental group.

## PLAY REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

October 31 - Tuesday - No Rehearsal (Halloween Party)  
November 1 - Wednesday - No Rehearsal (Study Lines)  
November 2 - Thursday - TV Set  
November 3 - Friday - Matter of Conscience  
  
November 6 - Monday - Common Clay  
November 7 - Tuesday - Common Clay  
November 8 - Wednesday - Matter of Conscience  
November 9 - Thursday - TV Set  
November 10- Friday - Matter of Conscience  
  
November 13- Monday - Common Clay  
November 14- Tuesday - Common Clay  
November 15- Wednesday - Matter of Conscience  
November 16- Thursday - TV Set  
November 17- Friday - Matter of Conscience  
  
November 20- Monday - Common Clay  
November 21- Tuesday - No Rehearsal  
November 22- THANKSGIVING VACATION  
November 23- THANKSGIVING VACATION  
November 24- THANKSGIVING VACATION

November 27 - Monday - Common Clay  
 November 28 - Tuesday - Common Clay  
 November 29 - Wednesday - Matter of Conscience  
 November 30 - Thursday - TV Set  
 December 1 - Friday - Matter of Conscience  
  
 December 4 - Monday - ALL THREE PLAYS - Cast and Crew  
 December 5 - Tuesday - ALL THREE PLAYS - Cast and Crew  
 December 6 - Wednesday - ALL THREE PLAYS - Dress Rehearsal  
 December 7 - Thursday - School Matinee 2:00 P.M.  
 December 8 - Friday - EVENING PERFORMANCE 7:30 P.M.  
 December 9 - Saturday - EVENING PERFORMANCE 7:30 P.M.

It is important that each cast member be at every rehearsal. It is up to each member of the cast to have their own costume ready by December 1. Two unexcused absences from rehearsal means being dropped from the play. There are others in the drama club ready and willing to take over parts in the one-act plays. The only excused absence will be sickness or absence from school. Let's do our best to make these plays the best drama club plays yet! Mark the rehearsal schedules on your calendar immediately, so no conflicts will appear for you.

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Note: This rehearsal schedule is a reproduction of the one given to the members of the cast and crew for the one-act plays.

# A Matter of Conscience<sup>1</sup>

by

Rollin W. Coyle

## Characters:

George Payne	George's Conscience
Judith Payne (George's sister)	Dora Mason (neighbor girl)
Mrs. Payne (George's mother)	

Time: The Present

Setting: The living room of the Payne home.

At the opening of the play, George is standing in front of the couch, facing the audience. His Conscience is directly behind him, facing the same direction. George lifts his right arm slowly; his Conscience does precisely the same thing at the same time. George drops his arm suddenly; so does his Conscience. George suddenly faces right; so does his Conscience. Then George whirls and ends by facing left and looking at his Conscience face-to-face.

GEORGE:           There! I fooled you that time.

CONSCIENCE:      You certainly were trying hard enough.

GEORGE:           I knew I could eventually outfox you.

CONSCIENCE:      Let us just say I finally decided to let you  
                          have your own way.

---

<sup>1</sup> Script from: PLAYS: The Drama Magazine for Young People, January, 1958 issue.

GEORGE: Who are you anyway?

CONSCIENCE: Don't you know, Georgie?

GEORGE: Well, I'm not sure. I have had a feeling for a long time that there were two of us. Am I one of those split personalities?

CONSCIENCE: Oh, no! I would call you entirely normal, Georgie.

GEORGE: I feel so different somehow, with my being here and your being there in front of me.

CONSCIENCE: Naturally! Now you had better let me get behind you again.

GEORGE: No you don't! Stay where you are. It wasn't so easy to get rid of you that I want to give it up so quickly. What do you do behind me anyway?

CONSCIENCE: I keep you out of trouble.

GEORGE: Like a conscience, maybe?

CONSCIENCE: Precisely!

GEORGE: Think of that! My conscience!

CONSCIENCE: Yes, Georgie!

GEORGE: You know that you have been keeping me from having a lot of fun lately. (goes to couch and sits down) I'm not so sure I want to have you a part of me.

CONSCIENCE: You would want me back again very shortly, Georgie. You see, I am a rather important part



of you. Without me, you would always be in trouble. So let's not delay it any longer.

Let's become one again.

GEORGE: Not so fast now! I think it would be nice not to have a conscience for awhile. Can't you take a little vacation?

CONSCIENCE: It's tempting, I must admit. You have kept me rather busy lately. How long did you have in mind?

GEORGE: Today at least. Next week I go to camp, with two months' allowance I've saved up to spend any way I please! Boy! Would I have fun at camp without you! But at least give me today.

CONSCIENCE: It is tempting, and it might teach you a lesson. I'm more important to you than you realize, Georgie.

GEORGE: You might stop calling me Georgie, too. It's not fair since you are really a part of me.

CONSCIENCE: Since it's a reasonable request, I shall try to call you George, although Georgie is a habit with me after almost ten years. So you want to be rid of me for today. Let's give it a whirl. After all, the results probably won't be fatal. I'll still be around if you want me, George.

GEORGE: I don't want to have to listen to you. You'll have to promise to be quiet.

CONSCIENCE: It will be difficult. I am so in the habit of popping off.

GEORGE: What a day this is going to be!

JUDITH: (offstage) George!

GEORGE: My sister! Now you go away. I want to try my new self on her.

CONSCIENCE: I suppose it has to start sometime, but do be careful.

JUDITH: (enters, carrying her diary) George, why didn't you answer me? Didn't you hear me?

GEORGE: I thought it was someone calling pigs.

JUDITH: Don't be insulting. I wanted to borrow your fountain pen.

GEORGE: (taking a small, old, pencil from shirt) Here, loveliest of sisters, try this pencil.

JUDITH: I can't write in my diary with a pencil, silly. I have been so busy the last two days that I have fallen behind. I need your pen.

GEORGE: (taking pen from pocket) How much rental are you prepared to pay?

JUDITH: Rental? I'll pay you nothing George Payne. The reason I have to borrow your pen is that you broke mine. (tries to take George's pen, which

he hides behind him). The reason I'm behind in my diary is because of you, too. Now let me have your pen.

GEORGE: On one condition! I get to read your diary.

JUDITH: Never! That's why it has a lock. Well, never mind. I'll see if I can use Mother's pen. I have never seen you so mean.

GEORGE: (looking at Conscience) It's my new personality. Like it?

JUDITH: It's positively revolting. (exits).

GEORGE: Give me time. I'll need time to perfect it.

DORA: (Offstage) Judith!

GEORGE: That's Dora Mason. Now I can practice on her.

CONSCIENCE: I wonder how long the Devil had to practice.

DORA: (enters) Georgie! Where is Judith?

GEORGE: She went to Africa this morning.

DORA: To Africa!

GEORGE: On a safari.

DORA: Why don't you try being sensible for a change? I came over to see if Judith likes my new hairdo.

GEORGE: It looks like a haystack.

DORA: George Payne, I think you're mean.

GEORGE: Judith may like it, though. She likes nature, bird's nests, and things like that.

DORA: Shame on you, George.

GEORGE: That's why she went to Africa.

DORA: It's just your age, I suppose. Boys your age are almost always mean.

GEORGE: All isn't lost yet. I'll have a birthday while I'm at camp next week. By then I'll be older and nicer.

DORA: At least your mother will tell me where Judith is. By the way Georgie, what is your favorite color?

GEORGE: Purple!

DORA: Purple! Do you like purple neckties?

GEORGE: I love purple neckties.

DORA: Ugh! I didn't know that anyone liked purple neckties. (exits)

GEORGE: Boy! Was that fun!

CONSCIENCE: You know you don't like purple.

GEORGE: I know it, but Dora doesn't know it. I told her one lie after another, and it was fun. It's great not having you interrupting my fun for me all the time. Why, I don't even have to worry about being a gentleman at all.

CONSCIENCE: I'm sure you didn't make Dora a better friend of yours.

- GEORGE: Who wants her for a friend? This is really living. I can say what I want to say, do what I want to do, and life will be full of laughs. Say, how would you like to go away permanently, old man? (lies down with feet on sofa)
- CONSCIENCE: The idea has its merits. Seeing you in action without me has made me realize what a burden I have been bearing all these years.
- MRS. PAYNE: (enters) George! What are you doing with your feet on that sofa?
- GEORGE: (sitting up) I'm relaxing Mom.
- MRS. PAYNE: I haven't seen you do that for months.
- GEORGE: I'm living a new life today.
- MRS. PAYNE: We'll need a new sofa if you are going to revert to your childhood. George, I'm making a cake, but I ran out of flour. Dora says her mother can lend me some. Will you go into the kitchen and watch the batter for me while I am gone? I had to leave it in the mixer.
- GEORGE: Let Judith do it.
- MRS. PAYNE: Judith is leaving right away to go shopping with Dora. If I am gone too long, you will have to turn the mixer off.
- GEORGE: Oh, all right.

MRS. PAYNE: And will you call the dairy, George, and ask them to deliver two quarts of ice cream this afternoon?

GEORGE: Ice cream!

MRS. PAYNE: Vanilla! Do it right away. (exits)

GEORGE: (going to telephone) Wow! Do I have an idea!  
(dials)

CONSCIENCE: It can't be good.

GEORGE: You'll see. Hello! Rosemont Dairy? This is Howard Payne residence on Lake Avenue. Can you deliver two quarts of cottage cheese this afternoon?

CONSCIENCE: She said ice cream.

GEORGE: Stop bothering me. Remember your promise.  
(into phone) Yes, that's right. Cottage cheese! I wonder if you could pack it in ice-cream cartons? You can! That would be fine. Thank You.

CONSCIENCE: I smell mischief brewing.

GEORGE: Can you imagine Mother's face when she serves cottage cheese for dessert? This is going to be a wonderful day.

CONSCIENCE: You'll be sorry!

GEORGE: How can I if you aren't around to bother me? By the way, I wonder how a cake would taste if you put a cup of salt into it?

CONSCIENCE: I suppose you will have to find out.

- GEORGE: Dad will love Mother's cake tonight. Now if I can just find the salt. (exits to kitchen)
- JUDITH: (offstage) That cake has been in the mixer almost long enough, George. (enters with Dora-- Judith carries her diary) I'll just be a moment Dora. I want to leave my diary. I'll hide it under this magazine where George can't find it.
- DORA: There always seem to be so many things to do when you are planning something like this. Do you think he really meant that about wanting a purple necktie?
- JUDITH: There's no accounting for taste. Maybe it's the latest fad.
- DORA: Well, it's his surprise party! I'd feel better if you'd come with me to help choose it though. A purple necktie! I wouldn't have believed it if he hadn't asked for it.
- JUDITH: You were careful not to give us away when you asked him weren't you?
- DORA: He didn't even get suspicious.
- JUDITH: Good! After all this work trying to plan a surprise party for him, it would be a shame for him to guess it at the last minute.
- MRS. PAYNE: (enters, carrying a cup of flour) Honestly, if I have everything ready by two o'clock when the

guests arrive, I'll be the one surprised. You won't be gone long, Judith? There's so much to do. I even had George order the ice cream, but I don't think he caught on.

JUDITH: We won't be gone long Mother; I left my diary on the table there. I hope it will be safe from George.

MRS. PAYNE: George wouldn't read it. Even George has a conscience.

DORA: I won't keep her long, Mrs. Payne. Shall we go, Judith? (Dora and Judith exit)

GEORGE: (enters) I turned the mixer off, Mother. Everything is well mixed.

MRS. PAYNE: I hope the cake is good, considering all the trouble I have had. (exits)

GEORGE: It certainly will be different. (turns to Conscience) You should have seen it foam when I put the soap powder in the cake.

CONSCIENCE: You put soap powder in the cake, too?

GEORGE: I was inspired.

CONSCIENCE: Your sister left her diary under the magazine here on this table. You aren't supposed to look at it.

GEORGE: (goes to table) So she did! Say! Thanks! You are putting ideas into my head. (picks up diary and a letter opener from table) I'll bet this letter



opener would pry off the lock. (tries to break the lock and succeeds) See! It was easy.

CONSCIENCE: You shouldn't read it.

GEORGE: So I will!

CONSCIENCE: I thought you would.

GEORGE: If you were a little more human like this all the time, I wouldn't mind having you around. (reads) "Dearest Diary, I don't know whether I am in love or not." Oh, boy, is this going to be mushy!

CONSCIENCE: Couldn't you find something a little more up to date?

GEORGE: Here's today's date, and filled in too. Judith must have found Mother's pen. Is this current enough for you?

CONSCIENCE: That should do nicely, thank you.

GEORGE: (reads) "I don't have much time to write today because we are so busy." Women are always busy to hear them tell it.

CONSCIENCE: Read on.

GEORGE: "The invitations have all been accepted. There will be Henry, Richard, Mary, Dora, Parker, Helen, Bill, and Ted." Invitations! Say! That's odd.

CONSCIENCE: Invitations!

GEORGE: "The games are planned. Refreshments are almost ready."

CONSCIENCE: Refreshments!

GEORGE: "Now all that remains is wrapping our presents for George."

CONSCIENCE: Now the dawn is beginning to break.

GEORGE: A surprise party! They are giving a surprise party for me!

CONSCIENCE: Such a beautiful surprise!

GEORGE: But why? It isn't my birthday?

CONSCIENCE: Could it be because when your birthday arrives next week, you will be at camp?

GEORGE: Henry, Richard, Mary, Dora---my friends. And I put salt in the cake!

CONSCIENCE: Not to mention a little soap.

GEORGE: Instead of ice cream, they will get cottage cheese.

CONSCIENCE: It sounds delicious.

GEORGE: What will my friends think of me?

CONSCIENCE: They will, no doubt, like your purple necktie.

GEORGE: Purple necktie? Oh, Dora knew I was only kidding.

CONSCIENCE: Twenty minutes ago you thought you had her fairly well convinced.

GEORGE: A purple necktie! Ugh! That settles it. Get behind me again before I do something else that is foolish.

CONSCIENCE: Your day of freedom isn't over yet.

GEORGE: I wish it were. Hurry!

CONSCIENCE: I'll probably make this afternoon more painful for you.

GEORGE: How could you?

CONSCIENCE: Ah! It's so nice to be appreciated.

GEORGE: They will all bring presents. And what will I do for them? Cottage Cheese! (He slaps his head with his right hand--Conscience follows; George snaps his fingers--Conscience follows) Maybe it's not too late. I'll phone the Dairy and change the order to ice cream! I suppose I'll have to explain to them what I did. Oh well, guess I asked for it. The cake! Oh, the soapy cake! Whatever made me do it? It wouldn't take me 10 minutes to go down to the bakery and get another cake. But what would I use for money? Upstairs! In my strongbox! The allowance I've been saving for camp? (Conscience gives George a small push) Guess it's the only way. (goes to phone) All right, let's go! What are we waiting for? (Conscience nods to audience, then falls behind George, as George picks up the phone.)

THE END

Common Clay

Cast of Characters

Judge	Steve
Jane	Clerk
Mason	Mother
Policeman	Detective

SCENE: The JUDGE is seated on Judge's bench upstage C. The CLERK is seated behind a table upstage R. MASON is seated back of table below CLERK'S desk. DETECTIVE is seated R. of R. table. JANE is in the witness chair L. of the JUDGE'S desk.

JUDGE: (To Jane) Is there anything more you wish to say?

JANE: Not a thing, not a thing.

MASON: (Rises) And you take your oath that you never met the man?

JANE: I never met the man, I never met the man.

MASON: That's a lie Judge. I can prove it.

JUDGE: Well, prove it.

MASON: I can prove it, for the man's right here.

JUDGE: The man's right where?

MASON: Here.

JUDGE: Where?

STEVE: (Rises) Here.

JUDGE: (Pointing to Steve) There?

STEVE: Yes, I'm the man.

MASON: He's the man.

JUDGE: (To Jane) Is he the man?

JANE: I never saw the man before, I never saw the man before. (Four knocks off stage L.)

JUDGE: (To Policeman) See who's at the door.

POLICEMAN: Yes, Judge, right away. (Exit)

JUDGE: (To Jane) You say you never saw the man until today---did you ever?

JANE: Never.

STEVE: That's a lie, Judge. That's a lie.

POLICEMAN: (Enters from L. on seven counts) Jane Clay's mother wants to come and testify.

JUDGE: Jane Clay's mother?

MASON: Jane Clay's mother?

JANE: (To Steve as he rises) You called me a liar?

STEVE: Yes!

JANE: You're another!

JUDGE: (Break with gavel) Order in the court!

STEVE: But, Judge, it isn't true.

JANE: But, Judge, it isn't true.

JUDGE: Order in the court!

STEVE: Well, what am I going to do? (Sits)

JANE: Well, what am I going to do? (Sits)

POLICEMAN: (To Judge) Do you want to have the mother in to testify?

JUDGE: (To Jane) Do you want to have your mother in to testify?

MASON: (Rises) I object, Judge. Any mother can be fooled.

JANE: (To Judge) Please let her in!

JUDGE: Objection Overruled. (Calls) Clerk!

CLERK: Yes, your honor. (Rises)

JUDGE: Make a note.

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: He objected on the ground that the mother could be fooled.

CLERK: (Making notes) I understand---objection overruled. (Sits)

JUDGE: Right. (To Policeman) Bring the mother. (To Jane after Policeman exits) You say you never saw the man?

JANE: Never!

STEVE: (Rises) You're another!

JUDGE: (Breaks with gavel) Order in the court!

STEVE: But it's nothing of the sort.

JUDGE: Order in the court.

MASON: (To Steve) Sit down, old sport. (Steve sits)

MOTHER: (Enters from L.) Oh, oh, oh, Jane! (Policeman follows her on and stands L.)

JUDGE: (To Jane) Kindly take a seat and let your mother take the stand.

MOTHER: (Takes witness chair, Jane going down R.)  
Oh, oh, oh, Jane!

CLERK: (To Mother, as he crosses) Swear to tell the truth. Put up your hand. (Mother raises hand)  
The truth and nothing but the truth. (Holds up telephone directory)

MOTHER: (Lays her left hand on the directory) And nothing but the truth.

CLERK: So help you K. and E?

MOTHER: So help me Jake and Lee. (Clerk returns to R. on this) Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!

JUDGE: (To Mother) Well, what have you got to say, what have you got to say? You said you came to testify now what have you got to say?

MOTHER: All I can say---her name's not Clay.

JANE: (Rises) What's that you say---my name's not Clay?

MOTHER: No, no,---she comes from royal blood. (Rises) Her name's not clay. It's mud. (Sits)

ALL: Mud!!

MOTHER: Mud!

ALL: Mud!

MOTHER: Mud!

JUDGE: (To Mother) Go on and tell it all. I want to hear it all. Your story interests me and I want to hear it all.

JANE: What am I going to do? I don't know where I'm at! How am I going to live with a name like that!

MOTHER: Oh, oh!

JUDGE: What have you got to tell?

MOTHER: Oh, oh, oh!

JUDGE: Well?

MOTHER: Oh, oh, oh!

JUDGE: Well?

MOTHER: Oh, oh.

ALL: Do tell!

JUDGE: (After break with gavel) Order in the court! I told you that before. (Four knocks off-stage) See who's at the door.

POLICEMAN: Yes, right away. (Exit L.)

JUDGE: Now go on and tell the balance of your story, Mrs. Clay.

MOTHER: My name's not Clay.

JANE: My name's not Clay.



MASON: (Rises) Her name's not Clay---didn't you just hear her say her name's not Clay?

JUDGE: (To Mason) Down! (Mason sits) I've had enough of you today. (Calls) Clerk!

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: Make a note.

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: If this man monkeys any further with the law---

CLERK: Well?

JUDGE: Punch him in the jaw. (Clerk sits) (To Mother, as Policeman enters) Well, go on and tell it all.

POLICEMAN: Excuse me, Judge, the detective's in the hall.

JUDGE: Detective?

POLICEMAN: Yes, the one who arrested Jane.

JANE: That man---is he after me again?

JUDGE: Show him in.

POLICEMAN: Right away. (Exit L.)

JUDGE: Now go on with the balance of your story, Mrs. Clay.

MOTHER: My name's not Clay.

JANE: My name's not Clay.

STEVE: (Rises) Didn't you just hear her say---that her name's not Clay?

JUDGE: Clerk!

CLERK: Yes, your honor. (Rises)

JUDGE: Make a note.

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: (Points to Steve) See that little guy? Bring him to me by and by.

CLERK: Why?

JUDGE: I want to smash him in the eye. (Steve and Clerk sit)

DETECTIVE: (Enters from L. with Policeman) How do you, Judge, How do you do?

JUDGE: How do you do, --- how are you?

DETECTIVE: I'd like to hear the trial, Judge, if you wouldn't care.

JUDGE: Sit down.

POLICEMAN: Have a chair. (Shoves chair down to Detective, who sits)

JUDGE: Now go on and tell the balance of the story, Mrs. Clay. (Up with Steve and Mason) Her name's not Clay---I beat you to it, eh? (The three sit)

JANE: To think, to think, my name's not Clay!

DETECTIVE: (Rises) What's that you say---your name's not Clay?

JUDGE: (To Detective) Down! Not another word to say.

DETECTIVE: Didn't you hear her say that her name's not  
Clay?

JUDGE: Clerk!

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: (Points to Detective) When this man comes around  
never let him in---if you do---

CLERK: Well?

JUDGE: I'll kick him in the shin. (Clerk and Detective  
sit) (To Policeman) Joe, hold the door. (To  
Mother, as Policeman goes to L. Door) Now go  
on and no one here will interrupt you any more.

MOTHER: There isn't much to tell---her father was a swell.

JUDGE: Well, well, go on and tell it-----well?

MOTHER: The drink was in his blood---he was full of Bud.  
Oh, oh, to think my name is Mud! In Albany---  
we lived, you see---so happily---that's until he  
was doing well---became a swell---and then he  
fell---and then he fell.

JUDGE: Well, who'd he fall for---who'd he fall for?

MOTHER: I'll never tell---I'll never tell.

JANE: Tell it, tell it, get it out---tell it, let it  
out.

MOTHER: Yes, yes, I'll tell---I'll tell you.

MASON: (Rises) Excuse me, Judge, can I have a word or  
two?

JUDGE: Down! I've heard enough of you. (Mason sits)

STEVE: (Rises) Pardon, Judge, but the story isn't true.

JUDGE: Down!

STEVE: What am I going to do? (Sits)

DETECTIVE: (Rises) If you don't mind, Judge, I should like to say---

JUDGE: Down!

DETECTIVE: Well, her name is Clay. (Sits)

JUDGE: Clerk!

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: Make a note.

CLERK: Yes, your honor.

JUDGE: If those men once more interrupt the scene---

CLERK: Well?

JUDGE: Soak 'em on the bean. (Hands gavel to Clerk, who takes it and sits) (To Mother) Now, dear, let's hear -- every little thing---every little thing.

MOTHER: I will---I'll spill---every little thing. Her dad---he had---a name---of fame.

JUDGE: What was her father's name?

MOTHER: Oliver Mud.

JANE: (Rises) Oliver Mud!

ALL: (Rise) Oliver Mud!!

JUDGE: (Rises) All-over Mud!

MOTHER: Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. (To Jane) Is there a scar on your left-hand ear? (Steve, Mason, Detective, and Policeman drop down with Mother and Judge)

JANE: Yes, on my left-hand ear---you can see it right there.

JUDGE: My dear!

JANE: What?

JUDGE: I'm here.

JANE: Who?

JUDGE: Your dad.

JANE: You're mad!

MOTHER: No, no, it's so---I can tell by the sty on his left-hand eye. Oliver!

JUDGE: Maud! (Embrace) My love.

MOTHER: (Embrace) My love.

JANE: Oh, no!

JUDGE: (To Mother) What became of our little boy Tom?

MOTHER: Tommy ran away a year ago today.

JUDGE: I'll find him sure as sin---I can tell him by the scar on his left-hand chin.

STEVE: (Comes down R.) Excuse me, please, if I butt in, but I've got a scar on my left-hand chin.

JANE: (To Steve) Where?

STEVE: There.

JANE: Is it true? Is it you?  
STEVE: Sister!  
JANE: Brother!  
MOTHER: Father!  
JUDGE: Mother!  
MOTHER: Son!  
STEVE: Ma!  
JUDGE: (Over to Jane) Daughter!  
JANE: Pa! (Judge and Jane embrace)  
ALL: There you are---there you are.

#### CURTAIN

Production Notes: The author of this play is unknown. The idea of the play has been presented in other scripts relating to this takeoff on courtroom procedures. When the lines are spoken at a rapid pace, and kept in even rhythm throughout the play, it will add to the melodramatic form of the play. A simple courtroom setting may be used. A jury may be added to the play if the director wishes to give more students an opportunity to be in the cast.

# The TV Set

by

Larry Bowen

Characters: Bill

Jane

TV Set (Voice)

The play takes place in the living room or the recreation room of the Smith Home. The only necessary furniture are the TV Set, a few TV cushions, and possibly a daveno. Chairs, lamps and other furniture may be added for environment. The TV Set should be hooked up in some manner so the Voice sounds like it is coming directly from the TV Set. This can be done by using a microphone and an amplifier.

Bill:           (enters) Golly, I wonder what's on TV now. Here it is Saturday morning and nothing to do! (goes to TV set) Maybe the Cartoon Carnival Show is on. Let's see. (turns dial on set).

TV:            Hey, quit that!

Bill:           Who said that!

TV:            I did!

Bill:           Who's I?

TV: Me, stupid!

Bill: That sounds like it came from the TV Set.

TV: That is where it came from boy. From little old me.

Bill: But TV sets can't talk.

TV: And why not?

Bill: Because.

TV: Because why?

Bill: Well, golly. I don't know, but only people can talk.

TV: Where did you ever get a stupid idea like that?

Bill: From...well...golly...I just thought that...

TV: Thought? Thought what? Oh, forget it. I can talk just like you can. You watch television, don't you?

Bill: Why sure. I was about to watch Cartoon Carnival when...

TV: When I interrupted your whole day. Right?

Bill: Oh, no, not really.

TV: Come off it kid. I know how you spend your time.

Bill: What do you mean?

TV: Haven't you got anything better to do than watch TV? What fun is there in watching some



stupid old animals run after each other all over creation?

Bill: I don't follow you.

TV: You wouldn't. All right. Tell me, what is your favorite cartoon?

Bill: Bugs Bunny, I guess.

TV: And what usually happens to your friend, Bugs?

Bill: Well, Elmer Fudd is always trying to catch him, and...

TV: There you are--They chase each other all over the TV screen and what have you learned?

Bill: Well...

TV: Let me tell you. You learned that Bugs Bunny always outwits Elmer Fudd, everytime! Right?

Bill: Golly, that's right. I'd never even thought of that. It is the same plot over and over, almost every time.

TV: Speaking of talking--what about your friend, Mr. Bugs Bunny. Does he talk?

Bill: Of course.

TV: Well then, if Bugs Bunny, a rabbit, can talk, why were you so surprised when your TV Set began to talk to you?

Bill: But Bugs isn't real though.

TV: If he's not real, why do you waste your time watching him then?

Bill: Because I like to.

TV: I give up. Say, don't you have any homework to do, or hobbies to work on?

Bill: Oh sure. I've got lots of homework. We're making a notebook for social studies class, but that can wait until Sunday night.

TV: Why not do it now?

Bill: Because (Jane enters) it's Saturday morning and I always watch TV on Saturday morning.

Jane: What did you say Bill?

Bill: I was just telling the TV Set why I'm not doing my homework.

Jane: What?

Bill: I said I was just telling the TV Set why I wasn't doing my homework.

Jane: Oh, Bill, how silly you can be at times. Turn on the TV.

Bill: Honestly, Jane! The TV Set can talk! Say something to Jane, Mr. TV. (Pause) Come on, please tell my sister what you were saying about some of those silly cartoons on TV.

Jane: Bill, you've been watching too much TV. It's gone to your head.

Bill: But he was talking to me. Just before you came in. Oh, forget it. You wouldn't believe it anyway.

Jane: It's way past time for Cartoon Carnival. We've probably missed the best ones. If you won't turn on the set, I will. (reaches for TV knob).

TV: Don't touch that dial, girl!

Jane: Who said that?

Bill: He did it. He spoke again.

Jane: Who spoke again?

Bill: The TV Set - stupid!

Jane: Oh, you're crazier than a hoot owl!

TV: Who's crazier than a hoot owl?

Jane: (looks at set) You really can talk, can't you?

TV: Why not. You can talk, so why can't I?

Jane: Yes, but I'm a girl.

TV: And what do you think I am - just a box with no voice of my own?

Jane: Golly Bill. You were right. The TV Set can talk.

TV: And why aren't you doing your homework little girl?

Jane: My name is Jane.

TV: All right, Jane. Why aren't you doing your homework?

Jane: I always do my homework on Sunday night.

TV: Not another one.

Jane: Another what?

TV: Another procrastinator.

Jane: A what?

Bill: A what?

TV: A procrastinator. In other words - someone who keeps putting things off until a later time.

Jane: What's so terribly wrong with being a pro...  
c...procr..

TV: Pro - cras - tin - a - tor Procrastinator.

Jane: A procrastinator.

TV: How would you like it if I were a procrastinator?

Jane: It would be all right with me.

TV: Would it? You win then. Go ahead. Turn on the TV. I guess I've lost that argument.

Bill: Well, Jane, what are you waiting for. Turn the set on.

Jane: No, you do it Bill. You are stronger.

Bill: Oh, all right. (Both watch the set for a few seconds as it warms up).

TV: Well, what's wrong?

Jane: There's no program.

Bill: Maybe the local station is having cable trouble again. Let's try another channel. It has the same program. (turns knob)

Jane: Still nothing happens. No picture--not even any sound.

Bill: Maybe we need some new tubes, or maybe something is wrong with the set.

TV: Wrong again. It's not the station, it's not the tubes or the set. It's me!

Jane: What do you mean, it's you?

TV: Exactly what I said. You were just telling me it wouldn't bother you in the least if I were a procrastinator. Well, I've decided that I'd like to wait until Sunday Night before showing the Cartoon Carnival Program.

Bill: But you can't do that.

Jane: No, it's not fair. Think of all the kids who want to watch that program now. Besides, we have to go to bed early Sunday Night. It's a school night.

TV: But you told me you were going to do your homework Sunday Night. If you can put off your homework until then, why can't I put

off showing Cartoon Carnival until Sunday night?

Bill: But homework is different.

TV: And just why is it different?

Jane: Well, just because- that's why!

TV: Give me one good reason why it is different.

Bill: I can't think of any right off hand.

Jane: I can't either.

TV: Do you still think it's all right to be a procrastinator?

Bill: Golly, no. If we all put off things until we felt like doing them, this world would really be in a mess, wouldn't it?

Jane: Just think. What if all the newspaper men decided to put off printing the morning paper until Sunday night?

Bill: Or what if Mom waited until Sunday night before she cooked our next meal. Golly, I'd die of starvation.

Jane: What if Dad refused to go to work on Saturday and reported Sunday night?

TV: You kids are right. This world of ours would really be one big mess if everyone were a procrastinator.

Bill: Come on Jane. Let's get at that homework right

now.

Jane: Good idea Bill. And then after my homework is finished, I've got a whole bunch of letters to answer.

Bill: Hey! I just remembered. I've still got that model boat to finish. Golly, this is going to be fun!

Jane: Thanks loads, Mr. TV.

TV: It was my pleasure Jane.

Jane: We'll not be seeing as much of you though from now on.

Bill: We've got so many things to do. We sure hope you won't be mad at us if we don't spend a lot of time with you.

TV: Bill and Jane-nothing would please me more. I only hope that other boys and girls will follow your example. You know, you are only young once!

Jane: You've sure given us a lot to think about Mr. TV.

Bill: You can say that again Jane.

TV: Remember kids. Today only comes once, so be sure to use every minute of it wisely. For you will never be able to go back and live it over again.

Jane: Don't worry Mr. TV. We've learned our lesson.

Bill: Adious - Amigos!

TV: Fare thee well, my friends. Fare thee well!

CURTAIN