Queering High School: An Ethnodramatic Inqueery on Youth Experiences of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Harassment and Bullying

by

Patrick Tomczyk

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Secondary Education

University of Alberta

Abstract

"Queering High School," was a queer ethnodrama on the lived experience of LGBTQ youth in Alberta high schools that explored their experiences of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This ethnodrama, conducted through a queer lens, which I refer to as an ethnodramatic inqueery, was grounded in arts-based research, queer theory as an augmentation of critical pedagogy, and ethnography and theatre. The aim was to produce an authentic performance of lived experiences to a live audience. This is a medium wherein participants become co-researchers, and the data from ethnographic interviews is transformed into a script, which is then performed to an audience. The intention of this type of social justice research is that participants become empowered to share their struggles, and thereby raise a queer conscientization to the larger LGBTQ and school communities.

My primary research question was *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta High Schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic harassment and bullying?* And the secondary question was: *How can queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

The data that was uncovered through this study demonstrated that heteronormativity and cisnormativity perpetuate systems of oppression, as they are woven into school culture and the hidden curriculum. Heteronormativity and cisnormativity operate through manifestations of homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying and harassment, which have detrimental effects for LGBTQ youth.

This study advocates that ethnodramatic inqueery can be utilized as an empowering pedagogy that gives agency to sexual and gender minority youth and that it can be employed to raise queer issues for the wider queer community that may not have been recognized through other forms of traditional research.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Patrick Tomczyk. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Pro0007830, approved on September 20, 2018 and renewed September 3, 2019.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my gratitude to all the participants, who contributed to this research. Without your voices, this would not have been possible.

I would like to thank my doctoral committee, for your ongoing support throughout this journey. Thank you to all three of you for your commitment to this work and helping me refine the writing. Specifically, I thank my supervisor, Dr. Diane Conrad, for the inspiration and guidance in pursuing arts-based research and the tenacity and encouragement when it was needed. Dr. André Grace, for sharing your wisdom and queer knowledge by offering support in the theoretical and historical components of this research. Finally, Professor Jan Selman, for sharing your rich in-depth experience in popular theatre, it helped move this work one step further.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Stephen Snow for introducing me to ethnodrama during my graduate work in Montreal. Your passion back then certainly had an impact many years later. Johnny Saldaña, for the encouragement when we met at the NADTA conference and helping me navigate the field early on in the work. My friend Hayley Fisher, drama therapist extraordinaire, for the coin toss conversation which helped me decide on a topic.

I thank the amazing people that saw the value and the potential of this research at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies, PFLAG Calgary Chapter, Skipping Stone, and the Centre for Sexuality in Calgary.

I am also grateful that my research was supported in part through a Doctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

I am most grateful and more to my partner, Jason, for your constant encouragement and support throughout this process. Without you, this would not have been possible.

Thank you to my family and friends for the love and support over the last few years.

Lastly, I would be amiss, if I did not acknowledge Jordyn, for the countless hours of support at my side.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1 Queering a Topic

As a queer scholar and activist, I often use the word queer as a re-appropriated and a reclaimed identifier from its disgraceful history and pejorative uses, to ways I think and act within the world – queer shapes, challenges and lives within and outside of epistemology and ontology. By using queer to situate my work in a non-heteronormative, and a non-cisnormative perspective, I can challenge our current ways of thinking, being and knowing. Foremost, I use this term as an inclusive term (a noun or an adjective) for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two spirited, and all other non-conforming gender and sexual identities and expressions. I also use queer as a verb to define what I am doing, to queer / query. I wish to be specific here that queering and querying are not limited to asking questions. As Sullivan (2003) stated, "to queer [is] to make strange, to frustrate, to counteract, to delegitimize, to camp up – heteronormative [and cisnormative] knowledges, and institutions, and the subjectivities and socialites that are (in)formed by them and that (in)form them" (p. vi). Queering moves away from the binary, and into a space of possibility, an adjacent space that permits us to challenge normative categories, by "decenter[ing], destabili[zing] and deconstruct[ing]" normative practices (Pinar, 1998, p. 44). It was not until I began my doctoral studies that I was introduced to queer theory. I had used the word as described above, but I had never been exposed to queer theory until reading Pinar's (1998) work. When I brought this informally to the attention of my supervisor Dr. Diane Conrad, she lent me a book titled "That's So Gay" (Callaghan, 2007), which inspired my theoretical queering.

Thinking queerly opens up ideas to imagine other possibilities. Rincón-Gallardo (2019) wrote that "ideas are powerful forces. They shape not only how we think about the world but, perhaps most importantly, how we act on it … Our ways of thinking about the world delimit

what we believe is possible and desirable" (p. 1). As a queer educator, I have a role to play in disrupting and destabilizing the ongoing heteronormative and cisnormative discourses in schools, as they perpetuate a hegemonic power and authority that is designed to oppress. The future of educational change is to hone in on "deep learning," which is defined "as the process and result of making sense of questions that matter to us" (Rincón-Gallardo, 2019, p. 7). It was these questions that I posed and sought to answer in this study; questions and answers that give learning an intrinsic value, by becoming a liberating act, and an intentional practice with larger societal implications, and specifically one that benefits queer youth in schools.

Prior to arriving at an introduction to my proposed study and my research questions, this chapter first provides an overview of my teaching philosophy, my historical narrative as it is applicable to my proposed ethnodramatic inqueery, and a statement of the significance of my research.

Queers Must Query

In his recent book *Liberating Learning: Educational Change as Social Movement,* Rincón-Gallardo (2019), proposed that "reinventing schools and school systems requires that we reimagine educational change" (p. 3). He continued by defining educational change as "the body of knowledge and ideas that has developed as an attempt to better understand [and take action to] improve efforts to reform schools and school systems" and that "the future of educational change requires that we look directly at two blindspots: learning and power" (p. 3). When these two forces are brought into the spotlight, we are forced to rethink (query) how we identify and seek educational change. The change my study sought to address was in relation to the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying and harassment youth experience in their day-to-day lives at school.

I believe we can address these two blindspots by strengthening critical pedagogy with queer theory. I will explain further, in Chapter 2, how marrying these two ideologies, allows us to look at educational change in new ways. Queering my practice as a queer educator working in a large metropolitan centre is of importance to me, because it engenders re-adjusting my lens by challenging the patriarchal institutions and politics at play that impact attitudes, beliefs, and practices. By questioning, disrupting, and interrogating the status quo, my purpose is to create pedagogical spaces that are safer and more inclusive. I situate my pedagogical philosophy within Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) and Britzman's Queer Pedagogy (1995).

When I examine my own multiplicity, intersectionality and lived experience, I believe that the function of education is to build a community practice working towards freedom and emancipation, which can be achieved by means of "praxis," by reflecting and acting upon our world in order to transform it (Freire, 1970). The transformation I am suggesting in this case is a change in paradigm by recognizing how heteronormativity and cisnormativity act as agents of oppression, which lead to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in our schools. Emancipation (also referred to as liberation), I believe, occurs through the development of critical literacy, being able to read the world critically, and thus becoming conscious of the different forces at play that effect our lives. Freire (1970) referred to this process as a raising of critical consciousness, conscientization, or *conscientização* (in Portuguese).

Our educational system is a major social and political instrument that can submerge open dialogue and reinforce a "culture of silence" (Freire, 1970). A culture of silence can result in the continued oppression of sexual and gender minorities and further propagate the heteronormativity and cisnormativity upheld by those with privilege and power. I have witnessed this silence in schools, as teachers and students turn a blind eye to homonegative remarks such as

"fag" or "that's gay." Or, as I have also seen, heterosexual teachers free to speak of their husbands or wives with their students, whereas LGBTQ[1] teachers prefer not to speak about their partners out of discomfort in disclosing their sexualities. This silence can also have a consequential negative impact on youth expressing their sexuality and gender in non-normative ways, if they are forced to live on the margins, or even worse, if they need to silence their sexuality or gender expression for fear of what may result if they came out.

Giroux (1988) posited that educators should become "transformative intellectuals." I heed this call, and as a queer educator and drama practitioner, I situate my practice in a queer space that weaves creativity and pedagogy into an impetus that seeks opportunities for more inclusions in schools. Through the theatre, and in particular, by teaching high school drama in the recent past, my goal was to empower students to find their own voice so that they could become agents of change and advocate for a more caring and equitable world. My classroom became a site for social change that accepted, celebrated, and accommodated sexual and gender minority students.

Freire (1970) believed that our world is continually changing and as a result, it poses a dynamic challenge that constantly requires caring for and responding to. Using critical pedagogy and queer theory, I begin to discover, and expose the incoherencies that exist within our normalizing discourse of heteronormativity and cisnormativity. I consider that education is an evolving lifelong process and never a finite event; it is always a work in process. By promoting critically literate classrooms my past students and I have raised to consciousness our own "fear

[1] I use the acronym LGBTQ, throughout this thesis, as it is the most commonly used acronym in current research. This by no means is meant to exclude other forms of self-identification. For a glossary of terms related to gender, identity and sexuality, see the Alberta GSA Network key terms and definitions site http://albertagsanetwork.ca/index.php/key-terms/.

of freedom" as we queered our own intersectionality by identifying the oppressive forces in our lives and conversely, by examining the power and privilege we hold (Freire, 1970).

Freire (1990) believed that "freedom" is the right of every human being to become more human and that this "is the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion" (p. 31). This freedom, he explains, is found within ourselves, claimed by and for ourselves. Conversely, the "fear of freedom," is a condition that "afflicts the oppressed, a fear which may equally … lead … to desire the role of oppressor or bind them to the role of oppressed" (p. 31). The oppressed "suffer from [a] duality … [in that they] discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically … although they desire authentic existence, they fear it" (p. 32). For teenagers, who I worked with, their process of developing their independence, identity and individuation from their parents or other significant adults providing primary care often paralleled a fear of freedom as they negotiated their senses of self fraught with duality. I used theatre methods such as Boal's (1979) Theatre of the Oppressed, whereby my students identified how privilege and power could impede them in their desire for independence, and how they also perpetuated normalizing and oppressive attitudes and beliefs. Freire (1970, 2005) further expressed that our "ontological vocation" is to act upon and change our world and he called upon teachers to become "cultural workers for social change." Despite this call to action, Grace and Wells (2015) indicated that "few teachers and other educational players have taken up this task on behalf of [LGBTQ students]" (p. 179). I respond to this call, in that my teaching and theatre practices are situated in a search for social justice, fairness and equity with particular focus on sexual and gender minority students.

Critical pedagogy and queer theory share an emphasis on challenging the hegemony of the dominant culture and within the context of my research a heteronormative and cisnormative

culture. They converge in a place that disrupts the status quo, with the aim of questioning, disrupting, and interrogating. Liberating/emancipatory practices are fundamentally countercultural – they address the hierarchical relationships of control and authority inculcated in systems and structures in culture and society – which has implications for the educational, social and political arenas. As Rincón-Gallardo (2019) posited, "cultural change in classrooms and schools occurs when new pedagogical practices developed by a critical community are adopted by movements that disseminate them in three areas: the pedagogical, the social, and the political" (p. 16). Edelman (1994) indicated that queer is "a zone of possibilities" (p. 114); for me, it is within this space where I enacted my work of questioning, disrupting, and interrogating. Giroux (2011) and Kincheloe (2011) wrote that critical pedagogy is about issues of social justice, and thus, works towards critical manifestations. It is within Edelman's (1994) "zone of possibilities," that I took up my work of queering humanization in these challenging times, by addressing the intersectionality of injustice and oppression within our world. Through dialogue, "a fundamental component of critical pedagogy," we can envision possibilities; "dialogue is the process through which participants are able to name and rename their world" (Hackford-Peer, 2019, p. 87). It is through this dialogue around how our world functions that we can posit new ways of thinking and being, where we can hope and aim for change and cultural transformation for the better, which is at the heart of critical pedagogy (Giroux 2011; Kincheloe, 2011). This emancipatory effect has the capacity to disrupt a system. However, such emancipation is not an instantaneous effect, nor does it solve all problems, but rather, it is a process that creates potential for us to envision a better world, as it "attempts to disrupt the usual power dynamics … so that previously marginalized or silenced voices can be centered, empowered, and heard" (Hackford-Peer, 2019, p. 88). Finally, the result of this dialogue is that it creates agency and calls to action.

When I was teaching high school drama, my classroom became a confluence of a multiplicity of subjectivities and identities, as well as their intersectionalities, that converged in the drama crucible to create a social democracy. Within the context of drama pedagogy, my students could envision freedom and emancipation and learn about themselves, each other, and their world, as learning evolved through imaginary role-play involving improvisation, character work, acting and devising theatre.

My Personal Narrative in Relation to my Research

Guiding Themes

Social justice and equal human rights, despite race, religion, and sexuality are values that I have held deeply since I was a child. The articulation of my own narrative is equally as important as my pedagogical philosophy to this inqueery in order to set the context of where my beliefs and values originate. As I worked with youth, inquiring into their lived experiences, I felt it important to acknowledge my own journey and lived experiences that have shaped me, and the lens through which I see the world today. To understand the complexity of real life, where multiple categories intersect and interact to form identity and social positioning, I must acknowledge my multiple subjectivities: a refugee as a child, a cisgender gay male, a student that experienced Catholic schooling, a child brought up in a deeply conservative Catholic and at times homophobic home, a drama teacher, a therapist, an arts-based researcher and now a school administrator. Mediating and understanding my own subjectivities permits me to work in a space of intersectionality, and to explore how this space is realized through and within the realm of pedagogy. I will endeavor to articulate some of the more important subjectivities that run through my narrative by invoking themes of seeking refuge and what it means to be a refugee –

seeking a sense of belonging and acceptance; and its converse: otherness and homophobia; and finding a safe space through imagination, play and drama.

My grandparents would often remind me, when I was an adult, of how privileged I was to have grown up in Canada. It took time for me to queer this privilege, to understand what they meant by it. I never perceived myself as privileged; at first, I always argued that everything I had in life was because of my parents' sacrifice and my own hard work. It is through queering this moral attitude of meritocracy that I have begun to reject this assumption of entitlement and realize what privilege really engenders. In queering my privilege, I reflect all the way back to my early childhood and onward.

Early Years: Seeking Refuge

I was born in Poland in the 1980s. I recall the stories I heard from my parents and grandparents, telling how the country at the time of my birth was under the cloud of communism, ruled by an authoritarian military government, and how a month before my birth a state of martial law had been declared. My parents and grandparents would tell me stories of how civil liberties were suspended and how the soldiers patrolled the streets in their armed vehicles. General Jaruzelski, the leader of the government, declared *stan wojenny*, Polish for a state of war, on December 13, 1981. He stated that the country was at the edge of an abyss and he had to prevent a Soviet military intervention. In hindsight, I realize that I was born into a country paralyzed by fear. The desire for civil liberties and the appetite for freedom to live without fear were deeply instilled within me at an early age.

Due to the political climate, my parents decided (probably out of fear) that we could no longer stay in Poland. In August of 1985, my parents applied for a special permit to leave the country for a holiday and after bribing police officials, our passports were released and we were

given permission to travel for a short vacation to Italy; little did I know, we would not be returning from our vacation. In my father's tan colored Polish Fiat, we set out on a meandering weeklong journey along a landscape that was mired in fear through (the former) Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and (the former) Yugoslavia. My mother recalls how she had her jewelry and other small valuables taken away by the border guards in order for us to be granted passage. We made it to Italy a week later and this is where I learned a new word, *rifugiato*; I had become a refugee. Looking back at my childhood this was the first time I came into contact with the notion of refuge, or in a more modern context, a safe space. Our new home for the next thirteen months would be "Rossi Longhi" refugee camp in Latina, Italy. Figure 1 shows my father in front of the camp main gates with the administration building directly behind him.

Figure 1

My Father at Rossi Longhi Refugee camp

Photo Credit: Sophie Klimek, 1986

The refugees in the camp were fleeing communist totalitarianism from eastern bloc countries. It was here that people were meant to find refuge from oppressive regimes, while they were being processed to gain asylum and visas to new countries, mostly the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, and Australia. Our little family of three was housed in a small one-room apartment. In the corner of the room there was a small sink with only cold water. There were no basic luxuries in this room: there was no fridge, no oven, and no bathroom. Fortunately, there was a window. We had two beds, one along either wall, and a small table at which to eat in between. Figure 2, offers a glimpse of the room during my fourth birthday celebration. My mother recalls telling me to be careful of the rats in the shared public bathrooms down the hall. There was an unofficial level of freedom from the authorities, where the refugees were allowed to leave the camp at any time to find work, to go to their place of work, and even to travel as long as they remained in Italy. While our living situation left a lot to be desired, my parents recall how there was a sense of hope felt by the people living in the camp, a hope for a future, and a hope for something better in being granted asylum or a visa for countries that were taking in refugees at the time.

Figure 2

My Fourth Birthday at Rossi Longhi

Photo Credit: Sophie Klimek, 1986

First Encounter with School and Drama

Regardless of age, children at Rossi Longhi attended school during the day and at the age of four I was one of those children. School forced the children from various cultures and backgrounds to come together in the face of adversity. Without speaking a common language, and in the face of otherness, we came together in the classroom – the younger children came together in imaginary dramatic play. As children, we dramatized unbelievable adventures as we uncovered our newfound freedom through imagination and drama. My first formal introduction to drama was when the school children put on a Christmas play for their parents. I remember feeling there was something special about being able to use theatre to express myself and to tell a story; little did I know the seeds of drama and theatre were being planted at the moment. In

retrospect, it is ironic that my first performance was a typical Catholic Nativity Scene play, especially with what was to come with respect to my Catholic education. Figure 3 is a photograph of me and some of the other children as we are getting ready for the performance.

Figure 3

Christmas Play at Rossi Longhi

Photo Credit: Sophie Klimek, 1986

The Importance of Education

In the cold winter of 1986 we arrived in Winnipeg. Canada had accepted our refugee claim, and we would become landed immigrants. There was that term again – refugee. I could not understand how the awful cold could be a refuge, or why we had been uprooted after being in the Mediterranean for slightly over a year. My mother tells me to this day how she was in shock

when we arrived in the middle of winter in Winnipeg after having spent 13 months in Italy. Nevertheless, there were some advantages to moving to Winnipeg. This time our home was a government subsidized two-bedroom apartment. We had a kitchen and a bathroom with running water and sanitation, and I even had my own room, my own refuge and safe space.

My parents were sent to English courses in the evenings and through a government agency, they were assigned employment during the day. Regretfully, my parents' postsecondary education from Poland was not recognized at all in Canada. My father had a master's degree in pedagogy of kinesiology, however, he was assigned as a carpenter's apprentice, and my mother, who had studied tourism and travel in post-secondary, became a maid at the Sheraton Hotel. Both jobs were physically demanding and I remember my father saying to me on many occasions as I grew up that, "you have to do well in school, so that you won't have to work hard like us." As I reflect on this statement, I realize the impact it had. In the place I am today, it signified that developing a critical literacy would have enabled me to read the world, and this would have empowered and given me agency to shape the opportunities that were presented to me. It also signified that education affords certain privileges such as less physically demanding career opportunities and better paying wages. So, it was at this young age of four, that the necessity for education was imparted to me. I learned that it would be education that could offer me a refuge and agency at the same time.

My first encounter with the Canadian education system was at the Learning Tree Daycare. I was the only non-English-speaking child and a sense of otherness crept in. I had no means to communicate with the other children and they did not engage in make believe play as the children had at Rossi Longhi. I wonder about this often; perhaps I felt less different at Rossi Longhi, because we all came from different backgrounds, and in many ways a refugee camp is a

melting pot of people with diverse backgrounds. Even though we were all different minorities of refugees, as a collective whole, we made the majority, whereas, at the Learning Tree, I was now the minority without exception, and this was mostly because I did not speak a word of English.

There were more toys at the Learning Tree than I could ever have imagined. It was a place where I was free to go anywhere my imagination could take me; it became my refuge for play and learning alike. At first, while I had no friends, I played alone with Barbies and G.I. Joes. I remember being teased by the other children for playing with Barbies, as if I were breaking some social norm, but, at the time, I did not understand the purported deviance of my actions. In hindsight, I now understand the "gender stereotyping of toys" and that I was violating a social code that boys did not play with Barbies (Campenni, 1999). Fortunately, the staff was very kind, and I was forgiven and most likely taken pity upon for breaking this social norm, as I was the landed immigrant who did not know any better.

Education Perpetuates Privilege

Language acquisition came quickly at that very early age and I was speaking in English before I knew it. For my parents, who were working all day and taking turns attending an English course in the evenings, it was much more difficult to communicate. As such, my parents would use me as their translator, as their voice. I was a little embarrassed, as I felt othered by them. I was never given a choice in the matter and I soon realized that they were at a considerable disadvantage. I remember being especially embarrassed when my father, in his very thick accent, would say, "no und-eh-stend." It is now that I understand how education, and in turn privilege, can afford certain people benefits and advantages, and how the lack thereof can create inequality and oppression for others.

My experiences in kindergarten at Holy Spirit Catholic School (pseudonym) were quite different from my earlier school experiences in Italy; in hindsight, I see that the culture in that classroom was quite inimical. Sister Mary Clarence (pseudonym) was my kindergarten teacher. She othered me like no one else had up to that point in my life. She was relentless and could not sympathize with the fact that I was still learning the English language. On a daily basis, I would have to complete matching cards that had images on them. The task was to pair them based on rhyming words. I remember my inability to match two of the rhyming cards: the card with the image of a glass filled with yellow liquid (which I thought was juice or drink) and the one with men in military uniforms and drums (which I thought was army, drums, band, or music). Later, I learned that the rhyming words for those two cards were lemonade and parade. Sadly, for an English language learner this did not come with ease, maybe because I had never experienced the drink of lemonade or had seen a parade; either way, I now understand how less privileged I was than the other children. As a consequence, for not being able to identify the items in the images, and not knowing that lemonade and parade rhymed with one another, I could not join the other students during free playtime. Instead, I had to pray at a small pew, with a picture of the Virgin Mary hanging above it, in the corner of the classroom. To this day, I am uncertain if I was to pray that God would help me learn English or pray that I could find refuge from Sister Mary Clarence. Unfortunately, God never answered either of my prayers and I felt abandoned by him. My Catholic beliefs were beginning to be challenged from an early age, and this lemonade/parade fiasco repeated itself mercilessly every day of school. At this early age, I imagined schools as a refuge for children, and I was confused by my experience in kindergarten. This experience at Holy Spirit taught me that school could also be a place of injustice, shame,

feeling othered, and not feeling safe. This experience reverberates within me, and reminds me of the power a teacher is entrusted with at school.

My experiences at Holy Spirit were short lived, as we moved to Calgary in time for grade one. This time I was more equipped with the English language; little did I know that when I entered École Holy Trinity (pseudonym) I would be going into a grade one French Immersion program. My new teacher, Madame Morreau (pseudonym), was much more forgiving than Sister Mary Clarence, and I became one of her *petits moineaux*, French for her little sparrows. She embraced our differences and celebrated our diversity. At École Holy Trinity I felt a sense of freedom to be myself and once again school became a refuge. My faith was restored in the belief that school can in fact be a safe space to play, grow, learn, and to be oneself. While I had had such a poor experience within the Catholic school system the previous year, Holy Trinity was less dogmatic. Perhaps the French sense of separation of Church and state was more evident in the school culture.

First Experience of Homophobia

In grade two, after receiving the Sacrament of Communion, I became an altar boy at our parish that we would regularly attend on Sundays. I have a memory with respect to being an altar boy that really stands out for me. I recall that one day after mass, when, on the ride home in the car, my father used a term that I had not heard before. He called the priest a "*pedał."* Later that day, my parents had friends over for dinner. I recall my mom's friend engaging in some childlike conversation with me and asking me what it was like to be an altar boy. I remember telling her that it was fun and that priest was a "*pedał."* I quickly learnt that evening that "*pedał"* was a bad word and that it was bad to be a "*pedał."* Sadly, I was sent to my room. It was not until much later, probably during my adolescence, when I learned that "*pedał"* is a derogatory term for gay

men. The English equivalent would be fag. Looking back at this memory, I now see how evidently blatant my father's homophobia was in my life from an early age.

In junior high and high school, the feeling of otherness crept back in. I can possibly attribute this feeling to be the result of a shift in what we were learning in religion class. I was no longer learning about biblical stories of Jesus, and metaphors for the golden rule, of doing unto others as you would have done unto you. Rather, it was a shift toward character development in terms of prescribed behaviours and attitudes of what was considered moral and right in the eyes of the church and God and by extension society. I learnt in religion class that homosexuality was a sexual deviance and was sinful. During my adolescent years, I was beginning to explore my own sexuality, and out of fear of judgement, by God, my teachers, peers, and most of all my parents, it was not until the end of grade 12 that I came out as gay. High school was a three-year struggle in terms of coming out; I remember in grade 10 another student uttered the word that changed my life forever: "fag." This word brought on echoes of feelings I had felt a long time before when my father had used the word "*pedał."* These were all raw feelings of injustice, shame, feeling different and unaccepted, not feeling safe at school. School at the time was ripe with hegemonic behaviours that policed heteronormativity and cisnormativity. There were no Gay Straight Alliances or Gender Sexuality Associations (GSAs) back then, and I had nowhere to turn in my Catholic school. For 12 years, I had attended Catholic schooling and I realized that coming out would not gain much favor either at home or at school. I remember my high school religion teacher saying that it was okay to be gay as long as you did not sin. I consider myself lucky my religion teacher was fairly liberal, as some of my friends had a priest or a nun for religion class whose messaging was a little more severe. I now understand what a "culture of silence" within the education system means (Freire, 1970); at the time it was almost preferred, if

not encouraged, to remain in the closet. I recall a boy a year ahead of me was told he would not be able to participate in graduation if he continued to shame his family and school.

Drama as a Place of Acceptance

It took a couple of years post high school, before I came to terms with my sexuality – to come to understand it and the meaning of being gay. Looking back at those high school years, I realize that I found comfort in drama class, where we were free to explore and be ourselves. The students in those classes were, for the most part, very open and accepting. The two drama teachers I had in high school created a culture of acceptance and a safe space. I participated in the after-school drama productions and made close friendships with the other drama students. After high school, a number of those students came out too and now live openly LGBTQ lives. I felt a sense of belonging in drama, both in class and in extracurricular after-school work. Since there were no GSAs in the 1990s, hanging out in the theatre, with like-minded peers, created a very accepting and supportive school community. There, I did not feel othered and I had permission to be and to express myself for who I was. Drama was one of the only places of non-judgment, of creativity, and of acceptance in my school in those years.

Acceptance and Coming Out: The Role of Drama

I have a vivid memory of my junior high drama teacher, Mr. G. I remember he taught us about drag performance. Back then, as a young teenager, I did not think anything unusual about it. However, now as an adult, I think about how progressive this would have been for a Catholic school. I remember that he would come to school with the longest painted finger nails, which was so extreme at the time, and yet we just thought he was cool. I do remember that he was playing the character of Hosanna in the play of that title by Michel Tremblay (1942/1991). I remember that my parents would not take me to see the play. I do not recall why; however, I can

assume that it may have had something to do with my father's homophobia and the content of the play. I am surprised that my teacher's liberal practice did not cause any controversy and that there were no complaints – at least to my knowledge. I recall Mr. G. would bring photographs and tell us about the character of Hosanna, a gay man, who was a drag queen, dressed as Cleopatra and the inner conflict this character had in finding their true identity. The themes Mr. G. presented were quite simplistic at the time, and meant for a junior high classroom, but I can see how he was planting the seeds that drama can be used as a countercultural tool. He encouraged us to play with gender roles, and he certainly challenged gender norms and heteronormative and cisnormative expectations through our work in improvisation and short comedic scenes. I recall in one play, which we took to a francophone theatre festival somewhere in Kananaskis, I played the role of a woman. Once again, there was this teacher who created an environment of acceptance, safety, and respect, in which, from what I recall, there was no bullying, or sense of discomfort with what we were learning about or dramatizing.

After high school, I came out to my parents. It was probably one of the most difficult tasks that I had ever undertaken. As I imagined, my father responded in a very negative way. He told me to "whip out my [genitals] and go march in the parade with the rest of the fags." As a result, we have not spoken since. This detachment from my father felt like an echo of the abandonment I felt from God in kindergarten – both were hegemonic powers that could result in me being ostracized if I crossed them. I reconciled my internal conflict through coming to terms with my sexuality, and realized that perhaps this rift with my father was for the best – life would go on. My mother was forgiving and compassionate. I use the word forgiving, even though I realize that being gay is not something one needs forgiveness for, but within a Catholic context forgiveness is definitely something I was seeking at that age. I know she struggled with my

sexuality, as she wanted the best for her son. Envisioning a gay lifestyle was probably something to be scared of back then; particularly, holding traditional Catholic views, coupled with the 1980s AIDS crisis, fueled fear. I am fortunate and perhaps privileged that she was accepting of who I was, just like Madame Poirier had been in grade one and then in later years my drama teachers.

I continued with my education after high school, went to university and completed a BFA in Drama at the University of Calgary. The primary reason I enrolled in a Bachelor of Fine Arts program in the first place was because of encouragement from my high school drama teachers. It was at this point I realized that I wanted to become a drama teacher, because of the sense of wellbeing and belonging that I experienced while I was in drama classes. I believed that drama could have the emancipatory effects within education that I had so longed and hoped for so many years ago when I was at Sister Mary Clarence's mercy. I eventually completed a Bachelor of Education in Drama Education and taught in Calgary with the public schoolboard. I witnessed the transformative potential for students through drama. As an aside, to this day, I cannot bring myself to teach within a Catholic school system, due to the hegemonic heteronormativity and genderism the church continues to espouse.

After teaching a few years, while completing a master's degree in Drama Therapy, the therapeutic benefits of drama were re-affirmed while working on placements in Oncology, Psychiatric Health, and Geriatrics. Drama Therapy uses theatre techniques to achieve therapeutic change and to promote psychological wellness. The North American Drama Therapy Association (2020) defined it as:

> an active, experiential approach to facilitating change. Through storytelling, projective play, purposeful improvisation, and performance, participants are invited to rehearse

> desired behaviors, practice being in relationship, expand and find flexibility between life roles, and perform the change they wish to be and see in the world. (para. 1)

It became very evident to me how drama, whether therapeutic or educational, has the potential to be quite transformative, which is why drama and arts-based research have become among the driving forces behind this study (discussed further in Chapter 3).

Concluding Thoughts on My Narrative

Understanding the story of my life experience, and my intersectionality, has led me to consider how drama, education, and being queer have influenced my path to where I am now. First and foremost, I value education and believe that it should be as accessible and without limitations as it was for me. Education does change lives, and it can empower people to become agents of change, especially when offered from a place of compassion and care. I have come to understand how a compassionate and caring pedagogy (Wilde, 2013), as I experienced through drama education, allows students to thrive and achieve success at school. Having experienced high school as queer, and now being a part of the education system as a high school teacher, and most recently as an administrator, working with LGBTQ youth, I often wonder what these youth experience.

The literature I review in chapter 2 demonstrates that LGBTQ youth are considered vulnerable and at risk and are proportionately at higher risk for experiencing bullying in school than other students. In chapter 2, I also review the policies and legislation that have passed in the Province of Alberta since the beginning of this study to present in order to gain a better understanding of what has changed on a systems level and if this change has indeed trickled down in practice to impact the lives of queer youth. Having worked with students who attend GSA meetings and who identify as LGBTQ, I have heard some narratives of their experiences in

high school. It seems that despite the systemic change that has occurred, there still remain elements of HBT harassment and bullying within today's schools. Change can often be difficult, slow or short-lived and while it may start at a systems level through policy, it can also present as a grass roots level process. In order for change to be meaningful, enduring and transformational, it needs to be both a political and cultural project, because, in the end, it is policy and practice that will interact and influence each other within a school. While we already have legislation at the provincial level and policy at the schoolboard level in place to support LGBTQ youth, I wonder if these safeguards are doing what they are meant to be doing, or if we still have much work to do in our schools. Rincón-Gallardo (2019), stated that,

> the worthiness of policy should not be measured by how good it looks on paper or by the extent to which it is implemented with fidelity, but by the extent it is developed through a continuous learning partnership between system leaders and schools, whereby both parts learn from and influence each other as they endeavor to fundamentally shift pedagogy and liberate learning. (p. 12)

The aim of my research was to bring to greater awareness the experiences of LGBTQ youth as they live in this reality forged by existing policies and cultural expression, so that we may move forward in a responsive manner to address their needs while hearing their voices. Despite being a key stakeholder in public education, students' voices are often not heard in schools and education systems' decision-making processes. "This way of [overlooking] young people misses – and wastes – the tremendous transformative potential that lies in their agency to change pedagogical practices, school designs, school systems, and the world" (Rincón-Gallardo, 2019, p. 70). It was my intention that through my research student-participants would be empowered to take action, to be heard, and to be an impetus for change.

Introduction to my Proposed Study and Research Questions

I learned, through preliminary interactions with LGBTQ youth both in and out of school contexts, that even though their differences in sexuality, gender expression, and sexual orientation are generally invisible, they are one of the highest targeted groups to suffer from bullying and harassment. I see teaching as a service to students and future generations and I am passionate about this particular group of youth, as I too was once a LGBTQ youth finding his way through high school. I can relate at a very intimate level to their experiences of school, harassment and bullying, and hegemonic heteronormative and cisnormative oppression. It was my hope to find some meaning and understanding, and to give voice to my youth participants, so that we could generate discourse on the issues that arise through our work together and hopefully work toward transformational social change. My research addressed a human rights issue that is current and relevant in Alberta, and my research can contribute to educational research and policy, bullying prevention programs, and GSAs, with the overall aim of making schools safer places for all youth.

For my research, through my alliances with the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services at the University of Alberta, the Alberta GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) Network[2], the Centre for Sexuality[3], Skipping Stone[4] and the PFLAG[5] Calgary Chapter, I set out to work with a small group of youth who identify as LGBTQ. I listened to stories of their experiences with HBT harassment and bullying in schools and engaged them in developing an ethnodramatic script to represent their experiences. The ethnodrama was performed for two audiences: the first, a small

[2] http://albertagsanetwork.ca/
[3] https://www.centreforsexuality.ca/
[4] https://www.skippingstone.ca/
[5] PFLAG Canada is a national non-profit organization which brings together family and friends of LGBT people in Canada. https://pflagcanada.ca/

by-invitation only performance and the second at the annual Alberta GSA conference. Post-performance surveys and discussions took place with youth and with audiences to see if there had been a change in attitudes, if new information was transmitted, and to open the discussion of how positive change can occur in schools.

Research Questions

My doctoral study sought to understand what LGBTQ youth experience in high schools, with the aim of generating awareness and creating safer schools by addressing the questions: *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta high schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic harassment and bullying?* And the secondary question: *How can queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

Relevant Expertise of the Researcher

I was well prepared to undertake this study. I finished a Master's Degree in Drama Therapy, at Concordia University, Montreal, where I completed course work in Psychodrama, along with running psychodrama groups within a clinical setting as part of my education. Additionally, I participated as a research assistant for an ethnodrama research project conducted at the Centre for the Arts in Human Development (CAHD) at Concordia. While at the CAHD, I was exposed to the theoretical underpinnings of ethnodrama and my responsibilities included conducting ethnographic interviews, and following this with coding of the interviews to identify themes, actions, emotions, etc. As a secondary school drama teacher, I produced, directed, and devised theatre with youth. I also experienced working with LGBTQ youth, and presenting participatory workshops in Forum Theatre at Alberta GSA conferences.

The Proposal

Following this chapter, in Chapter 2, I review literature around bullying in general, and more precisely HBT bullying, to draw attention to the pressing need I identified to explore this topic. The literature review shows that LGBTQ youth are affected by bullying at higher rates than their heterosexual peers (Warwick, Chase & Aggleton, 2004). Then I review current Legislation and Policies in Alberta that have been developed in the last several years that pertain to the topics of gender diversity and sexual orientation in schools. Thereafter, I develop a theoretical framework informed by queer theory that is relevant to the experiences I explored around HBT harassment and bullying with LGBTQ youth.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology and research design for my study, which utilizes drama-based research methods, specifically "ethnodrama," to describe, interpret, and perform the stories of non-heterosexual youth, related to HBT bullying and harassment in high schools (Mienczakowski, 1995a, 1995b; Saldaña 2005, 2011). Next, I outline ethnodrama as a type of ethnographic research that centers on the lived experiences of a particular group, and with group members' permission uses their authentic narratives in a theatrical performance to educate other community members on the particular issue under investigation (Mienczakowski, 1995a, 1995b; Saldaña 2005, 2011). Saldaña (2005, 2011) described ethnodrama as "dramatizing the data," or performing it "from page to stage." The goal is to use the methods and techniques of theatre to portray to an audience a live representation of a particular facet of the human condition authentically, vividly and convincingly, and to educate the audience by raising the awareness level of the social issues and catalyzing new ways of seeing and thinking about these vital issues. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 is the written script – the data generated and its representation if you will. This was produced with the youth as co-participants in the research process. The play was first performed on Friday November 1, 2019 at the Central Memorial Public Library in Calgary. This was for a small audience by invitation only. The audience included educators and mental health professionals. The final performance was at the 8th Annual Alberta GSA Conference on Saturday November 16, 2019, hosted at Nelson Mandela High School in Calgary. This second performance was open to any of the conference attendees. Attendees were GSA delegates, allies, LGBTQ youth, and teachers.

In Chapter 5, I summarize both of the post-performance conversations that occurred with the two audiences. I analyze the completed written questionnaires that audience members filled out after they had watched the play. I then incorporate my own personal reflections on the process, the performance, and the post-performance conversation. To conclude, I address the what now question, by revisiting the themes that emerged from the ethnodramatic inqueery and offer my thoughts on how we can move forward to continue to validate youth experiences, give youth agency and make meaningful change in schools to address safety and inclusion.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion chapter where I revisit the research questions to discuss how the study addressed them, provide some discussion regarding the implications of the study, and make recommendations for schooling policy and practice and recommendations for further research.

As a queer educator, the wellbeing of LGBTQ youth is important to me. Morally and ethically, the injustices and inequalities these students experience demand a response from me. I believe that telling their narratives through drama can work towards ensuring the safety of LGBTQ students and all students and that it is the right thing for me to do.

Chapter 2 Literature Review & Theoretical Orientation

In this chapter, I begin by starting at the macro level and defining culture, its constructs, its impacts on power, privilege and oppression, and how in turn power, privilege and oppression lead to normalized microaggressions. Next, I explain that LGBTQ persons experience minority stress just by virtue of growing up in a heteronormative and cisnormative society. Thereafter, I review scholarly literature and government reports on bullying and homophobia in schools, and explore the Alberta context with respect to policy, action and Gender Sexuality Associations (GSAs). Finally, I develop a multiperspective theoretical framework for my study based on critical pedagogy and queer theory.

Culture

The term "pedagogy" as used, for example, in Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* shines an importance not only on educational practice, but also on the cultural and political arenas. I often reference the term culture in this dissertation. I would like to draw importance to this term, as it has several implications regarding how it impacts this work. Rincón-Gallardo (2019) defined culture as:

> Culture is the operating system of a human group. It consists of historically derived and selected ideas, beliefs, values, artefacts, practices and patterns of behaviour that constitute what is considered the "taken for granted" in a human group. Our actions create culture while, at the same time, they are shaped by it. Culture serves as an all encompassing matrix of meaning in and through which societal values and practices [*sic*] as well relationship of power and authority are reproduced, but also challenged and transformed. (p. 52)

Culture may be understood in relation to a heteronormative culture, a cisnormative culture, school culture, institutional culture, power and culture, culture and change, and so forth. It is essential to operationalize this term, because as I explain later on, there is an inert power in default culture. Default culture can have a neutralizing effect on any attempts at transformation; it is characteristically a conservative force that is powerful at preventing change (Evans 1996). This impacted my research, as I proposed a rationale for queer theory as an agent of counterculture and I drew on Gramsci's (1971) concepts of "hegemony" and "counterhegemony" to intentionally position the act of queering in a place of opening up the larger cultural context of social relations of power, authority and control. The emancipatory effect, or liberating learning through queering, as Rincón-Gallardo (2019) explained, is about, "catalysing and sustaining countercultural work in the pedagogical, the social, and the political arenas" (p. 59). If I am to queer the dominant forces of culture such as heteronormative and cisnormative forms of hegemony, heteropatriarchy and heteronormative and cisnormative oppression, then I need to bring to focus the products of dominant and default culture such as power, privilege and in turn oppression, as I believe they all contribute to bullying and harassment.

Power, Privilege and Oppression

Browne, Mickiewicz, and Firestone (1994) surmised that "majority cultural domination often carries with it the power to stereotype. It is in itself a way to maintain power in fact, because it underlines the ability of those holding power to determine how to portray those [without]" (p. 8). Historically, within Canadian society, and also within the Eurocentric context, those with power and who are in the majority, have had the privilege of being the dominant voices and writing the dominant narratives. Traditionally, these voices and narratives have been those of white, cisgender, heterosexual, Anglo, Christian, men – the hegemonic heteropatriarchy.

Nadal (2013), defined dominant groups as "people in a society with greater power and privilege due to their majority status or historical authority" (p. 79). This hegemonic heteropatriarchy, has the ability to control how LGBTQ people are characterized and treated.

Nadal (2013) specified that power has the "ability to define reality and to convince other people that it is their definition as well" (p. 79). A heterosexual person does not have to subscribe to heteronormative oppression to benefit from the privileges of heteronormativity. By virtue of belonging to the heteronormative majority, privileges are *naturally* afforded to them. Privilege is "a right, favor, advantage, or immunity specifically granted to one individual or group and withheld from another" (Nadal, 2013, p. 79). Privilege, whether it is deliberately intentional or not, presents an advantage to some, and its origins are the very same hegemony that oppresses others and denotes "advantages one holds as a result of membership in a dominant group" (Hays, 2008, p. 6). Furthermore, power has the unexpected effect of creating oppressive conditions that can impede, restrict, and deny human rights to LGBTQ persons, while concurrently protecting and ensuring them for those who are heterosexual, heteronormative, cissexual, cisnormative, and gender conforming. Hays (2008), suggested that privilege can "limit a person's knowledge of and experience with non-privileged groups" (p. 6). Consequently, power and privilege can isolate heteronormative and cisnormative individuals from LBGTQ persons and likewise diminish their capacity to understand and recognize the dangerous nature of heteronormative and cisnormative forms of oppression. Such forms have an impact on everyday social interactions.

Oppression can manifest itself both directly and/or indirectly; it can appear as malice, unkindness, violence (bullying and harassment), ignorance, abuse, injustice and bias. Oppression incorporates itself into the foundation and makeup of social norms, values and beliefs; it

infiltrates cultural customs. Oppression operates in a manner such that violent comments and actions can become normalized. Sue (2010) explained that, “when biases and prejudices become institutionalized and systemized into the norms, values and beliefs of a society, they are passed on to generations of its citizens via socialization and cultural conditioning” (p. 112). The heteropatriarchy forces LGBTQ youth to grow up in a straight world and this has unintended consequences.

Perez (2005) pointed out that within the cultural, political and social arenas, the oppression of LGBT people is more customary than the discrimination towards other minorities. This oppression is entrenched, perpetuated, and even supported by heteronormative and cisnormative systems and institutions. Beauregard et al. (2016) concluded that:

> It is clear that discrimination and stigma persists in social institutions such as families, schools, and business as a result of hetero and cisgender normative culture. This creates numerous stressors and impacts the mental health of individuals who identify as LGBTQI. (p. 45)

The effect of experiencing chronic heteronormative and cisnormative oppression leads to the internalization of stigma. This can present itself in a host of social and personal problems including shame with regard to sexual orientation and/or gender identity, at risk/high risk behavior, and even perpetuating heteronormative and cisnormative biases and prejudices (Nadal, 2013; Perez, 2005).

Microaggressions and LGBTQ Experience

Microaggressions are a type of oppression that can present themselves in a myriad of forms. They are messages that are expressed implicitly and/or explicitly through verbal communication and nonverbal behaviors that communicate prejudiced beliefs, regardless of

intention. Those persons in a place of power and privilege frequently do not even realize the oppression and hurt their microaggressions may cause for the person experiencing them (Sue, 2010). Research has revealed that LGBTQ people experience microaggressions of all types on a regular basis (Beauregard et al., 2016; Lambda Legal, 2010; Nadal, 2013). The following microaggressions have been identified by Nadal (2013) as those that are experienced by LGBTQ people:

- use of heterosexist or transphobic language;
- endorsement of heteronormativity or gender normativity;
- assumption of universal LGBT experience;
- exoticization;
- discomfort or disapproval of LGBT experience;
- denial of the reality of heterosexism or transphobia;
- assumption of sexual pathology/abnormality;
- denial of individual heterosexism (p. 46);

and by Nadal, Skolnik and Wong (2012):

- physical threat or harassment;
- denial of individual transphobia;
- denial of bodily privacy;
- familial microaggressions;
- systemic and environmental microaggressions (p. 64)

Something as innocuous as mistaking someone's gender pronoun, or asking them about their wife when they have a husband, can be a daily reminder for LGBTQ persons that their queer identities and realities do not fit into a heteronormative and cisnormative world. Frequent and

repeated experiences of microaggressions are hurtful and can lead to feelings of exclusion and stigmatization.

Minority Stress

LGBTQ people live within a heteronormative and cisnormative world. At any time, LGBTQ persons may experience oppression that is unique to the fact that they belong to a minority group. Consequently, in an attempt to fit into a heteronormative and cisnormative society, LGBTQ persons experience a unique and significant debilitating stress. "Minority stress," is a term that is analogous to "minority status"; it refers to the chronic stress LGBTQ people experience as a result of stigmatization from living in a heteronormative and cisnormative world (Meyer, 1995, 2003). The "minority stress model" is a commonly accepted framework that recognizes the psychological distress and adverse mental health outcomes of LGBTQ persons (Meyer, 1995). Meyer (2003) identified four forms of minority stress:

1. sexual prejudice (chronic or acute);
2. expectations of prejudice and hypervigilance;
3. internalized homophobia;
4. concealment of one's sexual orientation. (p. 687)

Meyer (1995) found that LGB persons that experienced high levels of minority stress were two to three times more likely to experience higher levels of distress. More recently, Velez et al. (2017) confirmed that LGBTQ persons are at a higher risk of mental and physical health problems and psychological distress, in comparison to heterosexual and cisgender persons. They further corroborated Meyer's research by identifying that this is directly associated to stressors that LGBTQ persons experience as a result of their minority status.

While I worked with LGBTQ youth for this study, each and every one of these youth was unique, and with this uniqueness came the possibility of many intersecting identities. Our lived realities and identities are not only shaped by our sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, but also by an array sociocultural, economic, and biological factors. It is possible to experience privilege in one domain of life while experiencing oppression in another, and while LGBTQ encompasses sexual and gender identifiers, it was important to understand that the lived experiences of the youth were unique to them and their contexts.

Intersectionality

All people carry multiple intersecting identities within larger social systems due in fact that identity is not singular by definition. In attempts to define ourselves, we use physical and biological markers, as well as socially and politically constructed identifiers. Gorman-Murray et al. (2010) identified that one of the challenges in queer research is "the difficulty in effectively communicating and achieving understanding across an increasingly wide range of sexual [and gender] subjects, each with their own experiences, practices, relationships and subjectivities" (p. 99). For example, one can define oneself as: male, trans, biracial, disabled, a father, retired – the possibilities are infinite. Within this example, it is important to consider the multiple dimensions of identity and social systems at play and how they intersect with one another and relate to inequality. Along with the diverse ways of identifying oneself, one can also claim membership in certain groups and/or communities. Throughout my research, I often refer to the queer community or LGBTQ community, and what I mean by this is "a group of individuals, with significant degrees of commonality in identities, interests, and culture, who socialize, provide mutual support, share resources, and engage in action to benefit one and all" (Grace & Wells, 2015, p. 258). Nevertheless, I am mindful that each individual LGBTQ person within the larger

queer community has a unique identity and this plays a significant role in our understanding of someone. Equally, each of these ways of identifying, whether it's gay, lesbian, trans, and so forth, carries certain implications and assumptions around inequality and oppression.

In Hill Collins's (2000) understanding, "intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions, for example, intersections of race and gender, or of sexuality and nation" (p. 18). For Meyer (2019), "engaging in real-life work also demonstrates intersectionality—that gender and sexuality issues are always connected to other communities' struggles for justice" (p. 52). It is essential, therefore, to understand that every person has a unique identity and lived reality; it cannot be assumed that all members of a certain group have the same issues, experiences, or even face the same oppression. With this uniqueness comes multiple and intersecting identities and "intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice" (Hill Collins, 2000, p. 18). This is important because "ignoring differences within groups contributes to tension among groups" (Crenshaw, 1993, p. 1242). I will speak further about this in chapters 4 and 5, referring to one of my participants who eloquently stated, "lesbian issues aren't trans issues, or gay issues." It is also noteworthy that within certain identities and groups, by extension, there are intersections of socially constructed hierarchies, known as the "matrix of domination" (Hill Collins, 2000). For example, a black trans woman, may be lower status in social hierarchies of oppression, compared to a white cisgender gay male. Once again, these are social constructs, with the ability to enforce certain oppressive beliefs and actions, whereby the oppressed can also become the oppressor.

Queer Intersectionality

Rahman (2010) highlighted the "affinity between intersectional perspectives and queer theories of identity, given that both have focused our attentions on marginalized identities" (p. 956). Halperin (1995) offered a description of queer to focus the lens on queer intersectionality:

> Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. Queer then, demarcates not a positivity, but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative. Queer … describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance. (p. 62)

For this study, I focused on queer realities and identities. As Gorman-Murray et al. (2010) noted, "those who variously identify as homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or otherwise non-heteronormative [or gender diverse] share a range of common experiences around legal, political and social constraints, there are also significantly different lived experiences of oppression and exclusion between these groups" (p. 99). Therefore, queer is not necessarily one identifiable group, nor an innate identity, but rather, as Halperin (1995) suggested, a unifying term that suggests a positionality that can be appropriated by varying marginalized gender and sexual minorities. "In many ways, queer intersectionality is simply the necessary tautology: intersectionality is inevitably disruptively queer, and queer must be analytically intersectional" (Rahman, 2010, p. 956). Queer theory adds a positionality to identity construction, along the matrix of domination that intersectionality identifies.

Muñoz (2010) critiqued that "queer sensibilities are theorized and understood through lenses that are largely academic, western, white, and privileged" (p. 57). As an academic,

western, white, privileged, cisgender, gay, male, in my research I was thoughtful in avoiding what Binnie (2007) described as homonormativity:

> The increasing visibility and power of affluent white gay men has been accompanied by the marginalization of the politics of both lesbian feminism and sex radicalism, and has highlighted the exclusions within queer communities on the basis of race, class, gender and disability. (p. 34)

I positioned myself as a gay cisgender male who has experienced bullying and harassment in high school; as a student who attended 13 years of Catholic education; a son of two working class parents who at times espoused conservative and even homophobic values; as a refugee to Canada who experienced poverty and had to learn English; as a drama student, and as a teacher who has felt powerless to help LGBTQ youth as I have witnessed ineffective policies in schools. Despite the obvious age difference between my participants and me, it was important that we could relate to one another. Thus, I positioned myself as someone who has a vested interest in championing LGBTQ rights; as someone who has the privilege and means to take on a project of this sort; and as someone who genuinely cares for others. Equally, I needed to display genuineness to my participants as I had a lot to learn from them and about them. I could not enter the conversation as an expert, but rather as someone who was there to learn from the participants. My participants were the experts in their lives, and I really needed to navigate my roles as an arts-based researcher, a queer activist, an educator, a doctoral student and a drama practitioner throughout this process.

I deliberately ensured that the participants I worked with represented as many various identities of LGBTQ persons as possible (age, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, location of school, body shape, etc.). It was vital to also consider the various points of identity

intersection of my participants, as excluding those differences would have excluded a full understanding of their lived experiences.

I believe the above section on power, privilege and oppression can serve as an explanation as to why bullying and harassment exist within our world. In the following section, I situate my research in the school context and discuss how concepts such as power, privilege, and oppression are manifested through bullying, and more specifically HBT bullying and harassment. I begin by reviewing literature around the larger context of bullying, before narrowing in on Alberta.

Bullying in Schools

Bullying is a systemic national issue in Canada. News of deaths, related to bullying, from violence or suicide have made national headlines in the last decade. Since the proposed study is situated within the Alberta context, in reviewing scholarly research focused on bullying in schools I will make reference to several documents produced by the Alberta Government that are applicable to education and relevant to this study. As my discussion will show, the issue is not exclusive to Alberta. However, I include a particular focus on Alberta because in Canada it is the provincial government that has jurisdiction over educational policy and its legislation. Furthermore, since I am an educator in the Province of Alberta, and the study took place here, it is important for me to create an understanding of policy and legislation within this province.

Section 1(1) clause d in the *Alberta Education Act* defined bullying as:

> Repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation. (Government of Alberta, 2019, p. 12)

Internationally, despite years of anti-bullying campaigns, research indicates that bullying (not just limited to HBT bullying or harassment) rates have remained consistent for the past 25 years and nearly all students worry about it (Sullivan, Cleary & Sullivan, 2004; O'Toole, Burton & Plunkett, 2005; Roberts, 2006). A Canadian 2012 survey found that 22% of elementary students reported having been bullied at least once in the prior two months and 41% of those admitted to being a bully and a victim themselves (Craig & Edge, 2012). Government of Alberta (2012) data indicated that as many as 25% of children in grades four to six have been bullied. Moreover, one out of ten children in Alberta have admitted to bullying another child (Government of Alberta, 2012). These numbers are corroborated by a 2008 American study published in the *Journal of Pediatrics*, which found that 26% of youth in the United States were involved in bullying either as victim, bully, or both (Glew, et al., 2008). The frequency at which bullying occurs is equally alarming. Government of Alberta (2012) studies have found bullying occurs once every seven minutes on the playground and once every 25 minutes in a classroom.

Bullying causes a number of social, physical and mental health problems. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)[6] are traumatic early life experiences, which can have a profound impact on health in later life. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse. ACEs can also negatively impact education. Bullying and gender harassment have also been added to the expanded ACE survey (Centre for Disease Control, 2020). Finkelhor et al. (2013) established that the relationship between ACEs and child health was strong when exposures to bullying was added to the initial ACE index. Olweus and Limber (2010) found that, "bullied children tend to suffer from elevated levels of depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem,

[6] https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html

social isolation, psychosomatic problems, and suicidal ideation" (p. 126). Statistics Canada (2008) reported that suicide was the second most common form of premature death among youths aged 15 to 24, with a total of over 400 deaths. At least some of these youth suicides could be linked to bullying. Moreover, problems that occur throughout childhood and adolescence are prone to continue and have detrimental effects in adulthood (Fosse, 2006). Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between adolescents who bully others as far more likely to have a criminal record by mid-adulthood than those who do not engage in bullying behaviours (Olweus, 2011). Even youth who are bystanders can become distressed when seeing bullying, as they become anxious that they may too become the victim of bullying. This anxiety and hyper vigilance adversely affects their ability to learn (Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

Bullying is not a phenomenon unique to schools; it grows out of systemic societal conflict (Conrad & Unger, 2011). Those who engage in bullying behavior learn to use power and aggression to control and victimize those that are vulnerable. Rather than conceptualizing this set of behaviours as infantile, which the term "bullying" seems to suggest, my research acknowledged the seriousness of the situation by treating it as "a repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons" (Rigby, 1996, p. 15). Fundamentally, bullying within a school context is a form of harassment and abuse from one's peers that can take many forms. It is directed and repeated and it involves power, aggression, intimidation and shame. It targets the vulnerable, and exposes all those who bully, the witnesses, and those who are bullied, to a number of psychosocial problems. Harassment that can lead a student to contemplate suicide – is anything but infantile.

HBT Bullying & Harassment

My inqueery specifically focused on HBT bullying and harassment. Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are terms for systems of marginalization and I used the terms as defined in *The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-Inclusive Education in Canada's K-12 schools*[7] (Taylor, et al., 2015). The Government of Alberta (2017b) defines homophobic bullying as, "bullying behaviours that are motivated by prejudice against a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation" ("What is Homophobic Bullying?," para. 1**)**, and that "transphobia and homophobia often exist hand-in-hand. Transphobic and anti-gay slurs, and trans-bashing are all forms of bullying. Such discrimination is a violation of human rights" (Government of Alberta, 2017c, para. 1). Meyer (2007) indicated that "the persistence of homophobia and the related tool of sexism in schools harm everyone in the community and [that] the most basic expectation of school safety for all cannot be attained until these issues are addressed" (p. 16).

Research conducted in Canada, the UK, USA, and Australia, shows that up to 50% of LGBTQ youth have directly experienced bullying at school (Warwick et al., 2004). Sadly, it does not just end at school; 48.6% of LGBTQ students are bullied electronically (GLSEN, 2015). In 2011, Egale Canada[8] released *Every Class in Every School,* which reported the findings from the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools (Taylor et al., 2011). The survey reported that there is widespread existence of victimization against non-heterosexual students in Canadian schools. The climate survey related that 70% of all students reported hearing homonegative comments and normalized negative expressions such

[7] https://egale.ca/every-teacher-project/
[8] *Egale* is Canada's national lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) human rights organization: advancing equality, diversity, education and justice. The 2011 survey is the first of its kind in Canada. http://egale.ca/about/ and https://egale.ca/awareness/every-class/

as “that's so gay” and almost half (48%) report hearing “faggot,” “lezbo,” and “dyke” every day in school. Unfortunately, 10% of students also reported hearing these homonegative expressions by their teachers. The homonegative comments not only impacted the LGBTQ youth, but had an upsetting effect on 58% of heterosexual youth who heard the comments being made. The research also indicated that more than half of LGBTQ youth felt unsafe in school, compared to 3% of heterosexual peers. This is in part due to the fact that almost half of LGBTQ youth were verbally harassed about their gender expressions and/or sexual orientations. In addition to the verbal harassment, more than 20% of LGBTQ youth reported being physically harassed or assaulted because of their sexual orientation. When looking at the data around trans youth, the numbers are significantly higher, as 49% of trans youth reported being sexually harassed at school. For LGBTQ youth, the above data represent a lived reality that can be a chronic and persistent experience and this illustrates a cause for concern within Canada and reinforces the need for and timeliness of my inqueery.

It is evidenced that microaggressions and oppressive systems can lead to mental health issues and physical distress (Sue, 2010; Nadal, 2013). A study conducted in the province of British Columbia reported that when compared to their heterosexual peers, LGBTQ teens experienced greater levels of violence and more negative health outcomes and were more likely to exhibit at-risk behaviors and distress including: running away from home, using tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs, higher rates of depression and emotional stress, and increased risky sexual behaviors (Sawyc et al., 2007). 34% of LGBTQ youth were more likely to say that violence or abuse made them leave home compared to 16% of heterosexual cisgender youth (Abramovich & Shelton, 2017); and adolescents who have been rejected by their families are over eight times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (Ryan et al., 2009).

Bullying is often a key-contributing factor to youth suicides, and LGBTQ youth account for a significant and disproportionate number of these deaths. 44% of LGBTQ youth reported having had thoughts about suicide compared with 26% of heterosexual youth, and a further 35% were likely to take their thoughts and make plans to commit suicide when compared to their heterosexual peers (O'Shaughnessy et al. 2004; Dorais & Lajeunesse, 2004; Rivers & Cowie, 2006; Rivers 2011; Taylor et al., 2011; Wells, 2012). Similarly, Ryan et al. (2009) found that 33% of gender and sexual minority youth have attempted suicide compared to 7% of the youth in general. Living with repeated oppression and continual anxiety leads to an increase in mental health issues, suicidality, interpersonal disruptions, high risk behaviors and many other social concerns. In his review of the *State of* the *Canadian Nation for Sexual and Gender Minority Youth*, Grace (2015) identified that sexual and gender minority students "(1) still feel unsafe in classrooms, corridors, gyms, and other school spaces; (2) link their victimization to the lack of empowerment and human agency coupled with being blamed for their problems; and (3) feel that teachers do little to intervene" (p. 124). This data provides only a snapshot of the severity of the situation, and the lack of action on these issues is leaving a great number of Canada's young people trapped in hostile school climates that run the gamut, from demoralizing to deadly.

LGBTQ Inclusive Education in Canada's K-12 Schools

In January 2016, the final report of a national study, called *The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-Inclusive Education in Canada's K-12 Schools*[9], was released (Taylor, et al., 2015). Among the key findings of the report was that educators:

> were aware of various incidents of homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic (HBT) bullying and harassment in their schools in the past 12 months. Over two thirds (67%) of

[9] https://egale.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Every-Teacher-Project-Final-Report-WEB.pdf

> respondents were aware of incidents of verbal harassment of LGBTQ students (or students who were perceived to be LGBTQ). Over half (55%) were aware of LGBTQ students being the target of rumours, while 53% knew of LGBTQ students being excluded based on their actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation. Two out of five participants (43%) reported being aware of students being the victims of HBT cyberbullying, while a third (33%) knew of LGBTQ students (or those perceived to be LGBTQ) who were physically harassed. Nearly one-quarter (23%) knew of such students being sexually harassed, and one in five (20%) reported being aware of incidents of sexual humiliation because of students' LGBTQ, or perceived, identity. (p. 30)

Furthermore, more than half (55%) of the educators who reported being aware of HBT harassment were also aware of the impact of the harassment leading to self-harming behaviours (p. 49). Although LGBTQ students constitute a minority of a typical school population, educators reported hearing homonegative remarks, such as "that's gay" frequently (49% heard daily or weekly).

With respect to Alberta, *The Every Teacher Project* report found that 68% of educators perceived lesbian, gay and bisexual students as being safe at school, while the number decreased to 52% for transgender students. Alberta educators responded that 34% were aware of students being verbally harassed for being perceived as LGBTQ, with 24% reported awareness of heterosexual students being homophobically harassed. 19% of respondents also indicated that they were likely to hear educators using homonegative language at school, and the number increased to 23% in rural schools. Only 37% of educators in Alberta reported that their schools were likely to respond effectively to HBT harassment.

Alberta educators reported the lowest (42%) awareness of teacher organization committees or cohorts on LGBTQ issues and professional development workshops or training that addressed LGBTQ education. Alberta was also one of the two provinces having the lowest level of LGBTQ involvement and visibility in schools (the other was Saskatchewan); 44% of respondents reported having openly lesbian, gay, or bisexual students participate in clubs or committees in their schools. This is probably related to the fact that Alberta also had one of the lowest levels (15%) of educators participating in LGBTQ inclusive efforts and themed events at their schools, and only 14% of educators reported a GSA in their schools. Educators in the province also reported (55% in Catholic and 34% in public schools) that discussing LGBTQ issues would jeopardize their job. This may explain why only 22% of Alberta educators were likely to post a safe space or ally sticker, and even fewer would consider hanging a poster (19%) or making pamphlets available (11%). Only 58% of educators reported being comfortable discussing LGBTQ issues with students. Alberta had the highest (37%) number of educators agreeing with the following statement: "LGBTQ people seem to focus on the ways in which they differ from heterosexuals and ignore the ways they are the same."

The current Alberta Education Programs of Study generally omit any explicit reference or content about LGBTQ history, persons or achievements. The materials a teacher selects or chooses not to select underscores a message about what is important and valued and what is not. Take for instance Social Studies 8, where students learn about the European Renaissance and the work of such important historical figures as Leonardo DiVinci – one of many influential LGBTQ figures in history. If a teacher chooses to introduce DiVinci as a topic of study, knows about his non-heteronormative sexuality and chooses to share it with their students, they risk that parents may file an official complaint. There are many other noteworthy artists, writers, and scientists

who have also been concealed through heteronormative gender scripts. Consequently, this occurs to the detriment of all students, as it fails to fully acknowledge the significant accomplishments of LGBTQ persons. These types of omissions need to be disrupted and countered at all grade levels in order to acknowledge, and appreciate LGBTQ persons and histories.

GLSEN

Established in 1990 in the United Sates, GLSEN (formerly the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) is an education organization working to ensure that K-12 LGBTQ students are able to learn and grow in a school environment free from bullying and harassment. For nearly 20 years, GLSEN has conducted the National School Climate Survey every two years. This survey provides a glimpse of LGBTQ youth experience in US schools; it documents the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ students and suggests interventions that can be utilized to improve school climate. The 2017 National School Climate Survey (GLSEN 2018) examined the experiences of 23,001 LGBTQ students across all 50 US states, with respect to the following indicators of negative school climate:

- hearing biased remarks, including homophobic remarks, in school;
- feeling unsafe in school because of personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation, gender expression, or race/ethnicity;
- missing school because of safety reasons;
- experiencing harassment and assault in school; and
- experiencing discriminatory policies and practices at school.

While the study is American, and while I have strived to focus on the Canadian and particularly the Alberta context, this survey is the most up-to-date school climate survey - Egale is currently in the process of completing their second survey since 2011. The GLSEN has a wide sample

size, and indicates that overall, in the last 30 years, the numbers have remained quite high and are similar to the above-mentioned Canadian statistics. The report is quite comprehensive at over 190 pages, however, I wish to highlight only a few of the statistics taken from the executive summary, to corroborate my point that not much has changed in the last 25 years, and if anything, progress in the last decade has stagnated:

- 59.5% of LGBTQ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, 44.6% because of their gender expression, and 35.0% because of their gender.
- Almost all of LGBTQ students (98.5%) heard "gay" used in a negative way (e.g., "that's so gay") at school; 70.0% heard these remarks often or frequently, and 91.8% reported that they felt distressed because of this language.
- The vast majority of LGBTQ students (87.3%) experienced harassment or assault based on personal characteristics, including sexual orientation, gender expression, gender, religion, actual or perceived race and ethnicity, and actual or perceived disability.
- 55.3% of LGBTQ students who were harassed or assaulted in school did not report the incident to school staff, most commonly because they doubted that effective intervention would occur or feared the situation could become worse if reported.
- Most LGBTQ students (62.2%) reported experiencing LGBTQ-related discriminatory policies or practices at school.
- 48.7% of LGBTQ students experienced electronic harassment in the past year (via text messages or postings on social media), often known as cyberbullying.

(GLSEN, 2018, p. xviii-xix)

Responses to HBT Bullying: Alberta Policy and Legislation

In light of such alarming statistics, and given that LGBTQ youth continue to experience greater levels of psychological distress than heterosexual and cisgender youth (Nadal et al., 2011; Nadal et al., 2012; Nadal, 2013; Meyer, 2015), the Government of Alberta has become a national leader in developing policy around Gay Straight Alliances, more recently known as Gender Sexuality Associations, in schools. The latter term is more inclusive since it does not delineate a binary, as not everyone is gay or straight; rather, it speaks to how individuals relate to constructions of gender and sexuality. Alberta's initiatives are significant since research data indicates that creating safe schools for non-heterosexual students improves their academic performance, their relationships with faculty, and their general attitudes toward school (Kosciw, 2004; Evans, 2000; LeCompte, 2000; Schneider & Owens, 2000). The following section will discuss educational policy that has recently been introduced in the Province.

School boards in Alberta are governed by a considerable number of laws and public policies that guarantee, protect, and defend human rights. The *Alberta Education Act*, the *Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Professional Code of Conduct*, the *ATA Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Criminal Code of Canada* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act* all provide policies and legislation that require Alberta school boards, and their employees, to conduct themselves in ways that are inclusive and respectful of students, their families and school personnel with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. The following sections summarize historical legislation and policy development in Alberta regarding GSAs, and LGBTQ rights that have impacted schools over the last several years.

The Alberta Teachers' Association

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) has been a strong advocate for LGBTQ youth, making significant policy changes following the 1998 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Vriend v. Alberta* that granted equality rights to sexual minority Canadians. As Grace and Wells (2016) recounted, the ATA included protection on the grounds of sexual orientation for students in its *Code of Professional Conduct* in 1999 when this was affirmed at the Association's Annual Representative Assembly.[10] They noted that a series of other progressive changes followed. In 2000, the ATA moved to incorporate sexual orientation as a protected ground for teachers in its *Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers*. In 2003 and 2004 respectively, the ATA became the first Canadian teachers' association to include gender identity as a protected ground for students against discrimination in its *Code of Professional Conduct* and for teachers in its *Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers* respectively. In 2005 at the ATA's Annual Representative Assembly, the membership approved the following policy: "BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alberta Teachers' Association supports the establishment of gay-straight alliance groups to create awareness and action that promotes the creation of safe learning environments for all students in Alberta high schools" (ATA, 2005, para. 1). More recently, in 2013, the ATA published and distributed to schools the *PRISM Elementary Edition Toolkit* (ATA, 2016). In November 2016, the ATA followed up by releasing a *Secondary Edition Toolkit* (ATA, 2017). "PRISM is an acronym for **p**rofessionals **r**especting and supporting **i**ndividual **s**exual **m**inorities" (ATA, 2019). These toolkits were created to help teachers promote safe and supportive classroom discussions for all students around themes of sexual and gender minorities.

[10] See a complete Alberta timeline from 1998 to 2013 in: Grace, A. P., & Wells, K. (2016). *Sexual and gender minorities in Canadian education and society (1969-2013): A national handbook for K-12 educators.* Canadian Teachers' Federation.

The toolkits are teacher resources that were developed in collaborative work involving the ATA, practicing Alberta teachers and Alberta Education. The toolkits include lesson plans for teachers directly linked to curricular outcomes, definitions of gender terms and pronoun options, a summary of research trends and an explanation of various sexual and gender minority symbols. The toolkits also provide a list of relevant ATA policies and legislation from various levels of the Canadian government that are related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Bill 202

The Alberta Legislature was filled with much controversy during its legislative sitting in the autumn of 2014. On November 20, 2014, Laurie Blakeman, a Liberal member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, proposed a private member's bill, *Bill 202, the Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act* (2014). The three main tenets of *Bill 202* would have: compelled school boards to allow students to form gay straight alliances in their schools; repealed a controversial section of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, section 11.1, that forced schools to notify parents whenever religion, sexuality or sexual orientation was discussed in the classroom; and referenced the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act* in Alberta's *Education Act*. Then Conservative Premier, Jim Prentice, was quoted by the *CBC News* as saying:

> Bill 202 asks us to cast aside our constituents' beliefs in parental rights, in the autonomy of school boards, in order to support GSAs … it is unnecessarily divisive … it's unfair to us and to those we represent. (Bellefontaine, 2014, para. 4)

Regretfully, the Conservative Government did not see the merits of *Bill 202* and subsequently it was withdrawn on December 3, 2014.

Bill 10

Before shelving *Bill 202*, the Government had responded to the issue of unsafe schools by introducing its own version of the bill just two days prior: *Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect our Children* (2014). While I do not wish to compare and contrast the merits of either bill, I do wish to acknowledge that the issue of safe schools for LGBTQ youth is not a moral issue of determining whether non-heterosexual sexual orientations are right or wrong, but rather it is a human rights issue. After being subject to widespread public scrutiny and an outcry by the majority of Albertans, Premier Prentice deferred a third reading of *Bill 10* until 2015 to allow for public consultation. On March 10, *Bill 10* passed with amendments and was given Royal Assent nine days later. In June 2015, *Bill 10* was proclaimed and resulted in amendments to several pieces of legislation including the *School Act*, the *Alberta Bill of Rights* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. The amendments included the tenets of the original *Bill 202*; and section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* was repealed, affirming a parent's right to have their child opt out, without academic penalty, from instruction, exercises, and the use of instructional materials that dealt primarily and explicitly with religion, sexuality, or sexual orientation.

There were five significant areas of focus in *Bill 10* with regards to creating and promoting a sense of belonging and diversity. The first area, a New Code of Conduct, required all school boards to develop a system-wide student code of conduct that is compliant with the provisions in the Act. The second, on Student-run Organizations, required that schools must support student-initiated request for activities or organizations that promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. This would include Gender Sexuality Associations. GSAs are generally student-initiated and

teacher sponsored. If a student requested one, according to *Bill 10*, the school must create one. Schools could also begin a GSA at any time in order to create a safe place for any group of students to meet. In the third area, Parent-Student Responsibilities, *Bill 10* added new responsibilities for students and parents to promote and support welcoming, caring, safe and respectful school communities. Essentially, this required that students and parents be accountable for their behaviour in fostering welcoming, caring, safe and respectful school communities. This was to be addressed in the codes of conduct, as developed by each respective school board. In the fourth area, Protections for Staff, the *School Act* and the new LGBTQ guidelines required that school boards were required to provide a welcoming, safe, respectful and caring environment for staff as well as students. Lastly, the fifth area of focus was the creation of *Guidelines for Best Practices: Creating Learning Environments that Respect Diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions*.

The Alberta Human Rights Act

With regard to the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, in December 2015 the Act was amended to provide explicit protection from discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. The declaration of rights and freedoms in the *Alberta Human Rights* Act now recognizes sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; and students across Alberta may now compel their school boards to form GSAs. The amendments to the *School Act* (*Bill 10*) broadened a school board's responsibility to promote a welcoming, safe, caring and respectful environment within school communities to foster a sense of belonging and a respect for diversity. Changes to the *Alberta Human Rights Act* provided explicit protection from discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. This means that schools must strive to ensure that the learning environment is one that welcomes and reflects the

experiences of our diverse student population including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer/questioning students and families.

Guidelines for Best Practices

In November 2015, Alberta Education released *Guidelines for Best Practices: Creating Learning Environments that Respect Diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions*. These guidelines identified best practices in creating and supporting learning environments that respect diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. These guidelines stipulate that schools must ensure "that each and every student, including those with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions, has the educational opportunities and supports needed to be successful in school, and in life" (Alberta Education, 2016, p. 4). School boards were asked to use these best practices to develop or update their related policies, regulations and procedures. In January 2016, the Education Minister asked school boards to submit policies, procedures and regulations related to Bill 10 by March 31, 2016 to the Ministry of Education.

Bill 24

In November 2017, an NDP Alberta Government passed *Bill 24* strengthening rules around GSAs. The passing of the bill capped several weeks of debate over sex education and the rights of students and parents. *Bill 24* ensured that no student would be outed to their parents. The bill made it clear that school officials could not notify parents if their children participated in a GSA except under special circumstances related to safety and wellbeing, such as when a student is under direct threat of harm. *Bill 24* required all school boards in Alberta to adopt policies affirming *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Charter), and ensuring that rights of students and staff, along with their privacy rights are protected. Schools also had to post

those policies on their websites in a "prominent" location before the Bill passed on June 30, 2018. In November 2018, the *Edmonton Journal* reported that 28 private schools were non-compliant and were at risk of losing their funding for not adhering to the legislation. Their non-compliance included either not posting a compliance policy and/or a code of conduct (Clancy, 2018).

Bill 8, The Education Act

The 30th general election was held in Alberta on April 16, 2019. A new Conservative government was elected after four years of the Alberta New Democratic Party leading the province. One of the core tenants of the Conservative platform was to replace the 31-year-old *School Act* with an amended version of the *Education Act*. On June 5, 2019 the new Education Minister, Adriana LaGrange, introduced *Bill 8*, which sought to update the *Education Act* that was passed under the former Progressive Conservative government in 2012, but was never proclaimed. In September 2019, the new *Education Act* came into effect. Two significant changes with regard to the new *Education Act* that pertain to this study follow. Under the previous *School Act*, a principal was required to immediately permit the establishment of a student organization such as a GSA. Of importance was the omission of the word "immediately" from the new act. While school authorities were still required to create policies regarding their responsibility to provide welcoming, caring, respectful and safe environments for students and staff, another change was that the new Act no longer contained the same prescriptive requirements for the content of their policies. Additionally, a provision (similar to the repealed section 11.1 of the *Human Rights Act*) was now included, which stated that "a board shall provide notice to a parent of a student where courses, programs of study or instructional

materials, or instruction or exercises, include subject–matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality" (section 58.1(1)).

Queer Theory

Taking into consideration the research on HBT bullying, including the statistics and the work that was done by the Province of Alberta in terms of policy development and legislation as discussed above, I now turn to queer theory and critical pedagogy to further problematize the current status quo and develop a theoretical framework for my study based on them.

Definition of Queer Theory

Queer theory evolved to counter "a normalizing of (hetero)sexuality as well as from a desire to disrupt insidious, social conventions" (Holman Jones & Adams, 2010, p. 204). Defining queer theory is exceptionally problematic as it defies closure and remains in the process of ambiguous (un)becoming; as such, there is "no critical consensus on the definitional limits of queer" (Jagose, 1996, p. 3). Conversely, "becoming queer is always in process – experienced only in the present, in presence" (Heckert, 2010, p. 43). This concept of being in constant flux necessitates being "comfortable with uncertainty" (Chödrön, 2002). Once there is a comfort in this state of un/becoming, the focus of our work begins to shift to "the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning" (Sedgwick, 1993, p. 8). Heckert (2010) explained that "becoming-queer [then] turns our attention to life itself, remembering that becoming of the self is always already a social transformation" (p. 44). Holman Jones and Adams (2010) entered the conversation when they posited that "fluidity and dynamism characterize queer thought, motivating queer researchers to work against disciplinary legitimization and rigid categorization" (p. 204). Jagose (1996) further described that, "it is not simply that queer has yet to solidify and take on a more consistent profile, but rather that its

definitional indeterminacy, its elasticity, is one of its constituent characteristics" (p. 1). Since there are no definitional limits to queer theory, "[it] is best conceived of as a shifting sensibility rather than a static theoretical paradigm" (Holman Jones & Adams, 2010, p. 204). Queer theory opposes categorization, or systemizing itself, it can be situated within a "reworking of the post-structuralist figuring of identity as a constellation of multiple and unstable position" (Jagose, 1996, p. 3).

Queer Theory as an Extension of Critical Pedagogy

The reason I turn to queer theory is because critical pedagogy does not always specifically identify heteronormativity and cisnormativity as an agent of oppression (Malinowitz, 1995). Consequently, this can suggest that "queerness is silenced in the name of critical liberatory pedagogy" and it can also denote that "queerness and queering are so much a part of the pedagogy that they need not be overtly named" (Hackford-Peer, 2019, p. 80). The silence and omission of queerness in critical pedagogy demands a queer critical pedagogy, "as it requires that the normalization of heteronormativity [and cisnormativity] be removed from its secure location in the realms of the status quo, the unquestioned, the taken-for-granted, and the unnoticed" (Hackford-Peer, 2019, p. 80).

Critical approaches typically scrutinize, analyze, and critique historical or contemporary problems through diverse lenses and from numerous perspectives, revealing unnoticed or concealed truths. I propose that queer theory can be used to intensify critical pedagogy's work, because queer theory carries with it "the promise of new meanings, new ways of thinking and acting politically (Duggan, 1992, p. 11) in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) explained that, "[critical] approaches seek to reflexively step outside of the dominant ideology (insofar as possible) to create a space for

resistive, counter hegemonic knowledge production that destabilizes oppressive material and symbolic relations of dominance" (p. 27). Rincón-Gallardo (2019) maintained that critical pedagogy, with its roots in the work of Paulo Freire, "rejects the notion of neutrality of knowledge and insists that the pursuit of social justice and democracy should not be separate from the practice of teaching and learning" (p. 44). Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy presents the potential to enact social transformation by being able to read the world critically by way of critical literacy. As Freire (1987) proclaimed, "[A] critical reading of reality, whether it takes place in the literacy process or not, and associated above all with the clearly political practices of mobilization and organization, constitutes an instrument of what Antonio Gramsci calls 'counterhegemony'" (p. 24). More recently, Rincón-Gallardo (2019) critiqued critical pedagogy for not achieving its potential, stating that society "has failed to establish a new hegemony … [that society has] fallen short of subverting and redefining the institutional culture and power relationships of schooling … which gets in the way of social justice and democracy" (p. 11). Indeed, while critical pedagogy highlights the oppressive nature of education, it has failed to become the new normal across education systems. That is why I propose, as others have, that queer theory can offer an examination not only of evident oppressive conditions, but also of the heteronormative and cisnormative impact of oppression by extending critical pedagogy. There is still much to value in critical pedagogy's focus on democracy, freedom, social justice, and ethics. Queer theory can help rearticulate what these all mean for sexual and gender minorities.

Sullivan (2003) explained that in "the 1980s critical theorists became increasingly fascinated with the notion of ambiguity and, in particular, with bodies, genders, sexualities, and practices which appeared to defy traditional forms of categorization" (p. 99). Queer theory continued to focus on ambiguity, and went one step further by beginning to "dismantle binary

oppositions such as male/female, nature/culture, heterosexual/homosexual, and so on" (p. 99). Meyer (2007) stated that queer theory "is just another step further down the road initially paved by critical pedagogy, post structural feminism, and theories of emancipatory education" (p. 28). Therefore, queer theory shares critical goals of social justice, but with attention to problematizing the discourse around heteropatriarchal and cisnormative notions of sexual and gender identity as it rejects the essentialism of binary classifications and fixed identities. Hackford-Peer (2019) explained:

> Queer pedagogy extends what is possible to talk about, question, and analyze because, while critical pedagogy calls on students to read the world and pose problems about what they read, queer pedagogy requires that problems are posed that specifically take up the limitations of hegemonic and normative ideas about gender and sexuality. (p. 77)

Queer theory allows for a broadened understanding "based on an intersectional analysis that recognizes how numerous systems of oppression interact to regulate … the lives of most people (Cohen, 1997, p. 441). On that same note, Meyer (2007), in writing about the similarities between queer and critical pedagogies explained that:

> Queer theorists have consciously worked to understand the many intersecting layers of dominance and oppression as possible. Liberatory pedagogy and queer pedagogy are mutually reinforcing philosophies that share a radical vision of education as the path to achieving a truly equitable and just society. (p. 25)

Thus, queer theory extends the work of critical pedagogy since "it is less a matter of explaining the repression" of sexual and gender minorities than an analysis of the "power/knowledge regime that shapes the ordering of desires, behaviours, social institutions, and social relations" and is summed up as "the constitution of the self and society" (Seidman, 1995, p. 128). As Hackford-

Peer (2019) stated, “queer pedagogy augments critical pedagogy” in order to engender a “queer conscientization” among students (pp. 77–79). She defined a queer critical pedagogy as “a pedagogy that utilizes elements of critical pedagogy to engage in theoretically queer projects—projects aimed at naming, interrupting, and destabilizing normative practices and beliefs” (p. 76). The need for a multiperspective queer critical pedagogy for this study was essential, as it encompassed a wider lens of what is possible to be discussed, problematized, and scrutinized.

What Queer Theory Can Do re: Critiques of Heteronormativity and Cisnormativity

Queer theory responds to the normalizing discourse, specifically around heterosexuality, and heteronormativity. Historically, heterosexuality has been accepted as the norm with a binary construct of either heterosexuality or homosexuality. One of queer theory’s aims is to disrupt “the constructed social nature of these unwritten gender expectations,” (Ryan et al., 2013, p. 92) which have been generated and maintained historically, and are now entrenched within a contemporary sociocultural fabric, by queering imperialist and essentialist concepts of self and other. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) stated that, “queer theory is an interdisciplinary, social justice-oriented perspective that seeks equality for the sexually marginalized” (p. 25). Using a queer lens can initiate a discourse that disrupts heteronormativity and cisnormativity and the oppression they can cause. As Quinlivan and Town (1999) explained, “Queer theory draws on the philosophies of the gay liberation movement and aspects of lesbian feminism in its aims to destabilize and critique heterosexuality, emphasize sexual diversity, draw attention to gender specifics and frame sexuality as institutional rather than personal” (p. 511). Thus, queer theory developed as an activist approach, with a purpose of disrupting “rigid categories and normalizing discourses and practices” (Taylor, 2010, p. 69). Britzman (1995) explained that it “begins to engage difference as the grounds of politicality and community” (p. 152). Queer theory is not

limited to theorizing about gender and sexual identities, what is more, it "offers a critique of reigning ideologies of subjectivity, power, and meaning" (Greene, 1996, p. 326). Queer theory seeks to problematize concepts of identity by destabilizing universalisms and meta-narratives that are taken-for-granted and often (mis)understood, and by undermining the hegemonic and socionormative application of attitudes, behaviours and beliefs onto others, and the practices by which heteronormativity and cisnormativity are ensconced (Britzman, 1995; Greene, 1996; Meyer, 2019; Morris, 2000).

Queer Theory in Education

Stein and Plummer (1994) posited that heterosexuality is normalized in education (and in other arenas) and called on queer theorists to interrogate societal understandings and disrupt "sexual power as embodied in different levels of social life, expressed discursively and enforced through boundaries and binary divides" (pp. 181–182). Queer theory can interrogate our implicit, taken-for-granted assumptions of heteronormativity and cisnormativity that lead to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia within schools. For example, the heteronormative rhetoric around a gender binary has caused schools to have male and female washrooms only, and as a result, it forces individuals to gender identify in limited binary ways and creates unfounded fears about who might be in the washroom. It is only recently that schools have started to incorporate all gender or universal use washrooms in their buildings, and unfortunately in many cases it is only one washroom for the entire building. Another example is evident in athletics at school; teams fall into the gender binary: there are boys' teams and there are girls' teams. This creates barriers and dilemmas for gender diverse students who do not fit prescribed binary categories for playing sports. More recently, school boards and athletics associations have permitted students, regardless of sex, to join any team. However, this still poses problems of marginalization for

sexual and gender minority groups, as often heteronormative attitudes and beliefs shape the culture of these teams. For example, from my experience as a teacher, I recall a female student joining the football team. One of the first questions that came up in conversation in the staffroom was, “Is she a lesbian?” The second question was: “Can she play on the junior team because our senior boys are a really strong team?” These two comments are ripe with heteronormative, sexist and genderist oppression. They perpetuate stereotypes. They stigmatize, and they are deeply embedded in a misogynistic rhetoric.

Curriculum theorist William Pinar (1998a) first began to destabilize gender categories and critique hegemonic masculinity in education in the early 1980s with his article *Understanding Curriculum as Gender Text*. He highlighted:

> To understand curriculum as gender text is to subject the curriculum and its discourses to feminist analysis, radical homosexual or gay analysis, and gender analysis, which are concerned with the unequal ways people are regarded due to their gender and sexuality, and the ways we construct and are constructed by the prevailing system of gender. (p. 359)

His article summarized major historical discourses in feminist theory and gender research within the curriculum field and opened for critique the mainstream hegemonic masculinity that “forms and deforms” the normal heterosexist ways of knowing (p. 403). Pinar (2003) specified that “democratization … cannot proceed without a radical restructuring of hegemonic white male subjectivity” (p. 357). This then becomes the pedagogical project of queer theory in education.

Implications for Work in Schools

Bryson and de Castell (1993) articulated the objectives, forming ideologies, content, and outcomes of their engagement in the production of queer theory in education and described

queering education as "a radical form of educative praxis implemented deliberately to interfere with, to intervene in, the production of 'normalcy' in schooled subjects" (p. 285). The authors concluded that all discourse and action within education are always "permeated with the continuous and inescapable backdrop of white heterosexual dominance" (p. 285).

Britzman (1995) further examined what a queer theory might have to (re)offer in the (re)thinking of knowledge and pedagogy in her article Is *There a Queer Pedagogy? Or, Stop Reading Straight* in the journal *Educational Theory.* In this article Britzman posited that to work within a queer theory allows for two pedagogical stakes:

> [It] has to do with thinking ethically about what discourses of difference, choice, and visibility mean in classrooms, in pedagogy and in how education can be thought about. [Secondly, it] has to do with thinking through structures of disavowal within education, or the refusals whether curricular, social, or pedagogical – to engage a traumatic perception that produces the subject of difference as a disruption, as the outside to normalcy. (p. 152)

These pedagogical stakes are significant, as they problematize our conceptual landscape of normalization and begin to engage differences on the levels of politicality and community. She further explained that in order to rethink pedagogy and knowledge there needs to be an insistence on queer theory's three methods, all of which require "thinking against the thought" of educational foundations. The first, "the study of limits," maintained that the existing discourse in education on inclusion and inclusive practice, within an equity framework, promotes heterosexism by reinforcing and reaffirming heterosexuality's status as the universal and natural norm (pp. 156–160). This is fueled by hegemonic heteronormativity, which has often become an unconscious cultural and societal bias "that privileges heterosexuality and ignores or

underrepresents diversity in attraction and behavior by assuming all people are heterosexual" (Taylor et al., 2015, p. 7). Secondly, Britzman explored the notion of "thinking the unthinkable," which would involve an inquiry into the "study of ignorance." Through this concept, she described the importance of fracturing the homo/hetero binary by rethinking pedagogy and allowing opportunities to explore claims of truth and sexuality (pp. 160–162). Thirdly, the "study of reading practices" examined how one can read for alterity, rather than for a replication and reiteration of sameness. Queering sameness by exploring alterity can open avenues that can disrupt the normalizing practices of a patriarchal heteronormative and cisnormative hegemony. Britzman described this process as an ongoing dialogue with the self and the practice of theorizing how one reads in order to understand what one "cannot bear to know" (pp. 163–164). Finally, Britzman provided an explanation of how queer theory impacts pedagogy:

> Queer theory offers methods of critiques to mark the repetitions of normalcy as a structure and as a pedagogy. Whether defining normalcy as an approximation of limits and mastery, or as renunciations, as the refusal of difference itself, queer theory insists on posing the production of normalization as a problem of culture and of thought. (p. 154)

A critical and queer pedagogy gives teachers agency to generate discourse around customarily silenced topics and create "zones of possibilities" (Edelman, 1994, p. 114) where students can interrupt the taken-for-granted assumptions that are generated through heteronormative and cisnormative discourses of sex and gender, which can then be located, problematized, deconstructed, and exploited.

Luhmann's (1998) essay, *Queering/Querying Pedagogy? Or, Pedagogy is a Pretty Queer Thing*, argued that queer pedagogy seeks to challenge conservatism, particularly heteronormativity, pushing boundaries of traditional classrooms by posing "interminable

questions" (p. 151). It is in exploring these questions, that cultural bias, who/what determines "normal," and how normalcy is maintained within educational settings, become interrogated. Quinlivan and Town (1999) described how *hetero* normalizing practices are maintained and espoused within schools by the "maintenance of silences, the pathologisation of (homo)sexualities, and the policing of gender boundaries" (p. 509).

In my study, a queer lens was used to explore the lived experience of LGBTQ youth, and the common and taken-for-granted assumptions within schools, which lead to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying and harassment. Meyer (2007) posited that, "queer theory offers educators a lens through which educators can transform their praxis so as to explore and celebrate the tensions and new understandings created by teaching new ways of seeing the world" (p. 15). It is through this lens that I responded to Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli's (2003) argument that "bullying needs to be understood in terms which acknowledge the regime of normalizing practices" (p. 54). Within a queer theoretical paradigm, my research queered, challenged, and disrupted traditional ways of knowing and began to problematize our heteronormative and cisnormative school culture. To do so, I utilized a queer ethnodrama as the methodology, which I discuss in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Research Design

Rationale for the Research Approach

Methodologically speaking, this research promises to advance knowledge in arts-based research through an integration of queer theory, ethnography and theatre performance. Based on my personal experiences, my research addresses a social problem that is current, relevant, and pervasive in Canada. Together, Egale's climate survey (Taylor, et al., 2011) and *The Every Teacher Project* (Taylor, et al., 2015) powerfully illustrated that HBT bullying and harassment are pervasive and detrimental forces negatively affecting school climates across the country. While the data was very alarming, the focus was quantitative analysis; what was currently missing in the research was youths' voices. When addressing this very human problem of conflict, I believe it was important to bring in youth narratives, to witness their stories and to empower them by giving them agency to make their voices heard. Rincón-Gallardo (2019) beautifully stated:

> Through narrative we engage the heart: we connect affectively with injustice, hope and the desire to do what's right. Story is how we translate our core values into action. Social movements use their stories to access and mobilize the emotions that enable human agency. Movement stories bring to the surface an experienced dissonance between the world as it is and the world as it should be; they link members and their cause to their core traditions, their values, and their sense of personal dignity. They communicate a sense of urgency to take action. They instill hope and the courage to act. And they inspire a sense of efficacy (the belief in one's ability to change the world for the better) and belonging among its members. (p. 80)

In my research I employed ethnodrama as a form of ethnodramatic inqueery to answer the research question: *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta high schools related to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying?* And I took up a secondary question: *How can queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

Conrad (2004) stated that "a postmodern attitude toward 'truth' and the production of knowledge has legitimized an abundance of alternative approaches to doing research and new forms of representing research in the social sciences" (p. 15). My approach, discussed further in the methodology section below, was innovative and importantly permitted the youth, as participants and co-researchers, to explore experiences, opinions and emotions, to gain insight into their understandings and to generate new discourse with the aim of opening avenues to create social change by giving agency and voice to LGBTQ youth. The intention was that this work would provoke new ways of seeing and thinking about LGBTQ issues through the ethnodrama method.

In studying previous ethnodrama projects, I did not come across an ethnodrama that was implicitly and theoretically shaped by queer theory, and that is why I qualified this ethnodrama as an *ethnodramatic inqueery*. A queer lens brought forth a new form of engagement and dialogue about the world we live in, and also introduced a new take on ethnodramatic research. My hopes were that my research would contribute to qualitative research methods, educational policymaking, bullying prevention programs, and improve the quality of life for school-aged youth by offering new insights, which could create changes of attitude.

Drama and Bullying

Given that bullying has become a major concern in schools nationally and internationally, many bullying prevention and anti-bullying interventions are available. Since the mid 1990s

numerous dramatic techniques and interventions have been utilized in anti-bullying research (Nolte, 2000; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Parsons, 2005; Belliveau, 2007; Zins et al., 2007; Burton, 2008). There is "compelling evidence that dramatic enactment can be effective in enabling students of all ages to understand and deal with bullying" (Burton et al., 2009, p. 4). This is one of the primary reasons why I chose an ethnodrama to answer my research questions. Additionally, students have reported that they prefer the use of drama to other approaches in anti-bullying programs (Zins, et al., 2007). Ethnodrama has the potential to be participatory, engaging and interactive; it also has the capacity for research dissemination through a wide range of media (live performance, recorded performance, written text) and to various audiences (academic, public, youth).

To exemplify some of the drama strategies that have been developed, beginning in 1994, DRACON, a ten-year interdisciplinary and comparative action research project was envisioned with the aim of improving the way school aged adolescents dealt with conflict through the use of educational drama (Lofgren & Malm, 2005). Beale and Scott (2001) utilized a psychoeducational drama approach in *Bullybusters*, by dramatizing through role play, the negative impacts of bullying and then educating the student audiences by engaging them in exploring how they could overcome bullying's negative effects. Another example is the *Cooling Conflict* model based on eight years of research and development in Australian schools, using enhanced forum theatre to build relationships and to address bullying (O'Toole, Burton, & Plunkett, 2005). In Alberta, over the past several seasons, Concrete Theatre produced *The Bully Project* (Ouchi, 2014). This interactive play tours in elementary and in junior high schools and explores the complex reasons underlying bullying behavior, and what young people and the adults and communities who care

about them can do about it. A study guide is sent to the school prior to the performance and can be utilized by teachers seeking prevention and anti-bullying exercises and resources.

While various modes of drama have been utilized as intervention techniques against bullying, research suggests that the most successful interventions within the school context focus on all stakeholders; the student, the classroom, and the entire school climate (Beale & Scott, 2001; Whitted & Dupper, 2005; Olweus & Limber, 2011). Ethnodrama, as described further in this chapter, can in fact target various stakeholders. In her research on mindfulness, Macy (2007) posited that what is needed is an attentiveness to what is seen, felt, and known in order to find authenticity and healing. This can be realized within the imaginary realm of theatre, and although ethnodrama has yet to be utilized specifically with the topic of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying from the students' perspective, there is extensive evidence that drama provides opportunities to create and experiment with life-like models of conflict, even ones drawn from real life, which are "made safe" by being altered and made fictional (Belliveau, 2007; Belliveau & Lea, 2016). Below I offer some examples of ethnodramatic work that have been done with sexual and gender minorities.

The Ethnodramatic Inqueery Process

The ethnodramatic process can create a "collective vision" for any community and that vision is existential (Brook, l990). That is to say, the individual participants build the vision, while in turn the group is being shaped and reshaped by the vision that it is building. How the vision in ethnodrama is realized must be experiential and reflexive. It is in the experiential and reflexive processes (the actions we take also affect us) that the concretization of thinking and the possibilities for change and agency are explored. This exploration is always through "praxis" a process of action and reflection (Freire, 1970). Reflective discourse (standing back from the

action experience) provides opportunities for analysis, question making and answering, integrating personal experience, and sharing values and beliefs.

Denzin (2003) indicated that "performed experiences are sites where felt emotion, memory, desire, and understanding come together" (p. 13). It is this significant reflection of visceral experience that determines the effectiveness of ethnodrama as a methodology that has potential to give voice and agency to its participants. Through reflexive practice individuals' contributions are then negotiated into a common understanding out of which the group defines the new choices that require further exploration and action. This negotiation of meanings, through action and reflection, is the central work of the ethnodrama once it is performed, as it opens avenues for voice, agency and social change. An ethnodrama performance can provide a visceral witnessing of the lived experiences of participants and as such, it can become a catalyst for new approaches to see and think about issues important to the communities to which participants belong.

Within my research, participants were asked to share their narratives of HBT bullying and harassment and its impact on their lives. While some participants recalled narratives that focused on negative outcomes, I also solicited narratives about transgressing HBT bullying so that participants could share narratives of action, agency and transformation. For example, one of the youth shared a tragic story about how they were physically assaulted at school; they ended up in the hospital, with a concussion, a broken rib and a spinal neck injury. There was a lot of discussion within our group about the events that led up to it, and the lack of justice after the event from what the youth experienced. This youth expressed that they were deliberately targeted and victimized, and that this was a hate crime because of the homonegative remarks that led up to the event and that were used during the attack. After the youth had shared in significant detail

what had occurred, I validated their feelings by emphasizing how difficult and hurtful this would have been – but I did not leave it there. I asked questions about how they were able to bounce back from this experience, what actions they took after the fact, and a year later what had changed for them at the school. These questions solicited responses that led to deeper conversations. The youth shared how they had to develop a safety plan around their school day, that they had to have a heightened awareness with respect to their environment and those around them, and that they attended GSA more often to be around more accepting youth.

Rincón-Gallardo (2019), described "critical communities" as agents of change, these are fundamental to the ethnodrama process; he defines a critical community as a "relatively small network of people who develop shared understandings of a problem and a stance on how to address it" (p. 57). The potential for the LGBTQ community, with respect to the ethnodrama I facilitated, was in imagining possibilities for social change, through giving the youth a voice and the agency to tell their stories in view of what is happening in the world today. Rincón-Gallardo (2019), further explained that "critical communities serve as incubators of new ideas, social and political movements carry these ideas to a wider audience, to provoke critical examination of existing values, and to create both social and political pressure for change" (p. 57). This happens in ethnodrama because the form creates a "third space" (Mitchell, 1995; Stevenson & Deasy, 2005). Greenwood (2005) defined this space as "evolving out of dialogues, confrontations, accommodations, risk taking and unplanned discoveries" (p. 4) in the theatre process, as a multiplicity of avenues for change, realizations and expectations are brought together to create a social democracy. Ethnodrama is dialogic, offering multiple avenues for communication through the medium of performance that then become sites for further action and inquiry. Eisner (2006) wrote that, "through our [art]work we enrich the conversation and refine our sensitivity to the

subtle but significant aspects of the situation we are examining" (p. 16). What happens in the world of ethnodrama is the creation of meaning and it is these negotiated meanings that lie at the core of dramatic engagement. It is through this meaning making that new understandings can emerge as the process can open up the lived world of those who are silenced and marginalized. "Ethnodrama can enact a politics of resistance and possibility by giving voice to the previously silenced" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. x); thus, contributing to radical social change that extends "the principles of a radical democracy to all aspects of society" (Giroux, 2001, p. 25).

Methodology: Queer Ethnodrama

The term ethnodrama can be understood by examining its roots etymologically – ethnos and dran. The *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* defines "ethnos" as the Greek prefix meaning "nation" or "people," as it is applied to a specific cultural group, and is highly related to the word "ethnic" (Onions, 1996, p. 329). "Drama" is also derived from Greek, specifically from the word dran*,* which means to "do" or to "act." "Drama" often denotes the representation of a "deed" or an "action," like a story being told through action in a "play" (Onions, 1996, p. 288). When combined, these two terms suggest the representation of a specific cultural group's story through action within a theatrical performance. Ethnodrama as a research methodology (also sometimes known as performance ethnography, verbatim theatre, and nonfiction playwriting) is the scripting and theatrical staging of qualitative research (Saldaña, 2005, 2011). Unlike a scholarly article simply read in a performative manner, while seated behind a table or standing behind a podium, ethnodrama actively reconstructs fieldwork data into monologue or dialogue to resemble a theatrical performance mounted for an audience.

Ethnodrama is cultural by definition; it examines those values that control our actions by "looking at life's rules" through re-creation (Bolton, 1998). Exploring these life rules generates

opportunities for change beyond the context of the stage. Ethnodrama allows for an understanding of the performed content in ways that are contextual, constructive and collaborative, because the themes are enacted and above all, social. Ethnodrama permits a rethinking of attitudes surrounding marginalized populations, by allowing opportunities for change to occur. As a form of ethnographic research, ethnodrama focuses on the lived experiences of a given group or community, and with community members' consent, uses their authentic narratives in an embodied format to enlighten other community members by means of a theatre performance. That is to say, ethnodrama is "concerned with decoding and rendering accessible the culturally specific signs, symbols, aesthetics, behaviours, language and experiences of health informants [or other informants] using accepted theatrical practices" (Mienczakowski, 2001, p. 468). Ethnodrama uses action methods to facilitate creativity, imagination, learning, insight and growth. In the context of my research, a queer ethnodrama in service to understanding the experiences of queer students holds the potential to empower stakeholders to initiate change in their schools and community cultures. If queering the hegemony of heteronormativity and cisnormativity can raise an awareness of our fears, then the "discomfort [that this awareness causes] is greeted as a good sign of our attachments and aversions, and welcomed as an opportunity to investigate its source and nature and practice acceptance and release" (Eppert, 2008, p. 98).

Psychodrama's Relation to Ethnodrama

Psychodrama can be considered a precursor to ethnodrama. Psychodrama is a form of psychotherapy created by Dr. Jacob Levy Moreno (1946) as "an emancipatory approach" (Blatner, 2000, p. 2), wherein clients explore psychological and social problems, through enacting scenes from their lives, dreams or fantasies instead of simply talking about them as in

typical talk therapy (Blatner, 2000). This "deep action method" serves to "express unexpressed feelings, gain new insights and understandings, and practice new and more satisfying behaviours" (Garcia & Buchanan, 2009, p. 393).

American anthropologist Joseph Bram (1953) may have been the first to coin the term ethnodrama in *The Application of Psychodrama to Research in Social Anthropology*, an article published in the journal *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*. In discussion with Moreno, the founder of Psychodrama, Bram (1953) became interested in the possibilities of psychodrama as a method for anthropological research, and as "a wonderful tool for cross-cultural study of human behavior" (p. 255). Bram reflected how "[he] suggested to Dr. Moreno that psychodrama, when used in this [research] context, should be identified under a separate name, such as ethnodrama" (p. 255). There currently is no other known reference by Bram to ethnodrama, and perhaps one can presume that it was a suggested hybrid between psychodrama and ethnography (discussed below). There is little evidence that Bram, or any other anthropologist or psychodramatist, articulated in great detail this proposed research methodology known as ethnodrama. Bram left only the brief mention alluded to above, suggesting that the psychodramatic method can be of service to social anthropology; regretfully, there is no known outline written by Bram or Moreno on this method. It is my interpretation that ethnography, when coupled with psychodrama, becomes ethnodrama, and thus yields the potential for evoking personal stories, that in turn become the narrative for an emancipatory performance. Narratives are culturally grounded and within this study they are situated in a queer cultural context.

Ethnography's Relation to Ethnodrama

Ethnography hails from cultural anthropology, as a "description of particular contemporary culture by means of direct fieldwork" (Ferraro & Andreatta, 2010, p. 11), and

"aims to get a holistic understanding of how individuals in different cultures and subcultures makes sense of their lived reality" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 193). Ethnographers are researchers who embed themselves within a specific setting with a particular cultural group. They observe and record the day-to-day lived experiences of this group and then provide detailed accounts of everyday practices and customs usually in the form of a written document. Ellen (1984) in his historical analysis of ethnography, stated that ethnography is something "you may do, study, use, read or write," and, as such, there have become "various uses [that] reflect ways in which different scholars have appropriated the term, often for perfectly sound conceptual reasons" (pp. 7–8).

A critique of traditional ethnography is that it has exploited and appropriated cultural knowledge for research purposes. This appropriation becomes ethically problematic when writing ethnographically and equally, if not even more so, when performing the data. In the case of this study, I am a part of the queer community and belong to queer culture. My status as an insider, coupled with my life history, influenced my relationship with the participants because I could relate and empathize with their experiences, as I too experienced HBT bullying and harassment in high school. Additionally, the value of including LGBTQ youth as co-researchers in the inqueery helped reduce ethically problematic issues of appropriation and representation as they participated in a validation process at several stages of the study. I speak to ethical considerations specific to this study later in this chapter.

Conquergood (2003) acknowledged that "moral and ethical questions get stirred to the surface because ethnographers of performance explode the notion of aesthetic distance" (p. 2). Aesthetic distance is important, because within theatre it is "a marker of the relationship between an actor and a role, a group of actors and its audience" (Landy, 2009, p. 72). According to Scheff

(1979) “at aesthetic distance, there is a balance of thought and feeling. There is a deep emotional resonance, but also a feeling of control” (p. 64). Landy (2009) explained that people are present in everyday life “along a continuum of overdistance, an overabundance of thought; aesthetic distance, a balance of feeling and thought; and underdistance, an overabundance of emotion” (p. 72). Situating aesthetic distance midway between being overly-distant and under-distanced from thoughts and feelings requires an opening-up process where an examination of value laden perspectives, biases, and taken-for-granted assumptions occurs. Bailey (2009) described this as “a state in which one can feel and think and experience being connected to one’s body/mind/emotions all at once” (p. 378). It is also through this balance that meaning making can occur both for the audience and for the participants. Ethically, working with participants as co-researchers has immense value in an effort to avoid appropriation or exploitation of their lived experiences.

Denzin (2014) proposed that ethnographers need to de-center and challenge their voices, so that the voice and perspective of the other is equally represented in the writing and performance; this then becomes the researcher’s responsibility in presenting the material ethically. Giroux (1992) termed this as the “politics of location” when referring to how one’s own social, political, and cultural influences need to be understood, as:

> Knowledge and power come together not merely to reaffirm or exoticize experience and difference but to open up these domains to broader theoretical considerations, to tease out their limitations, and to engage a vision of community in which diverse voices define themselves in terms of their distinct historical and social formations and broader collective hopes. (p. 3)

To address this ethical dilemma, Conquergood (2003) proposed a "moral mapping of performative stances toward the other" wherein he described five different positions to ethnographic writing and performance (p .4). He identified four out of the five positions as problematic areas where ethnographic tensions lie and should be avoided. The first position, "the custodian's rip off" is guided by selfishness and assumes an attitude of "finding some good performance material" (p. 5). Conquergood described this first position as "plunder more than a performance," that does not honor the significance of other and he likened it to "theft and rape" (p. 5). The second position, "the enthusiast's infatuation" presents a shallow representation of subject or participant and becomes unethical as it trivializes the other. "The curator's exhibitionism," which sensationalizes and situates the other through a shocking and astonishing depiction, rather than from a place of understanding, creates distance and inaccessibility to the content due to the exotification of other (p. 7). The fourth position, "the skeptic's cop out" is completely removed and distanced and "shuts down the very idea of entering into conversation with the other before the attempt, however problematic, begins" (p. 8). Rather than struggle with the ethicality of performing sensitive material, this position is rife with a nihilistic attitude seeded in prejudice and mistrust. Finally, Conquergood presented "dialogical performance" as a path to genuine understanding of the other. He situated this position as the mid-point between the previous four, a way of finding the moral centre as much as it is an indicator that one is ethically grounded" (p. 10). Within this position, the ethnographer speaks to and with the other rather than about the other.

Giroux (2005) considered this a key tenet of critical pedagogy and refers to it as student "authorship" that nurtures youth agency by giving them voice to speak around the silences. Furthermore, Giroux (1992) explained that:

> We can never speak inclusively as the Other, though we may be the Other with respect to issues of race, class, or gender. But we can certainly work with diverse Others to deepen both our own and their understanding of the complexity of the traditions, histories, knowledges, and politics that all of us bring to schools and other cultural sites. (pp. 3–4)

By bringing together different voices, perspectives, and values, the research entered into a dialogical interaction, rather than an appropriation of material. It is also important to acknowledge that being a queer researcher who worked with queer participants was also very different than traditional ethnographic work, because I did not enter the world and reality of my participants as a complete outsider. Rather, as a cultural insider, my participants and I related to one another and formed shared understandings, and I avoided objectifying or exoticizing the participants from the lens of a traditional ethnographer researching another culture.

Traditional ethnography has opened up to other more reflexive, ethical forms of representation to portray cultural groups. Clifford (1986) believed that "ethnography is an emergent interdisciplinary phenomenon. Its authority and rhetoric have spread to many fields where 'culture' is a newly problematic object of description and critique" (p. 2). He went on to posit that "since that starting point of a crisis in anthropology" (p. 3) explorations in writing and other methods of representation have begun and that the writing of ethnography can be "evocative or artfully composed in addition to being factual" (p. 4).

Over 50 years after Bram (1953), John O'Toole (2006), an Australian drama/theatre researcher, confirmed that ethnodrama was first proposed by anthropologists "looking for a way of keeping alive the very visceral and embodied experiences of human social behaviour that they investigate, [through which] they hit upon the idea of re-embodying it, re-creating it through dramatic performance – turning the research report into theatre" (p. 42). The discussion below

compares and contrasts ethnodramatic methods based on Bram's initial description, drawing on the work of two more recent scholars: Mienczakowski's work in the 1990s in Australia, and Saldaña's in the 2000s in the United States.

Performance Ethnography

Mienczakowski (2001) recognized the importance that anthropologist Victor Turner (1986) had on the development of his own work, combining "the aesthetic assumptions of performance and the methodological and theoretical ambitions of research" (Mienczakowski, 2001, p. 468). In the 1980s, Turner suggested the "performance of ethnographies" as a means of further deepening the understanding and the depth of the cultural experience of a particular community and as a medium to devise a sort of "reflexive anthropology." Turner was one of the original progenitors of this proposed new tradition of ethnography in the social science research, which was further developed by scholars such as Mienczakowski and later Saldaña as an "educational and ethnographic practice, which in turn helps to create the pedagogical conditions necessary for emancipatory schooling" (Denzin, 2003, p. 31). More recently, Denzin (2003), called for research to be pedagogical, political and performative. He emphasized that performance ethnography can become "a way of acting on the world in order to change it" (p. 228). Denzin (2001) advocated for a performative social science, writing that, "viewing culture as a complex performative process, it seeks to understand how people enact and construct meaning in their daily lives. This is … a social science that has learned how to critically use the reflexive, dialogical interview" (p. 43).

The concepts expressed in Denzin's (2001, 2003) statements have an important theoretical influence on ethnography and the "crisis of representation" with respect to the style of research I engaged with for this research project. Denzin highlighted the value for using

performance coupled with social science research, such as ethnography; additionally, he emphasized the potential of the "reflexive interview" to unearth the subjectivity of people's lives. It is this significant reflection of visceral experience that lays the foundation for the pedagogical efficacy of ethnodrama. Denzin (1997) posited that ethnodrama is "the single most powerful way for ethnography to recover yet interrogate the meanings of lived experience" (p. 94) and later he asserted that "performed experiences are sites where felt emotion, memory, desire, and understanding come together" (Denzin, 2003, p. 13). In relation to my research, it was within this coming together that participant validation occurred, as well as in the post-performance discussion.

Ethnodrama as an Arts-Based Approach

The core research framework for ethnodrama is qualitative, and even more specifically, art(s)-based. McNiff (2013) stated that art-based research is "a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies" (p. 29). He further argued that art-based research has the potential to generate data that is more authentic and richer in that it "often feels more accurate, original, and intelligent than more conventional descriptions" (p. 30). In considering writing on culture and other methods of representation, James Clifford (1986) surmised "that scientific anthropology is also an art, and that ethnographies have literary qualities" (p. 4). Saldaña, a scholar of ethnodrama, to whom I refer throughout my research, further developed this concept of art and research merging together, by bridging qualitative research with theatre, when he stated:

> Qualitative researchers and theatre artists serve each other through collaborative development and presentation of ethnodramas. Scholars in ethnography have much to contribute to those initially educated as artists, and artists well-versed in the creative

> process and products of theatre have much to offer ethnographers. Both disciplines, after all, share a common goal: to create a unique, insightful, and engaging text about the human condition. (2005, p. 29)

Barone and Eisner (2012) explained that arts-based research affords us the opportunities to make deeper and more complex understandings of some particular aspects of our lives, and in turn our world, because through the arts we can "empathize with the experience of others" (p. 3). They wrote that arts make "empathic participation possible because they create forms that are evocative and compelling" (p. 3). In theatre, I have witnessed the possibility of being emotionally moved by some kind of dramatic action on stage, as I empathize with a character's plight or dilemma, whereas if I just read a research report, the empathetic connection would be less emotional and more intellectual. The arts permit us a deeper engagement with meaning-making as we confront and negotiate the experiences we witness.

Related Performed Research Approaches

Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) indicated that academics and ethnographers often work with an "ethno" label to situate their work within a qualitative and/or ethnographic research model (p. 22). A multitude of terms is used to identify performed research/research-based theatre. The following are some of the related terms found in the literature that fall under the performed research/research-based theatre umbrella.[11] These include but are not limited to:

ethnodrama
ethnotheatre
scripted research
research-based theatre
interview theatre
research as performance ethnography
performance text ethnographic drama
performance (auto)ethnography

[11] This list is based on Saldaña (2005, p. 34) and Ackroyd & O'Toole (2010, p. 22).

ethnographic performance	documentary theatre
generative autobiography	verbatim theatre
performative inquiry	presentational theatre
performative research	living theatre
performed research	ethno-mimesis
public voice ethnography conversational	natural performance
dramatism	informance
theatre as representation	mystory
performance anthropology	theatre of fact
reflexive anthropology	readers' theatre
narradrama	embodied methodological praxis
docudrama	dramatic commentary on interview data
metadrama	reality theatre

The terms/categories/labels and the language we use, are often associated with the context within which we work. Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) stated that "the literature suggests that those who have an education background and use their work in a pedagogic context appear to favour the term ethnodrama" (p. 26). I would have to concur with this statement, as I intended to use this as a pedagogical tool for transformation. The ethnodrama methodology best suited what I set out to do for this study. Moreover, ethnodrama has been established as a scholarly methodology with defining parameters. Furthermore, there are nuances, implications, and differences for each of the above methods. Ethnodrama differs from others, as it maintains a "close allegiance to the lived experiences of real people while presenting their stories" and capturing "verisimilitude and universality through their primary sources for monologue and

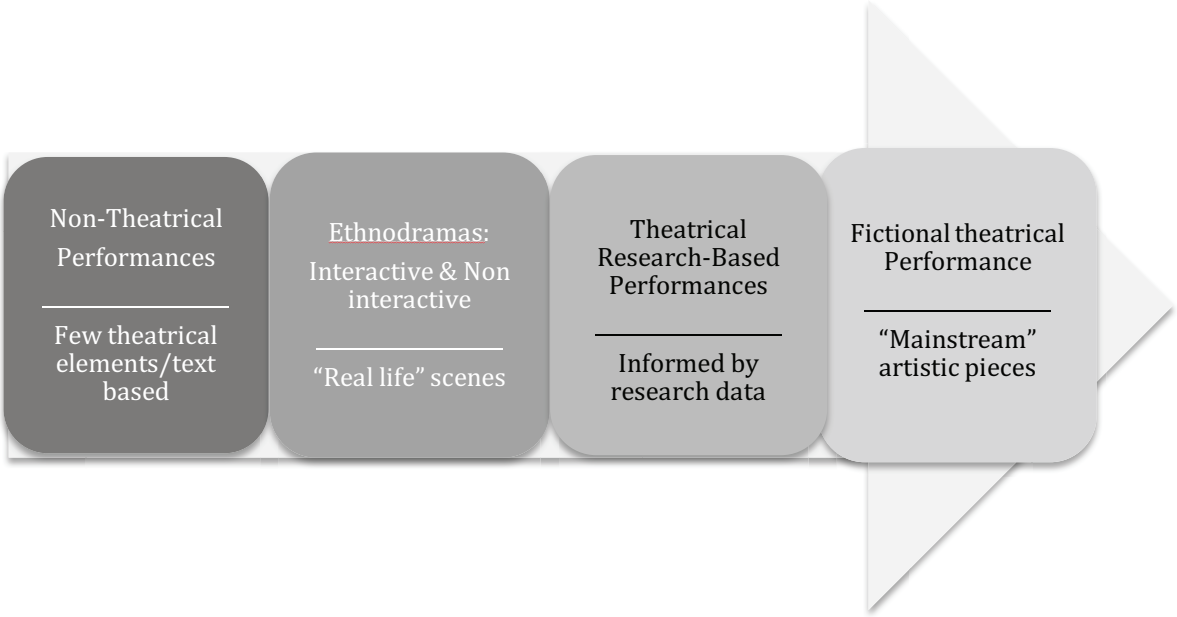
dialogue: reality" (Saldaña 2005, p. 3). Another point of difference from some of the other forms is "that dialogue is present in descriptions of ethnodrama" and ethnographic practices, but "appears less in descriptions of community theatre, theatre of fact, verbatim and documentary theatres" (Ackroyd & O'Toole, 2010, p. 25). Dialogue throughout the ethnodrama process is a marker significance, as it is woven throughout the entire process: from the dialogic interviews, the scripting process, the participant validation, and the post performances discussions. Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) identified that due to this dialogic sense, ethnodrama appears to be in a "different branch of the performing research family tree" than the other related fields listed above (p. 25). It is important to acknowledge that while there may exist differences in performance style, research processes, audience and purpose, among the above list, many of the categories overlap and blend into each other. This is to say that while there may be defining characteristics, as there are with ethnodrama, they are not exclusive or strict categories and depending on the context and intentions, of the research and researcher's background different terms can be utilized synonymously – this is also why I propose the term ethnodramatic inqueery to situate the work within a queer paradigm.

Belliveau and Lea's (2016) *Research-Based Theatre: An Artistic Methodology,* provided 12 examples of contemporary research-based theatre that have emerged over the last decade in education, health and community. They defined "research-based theatre" as theatre within a research process that "has potential to engage researchers and audiences in critical and empathetic explorations within live and ephemeral space" (p. 11). Canadian researchers Rossiter and colleagues (2008) have categorized and analyzed four theatre genres that have been used for/as research: (1) non-theatrical performances; (2) ethnodramas; (3) theatrical research-based performances; and (4) fictional theatrical. Their four categories are situated along a "continuum,

moving from a very close alignment with data to purely fictional accounts of health-related topics" (p. 131).

Figure 4

Four Genres of Performance Research (Rossiter et al., 2008)



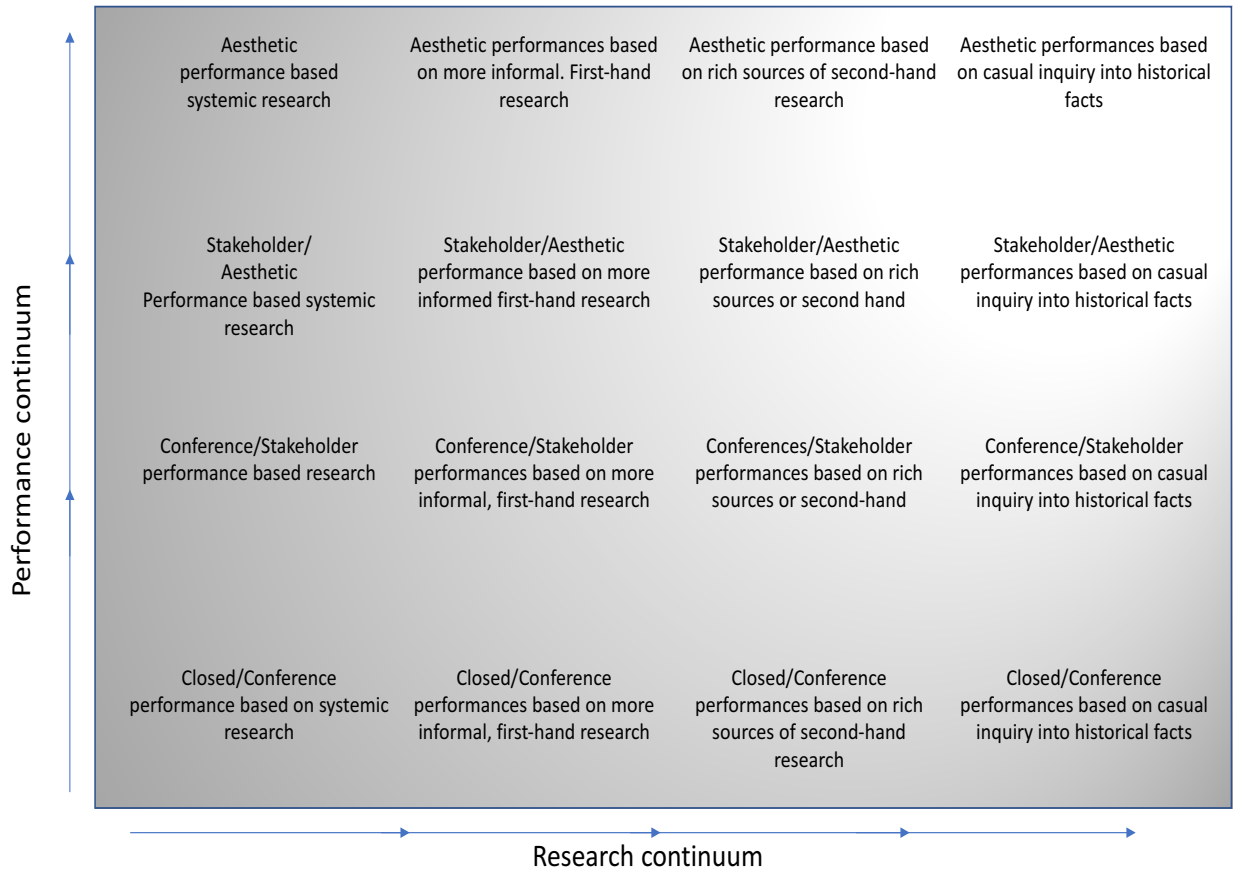
In describing ethnodramatic performance, Rossiter et al. (2008) suggested that "real life scenes" should emerge directly from the research; its purpose is to communicate the research findings; it should remain truthful to the participants and their narratives; the focus should be on verisimilitude and realism, not solely aesthetic considerations; all the while maintaining some dramatic tension and theatricality. They indicated that while ethnodramas are theatrical in tradition, wherein there can exist a diversity of characters that engage each other and the audience through monologue or dialogue and where scenes containing dramatic tension exist, the primary aim is "to communicate research findings and to remain ardently faithful to primary research subjects and the veracity of the data. Thus, performativity and theatricality may take a backseat to verisimilitude and realism" (p. 134). Ultimately, my aim was to remain true to the

narratives of the participants who contributed to the research, whether through verbatim text or through fictionalization, as appropriate, and I facilitated this through dialogue and the participant validation process that we engaged in at several stages throughout the research.

Beck et al., (2011) delineated a spectrum of research-based theatre based on two defining continua, "the research continuum," which differentiates between the numerous methods of research used to inform research-based theatre, and "the performance continuum," which characterizes the various types "of performances, audiences, and purposes of a research-based theatre" (p. 1). Figure 5 is based on the spectrum of research-based theatre offered by Beck et al. (2011, p. 8). My ethnodramatic inqueery is positioned along the far left of the research continuum, and situated between the "Stakeholder/Aesthetic, performances based on systematic research" and "Conference /Stakeholder performance based research" along the performance continuum. This spectrum situates my work and can offer a point of difference for ethnodrama in comparison to the other categories/labels/terms for performed research/research-based theatre.

Figure 5

Spectrum of Research Based Theatre (Beck, et al., 2011, p. 8)



Critical Ethno-Drama

Ethnodrama re-emerged, after Bram's early identification of its potential, in Australia; Mienczakowski (1995a), a health educator, was the first scholar to define and develop[12] this methodology, associating drama and theatre with ethnography. Mienczakowski took ethnodrama in a new direction by distancing it from psychotherapy, and framing it as research. He aligned it

[12] Until recently, I believed that during his doctoral studies in Health Education at Griffith University, James Mienczakowski (1995) was the first to coin the term *ethnodrama*. In light of my recent discovery of Bram's (1953) article, I now understand otherwise. Incidentally, Mienczakowski made no reference to Bram or Moreno's discussion on psychodrama as an anthropological research method.

with critical theory, and developed it as a performance-based ethnographic research method. In fact, it was Mienczakowski who first named this method of research as "critical Ethno-Drama" in his doctoral thesis (1995a). Mienczakowski's research was on the use of ethnodrama to explore the lived experiences of two groups of individuals: one with schizophrenia and the other with substance abuse problems. In both instances, the ethnodramatic theatre performances that were produced provided visceral experiences of the lives of the participants. As a result, these catalyzed new ways of seeing and thinking about the important issues that were represented on stage. Consequently, this assisted in educating professionals in the health system and gave agency to catalyze positive changes in their treatment of clients.

According to Mienczakowski's writings (1995a, 1995b, 2001), the purpose of health education is always to explain and illuminate some health-related topic or issue. He further explained that in formal health education settings, usually an expert, or a group of experts, present and analyze a health matter in order to explain and provide new information, typically followed by questions and a discussion. Within an institutional context this occurs through normative and standardized educational practices: presentations, lectures, documentaries, colloquia, educational sessions, etc. The mode of knowing, promoted by these educational practices, is clinical and instrumental in nature and has the effect of disconnecting learners "physically and emotionally from the things we want to know" and consequently, it disconnects us from ourselves and those around us (Palmer, 1998, p. 51). Mienczakowski (1995a, 1995b, 2001) utilized ethnodrama as a health education method, he considered that research-informed theatre presented a powerful mirror to reflect the deficiencies, failings and shortcomings of a particular health system. Mienczakowski's objective seemingly went further than normative education into a political sphere of seeking to transform health systems where change was

required to make the system better. I believe that a queer ethnodrama, or ethnodramatic inqueery, can offer more than just a powerful mirror. I also consider that it can offer a powerful window. As a powerful mirror, ethnodrama has the capacity for participants, and members of a particular community to critically reflect on their lives and identify systems of oppression, but what about others? By others, I am referring to those on the sidelines, or those who are in supportive roles, or allies, who are affiliated with the LGBTQ community only by extension – nevertheless that most likely are still part of the larger school community. I believe that a queer ethnodrama has the possibility of being a powerful window for them to witness queer identities, lived realities and struggles, of which they might not be aware. This is why I propose a queer ethnodrama as a vehicle for queer conscientization, not only for the participants so that they can reflect on their own lived experiences, but also for the audience who, with the participants, may witness others' lived experiences of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression. It is through this reflection and witnessing that we may engage in discourse to seek emancipation.

Emancipatory Practices

The political aim of Mienczakowski's approach was to raise an awareness for participants of the forces that oppressed them. Mienczakowski regularly affirmed that ethnodrama held "emancipatory potential" (1995a, 1995b, 2001). Emancipation as a goal for his method, reflected the value and the degree of the transformation he envisioned. It was critical theory with its attentiveness to "emancipatory practices" that shaped the foundation of Mienczakowski's approach.

The concept of "emancipation" is rooted in critical theory and is based on the notion of liberating human beings from the circumstances that oppress them (Freire, 1970, 1978, 1987). In writing about the aims of ethnodrama, Mienczakowski (1995a) posited that, "it is important to

remember that although emancipation might be a desirable goal of education it is not necessarily a function of education" (p. 28). Although critical theory has regularly been applied to large social systems, in ethnodrama it is applied to the small situations (within the context of a particular community) that are being brought to life on stage.

I propose that critical-ethnodrama is associated with an existing school of Popular Theatre, which is community-centric and seeks social change, similar to methods such as Epic Theatre (Brecht cited in Willet, 1967), Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979), Sociodrama (Sternberg & Garcia, 2000), and Playback Theatre (Salas, 1996). The term Popular Theatre was used by Ross Kidd (amongst others), a Canadian adult educator and popular theatre organizer in the 1970's, in his work in Botswana and Zimbabwe (Antongi, 1992; Kidd, 1980, 1985). Popular Theatre has a tradition of drawing on people's stories (Bappa & Etherton, 1983; Etherton, 1985; Kidd, 1980, 1985)[13] and is "a process of theatre which deeply involves specific communities in identifying issues of concern, analyzing current conditions and causes of a situation, identifying points of change, and analyzing how change could happen and/or contributing to the actions implied" (Prentki & Selman, 2000, p. 8). Conrad (2004) explained that "Popular Theatre draws on participants' experiences to collectively create theatre and engage in discussion of issues through theatrical means" (p. 4). Selman and Heather (2015) clarified that "in this kind of work, the choice to use a particular process or form is driven by intention, an analysis of the issue(s), as well as the artists' range of experience" (p. 15).

[13] While Bappa, Etherton and Kidd are early proponents and innovators of Popular Theatre, there are others associated with the various approaches that I have listed under the research based theatre umbrella. Each paradigm has its own nuances and lineage and it is important to acknowledge that the context of the work they were doing in Africa is very different than what I set out to do with LGBTQ youth in Alberta schools. Ross Kidd developed his concepts in Zimbabwe and Botswana, but practiced and organized popular theatre work with many "disadvantaged" groups in many parts of the world, including India and Canada, amongst others. As an early proponent in the field, Kidd and his work influenced many practitioners.

Such forms of theatre, with the aims of social and/or therapeutic transformation, differ from mainstream forms of theatre in that, like critical-ethnodrama, they follow the same principles as in going above and beyond aesthetic demands in their attempts to produce cultural critique. The art is not only aesthetic; it also possesses "emancipatory potential" for motivating social change within participants and audiences (Mienczakowski, 1995b).

Saldaña (2005) described that, "[ethnodramatic] performance pieces sacrifice mainstream canonicity in exchange for socially conscious merit and higher social purpose" and that they "provide a forum for artists with social vision and audiences with social need" (p. 8). The purpose of a queer ethnodrama is not primarily to entertain or amuse an audience through aesthetic experience, but rather to hold up a critical mirror to heteronormativity and cisnormativity to reveal "a living culture through its character-participants, and if successful, the audience learns about their world and what it's like to live in it" (Saldaña, 2005, p. 14). I reflect on ethnodrama and aesthetics specifically in chapter 5. Mienczakowski (2001) stated that "[ethnodrama's] overt intention is not to just transgressively blur boundaries but to be a form of public voice ethnography … that has emancipatory and educational potential" (p. 469). Through ethnodrama, the researcher, alongside the participants, seeks to communicate the importance of issues that may have been silenced otherwise. In this sense, the art is not only aesthetic; it also possesses "emancipatory potential" for motivating change within participants and audiences (Mienczakowski 1995a), which in turn may affect greater social change. Furthermore, as Eisner (2002) suggested, in relation to all arts, "work in the arts is not only a way of creating performances and products; it is a way of creating our lives by expanding our consciousness, shaping our dispositions, satisfying our quest for meaning, [and] establishing contact with others" (p. 3). Similar to Mienczakowski's (1995a) original vision, I aimed for "the translation of

ethnography into … theatre which possesses an emancipatory potential" (p. 221) for the youth participants, for their peers, for educators and for society generally, but with a queer twist.

Ethnodramatic Methods

Ethnodrama is the scripting and theatrical staging of ethnographic research. Johnny Saldaña, an expert and practitioner of *ethnodrama* in the United States, described "ethnodrama" quite simply as "dramatizing the data," (2005, p. 2); and "ethnotheatre" as performing it "from page to stage" (2011). I specifically used the term ethnodrama within this research as it encompasses the whole process from the beginning. Saldaña (2005) indicated that "an ethnodrama, the written script, consists of dramatized, significant selections of narrative collected through interviews, participant observation field notes, journal entries, and/or print and media artifacts such as diaries, television broadcasts, newspaper articles, and court proceedings" (p. 2). His definition of ethnodrama reflects accurately what I set out to do.

Saldaña has used ethnodrama and ethnotheatre in various ways, in collaboration with others, or working independently, for instance, to capture the experiences of homeless youth living on the streets in New Orleans in the ethnodrama titled Street Rat (Saldaña, Finley & Finley, 2005). On another occasion, he used ethnodrama to dramatize a researcher's intimate relationship with a young drifter diagnosed with schizophrenia (Saldaña, 2002). Besides its use as health education research, Saldaña has anthologized over 100 other applications of *ethnodrama* research in varied fields, including: education, ethnic and cultural studies, women's studies, health, anthropology, justice studies; and for addressing various issues, such as: ethnic/racial identity and racism, gender and sexual identity, homelessness, intrapersonal reflections and interpersonal relationships, and 9/11 (2005, 2011, 2014). Saldaña (2014) documented that ethnodrama has been utilized in over 40 studies in education and in educational

contexts worldwide, including Conrad's (2012) Canadian-based study, *Athabasca's Going Unmanned: An Ethnodrama about Incarcerated Youth*.

Ethnodrama has yet to be applied to the topic of HBT bullying. Bowles (1997), offered an anthology of three ethnodramas by and about gay and lesbian street youth; however, these three ethnodramas are directly linked to street life and not set in an educational context. Goldstein (2013) wrote three research-based plays on the topics of racism, xenophobia and homophobia. Her play titled *The Road to Health* (Goldstein, 2008) is a performed ethnography based on the investigative report that was commissioned by the Toronto District School Board after the school shooting and death of 15-year-old high school student Jordan Manners in 2007. Contained within the play are the findings of the report, that included "[the Board] needs to develop a new comprehensive Sexual Assault and Gender-Based Violence policy [and that the] new policy also needs to fight homophobia as well as sexual harassment and sexual assault" (p. 42). Goldstein further found that over 40 students have left their home schools due to homophobic bullying and harassment to attend the Triangle Program, an LGBTQ alternative high schooling program (p. 42). While Goldstein briefly raised the issue of homophobia based in Toronto schools, with reference to the findings in the investigative report, her research-based play was not specifically on the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth with reference to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in secondary schools. Additionally, I have found two ethnodramatic works that are closer in topic to my research, *Wearing the Secret Out* (Chapman et al., 2013) and *The Card* (Goldstein, 2006). Both of these ethnodramas attempted to disrupt heterosexism and homophobia in their schools; however, they were focused on the lived experiences of non-heterosexual teachers.

Ethnographic Interviews

As originally practiced by Mienczakowski, the ethnodrama method involves the "construction of ethnographic interviews into dramatized form" (Mienczakowski 1995a, p. 364). One of the main purposes of this type of interview is to build relationships, which is particularly relevant in instances where the participants are involved throughout the research, as in my study. This type of interview can be viewed as a friendly conversation. While asking semi-structured questions such as "Can you describe a situation when you witnessed homophobic bullying in school?", it was important to listen attentively, take a passive voice, and express interest in what the participant was saying. While I selected lists of themes and questions that I introduced throughout the interviews, a semi-structured interview allowed me to insert questions as necessary, dependent on participant responses and as different themes emerged. This type of interview also permitted the participants to respond in a manner that suited them. A principal foundation of this ethnographic approach is participant validation. This validation ensures that the authenticity of a participant's narrative is not lost – I speak to the validation process in detail under the section on ethical considerations. The participants who supply the data for the interactionist/ethnographic interviews (Denzin, 2001) become co-researchers as the text of the interviews are collaboratively analyzed for themes and narratives.

Analysis of Ethnodramatic Interviews

Once I transcribed the interviews I then used "dramaturgical coding" to analyze the narratives from the interviews (Miles et al., 2014, p. 76–77; Saldaña, 2013, pp. 123–127). The function of dramaturgical codes, as described in *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Miles et al., 2014), is to "apply the terms and conventions of character, play script, and production analysis to qualitative data" (p. 76). Miles et al. (2014) and Saldaña (2013) identified

six terms for dramaturgical coding. They are dramaturgical in that they focus on common theatrical methods, structures, and analysis. Saldaña provided this description:

1. Participant-actor objectives, motives in the form of action verbs: OBJ;
2. conflicts or obstacles confronted by the participant-actor which prevent him or her from achieving [their] objectives: CON;
3. participant-actor tactics or strategies to deal with conflicts or obstacles and to achieve [their] objectives, TAC;
4. participant-actor attitudes toward the setting, others, and the conflict: ATT;
5. emotions experienced by the participant-actor: EMO;
6. subtexts, the participant-actor's unspoken thoughts or impression management: SUB.

(Saldaña, 2013, p. 123)

The authors further explained that this method of coding is "appropriate for exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies, power relationships, and the process of human motives and agency" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 76). Dramaturgical coding, according to Saldaña (2013) "approaches … interview narratives as 'social drama' in its broadest sense. Life is perceived as 'performance,' with humans interacting as a cast of characters in conflict. Interview transcripts become monologue, soliloquy, and dialogue" (p. 123). Saldaña stated that "dramaturgical coding attunes the researcher to the qualities, perspectives, and drives of the participant. It also provides a deep understanding of how humans in social action, reaction, and interaction interpret and manage conflict" (p. 124).

Afterward, I moved on to identifying the emergent themes. As Saldaña (2013) stated, "a theme is an outcome of coding, categorization, or analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself coded" (p. 14). As I carefully listened to the interviews, transcribed the interviews, read

over the interviews and then coded the interviews, I could not help but notice themes emerging. Saldaña (2013) defined theme as "an extended phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (p. 175). Some of the strategies I used to generate themes are based on Miles et al.'s (2014) "tactics for generating meaning" and they include "1) noting patterns/themes, 2) seeing plausibility, and 3) clustering" (p. 277).

At the conclusion of this step, it was also important to ensure that a participant validation took place. The participant validation process sought to verify that the data that had surfaced from the interviews was a truthful and accurate representation of the narratives that were shared.

Scripting Ethnodrama

In ethnodrama, the partnership between the researcher and participants continues during the script writing phase and into the performance; not a single thing goes into the script or the performance without it first being validated by the participants themselves. The writing of the script is an iterative process, where either monologues and/or dialogues are developed to construct a larger narrative. The participants are actively engaged in this process, contributing their ideas and their voices in the writing of the script. Essentially, the participants become the co-authors of the script and this in turn is what creates the truthfulness of the performance and, as Mienczakowski (2001) wrote, "returns the ownership, and therefore the power of the report to its informants" (p. 471). This co-research process ensures the authenticity of the lived experiences of the participants and facilitates an ownership of their stories, thus creating a convincing representation for script and performance.

Ethnodramatic Performance

Saldaña (1995) explained that the goal of ethnodrama is to use the methods and techniques of theatre and performance to portray to an audience a live representation of a

particular facet of the human condition authentically, vividly and convincingly, to inform the audience by raising the awareness level of social issues. The final research report in this type of ethnography, then, is not primarily a written article, or a documentary film, but rather a live theatrical performance.

In some cases, the actors in an ethnodrama may be the actual participants, who may have had no previous professional actor training and at times no previous experience performing on stage for an audience. In other cases, the ethnodrama is presented by professional, semi-professional, or student actors. Generally, a critical ethnodrama, based on Mienczakowski's (1995a, 1995b, 2001) work, is performed for an audience within the community of stakeholders from which the data was generated. It is important to consider that one of ethnodrama's main purposes is to begin a dialogue towards change. In order for an ethnodrama to offer a significant contribution to the community it must hold relevance for the audience. Ethnodramas can help enact a politics of resistance and possibility by giving voice to those living on the margins of society, by creating a space for audiences and performers to actually engage in meaningful dialogue and discourse. While the need to reach wider audiences beyond stakeholders is very important, it is within the community itself (or an extension of the community as I have described above) that dialogue and action can begin. For example, a male teacher who identifies as heterosexual, but is a GSA sponsor teacher, does not necessarily belong to the LGBTQ community in terms of queer identity, but he may position himself alongside the LGBTQ community as an ally, and at the same time both the LGBTQ youth in the GSA and the sponsor teacher belong to the school community, and it is in those subtle queer nuances that I define this as an ethnodramatic inqueery.

Research Design

Participant Recruitment

With the support of Dr. André Grace, Faculty Director for The Institute of Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS), at the University of Alberta, I connected with the Provincial GSA Coordinator for Alberta, Lauren Alston, from iSMSS. She assisted me in getting connected with the various GSAs networks. Lauren explained that in Calgary, the Centre for Sexuality, hosts the Calgary GSA Network meetings and in Edmonton iSMSS and the Pride Centre of Edmonton host the monthly GSA roundtable meetings – both sets of meetings are open to the public. Initially, with Lauren's help, I emailed out the original call for participants (appendix 1) and posted it to their Facebook page. Unfortunately, a month passed without any expression of interest. I then reformatted the text document call for participants to a colourful handout the size of a postcard (figures 6 and 7). I once again reached out to Lauren Alston at iSMSS and she invited me to promote my research at the 7th Annual Alberta GSA conference in Edmonton at Jasper Place High School on November 17, 2019. Lauren provided me with a table amongst the other LGBTQ community organizations. On my table, I laid out a pride flag and I had my handouts and participant information sheets. As well, I had the title of my research and the research questions visible. This opportunity allowed me to network with LGBTQ youth, GSA sponsor teachers, and other allied professionals. A number of youth and teachers asked questions about the research, and indicated they would email me to follow up. Those who were interested also took the call for participants and information sheet. After the conference, I followed up by mailing hard copies of the recruitment postcards to all high school GSAs in Edmonton and Calgary.

After the conference, in Calgary I reached out to the PFLAG Calgary Chapter. I was invited to their December meeting by one of their co-facilitators, Sean Alley, to attend one of their monthly sessions. At the meeting, I had the opportunity to speak to the members in attendance about my research and informed them that I was recruiting participants. The adults in the room represented parents, allies and a handful of members from the LGBTQ community. This group was very supportive as they listened to what I had to say and offered some suggestions regarding where to recruit youth. Amy, the co-facilitator, invited me to leave a number of postcards and she indicated they would pass them out at future meetings. It was also at this meeting that Amy referred me to Skipping Stone and one of its founders, Lindsay Peace. Skipping Stone is an organization whose focus is to connect trans and gender diverse youth, adults and families with comprehensive and low-barrier access to the supports they need and deserve including: community, mental health, medical services and educational opportunities. I connected via email with Lindsay and explained my research. She invited me to come to the office in January so that we could connect in person and so that I could relay further details about the research project. At the meeting, Lindsay was very supportive of the research and she took a number of the postcards and also asked me to email her digital copies so that she could distribute them to the youth.

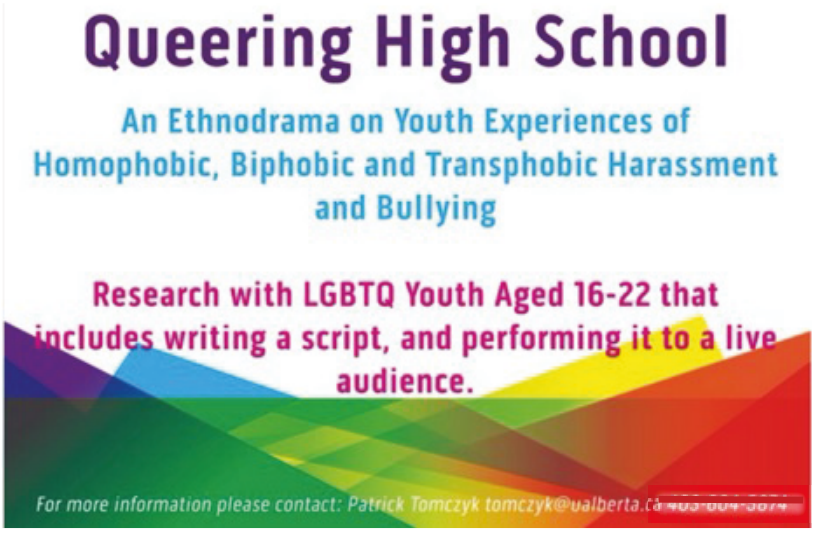
During this time (November-January) I also reached out to a number of other youth groups and organizations in Calgary and Edmonton. These groups included the Mosaic Youth Group, an arts-based group for queer youth;[14] Queer Arts Calgary, a non-profit that exists to give voice to queer people and their stories;[15] The Landing, a non-profit service at the University of

[14] https://www.facebook.com/pg/MosaicYouthGroup/about/?ref=page_internal
[15] https://www.calgaryqueerartssociety.com/

Alberta that offers support for gender and sexual diversity;[16] the Pride Centre at Mount Royal University;[17] and Queers on Campus and the Q Centre at the University of Calgary.[18,19] After making initial contact with the above organizations via email, I followed up by mailing them a number of postcards as well.

Figure 6

Recruitment & Participant Information Card (front)



[16] https://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/thelanding/
[17] https://www.samru.ca/supportservices/pride/
[18] https://people.ucalgary.ca/~qcampus/about.html
[19] https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/programs-services/student-services/the-q-centre/

Figure 7

Recruitment & Participant Information Card (back)

My intention was that, ideally, I would recruit 5-10 participants, that the participants would be representative of a diverse LGBTQ group, and would range in age from 16-22 years old. In the end, from start to finish, I worked with 22 youth who participated throughout the various phases of the project. Table 1 (see below) offers a visual of the number of youth and the phase(s) they participated in. Between mid-December of 2019 and late January 2020, a number of youth reached out via phone or email to express their interest in participating in the research – some to say that they wished they could participate, but their parents would not allow them; others just out of curiosity; and some who did not meet criteria (still in Junior High, or did not reside in the Calgary or Edmonton areas). I also had two GSA sponsor teachers reach out to see if I could facilitate the entirety of project at their school during their weekly GSA meetings. These teachers indicated that they had a number of youth who were willing to participate and that this would be a meaningful GSA project they could work on at their school. This would have

been an ideal situation in any other case, but I had to decline their offers for several reasons: the research would then have been limited to their schools' contexts, so I would have had to make some edits to my original research proposal. One of the schools was in Edmonton, so the practicality of driving to Edmonton from Calgary once a week was not feasible. Moreover, in both cases, I would have needed to apply to conduct research through their respective school boards' internal research ethics review process, which would have possibly added a 6-month delay to the project. I did encourage both teachers to ask the youth to reach out to me directly so that they could still participate outside of their particular school context.

Finally, by mid-January, I had 16 youth with whom I was in regular contact, who had expressed an interest in participating in phase 1. These youths were invited to contribute their narratives about instances of HBT harassment and bullying via the ethnographic interview process, which provided the raw data for the draft script. These 16 youth met my criteria: they represented the LGBTQ community; all except one were still in high school; and they all had various diverse experiences to share. Eleven were from the Calgary area, and 5 were from the Edmonton area. While 16 was the total number of participants I interviewed, only 14 of them participated fully in phase one, which included the interviews and the script writing processes. One of the youth expressed he only wanted to do the interview, and the second did not respond until phase 2. There were a number of additional youth who had reached out at the onset and agreed to meet, but then never showed up. These youths are not represented in Table 1 as they did not complete a consent form.

When I first met with the youth I reviewed the Information Letter and Consent Form (Appendix 1). On two separate occasions, I also spoke with two curious parents. One was in person at the Arts-based Research Studio when they arrived to drop off their youth, and another

over the phone prior to meeting the youth. In both cases, the parent was curious about what their children were agreeing to participate in, so I reviewed the process with them as well. Fortunately, the research was deemed low risk and was approved by the Research Ethics Board to not require parental consent for youth aged 16 and 17. This was primarily due to the fact that youth may not be out to their parents, and seeking permission to be involved in this project would have outted them, which could possibly have caused them harm. In one case, a participant let me know that their parents knew that they were participating in a theatre project, but they did not know specifically that it had anything to do with LGBTQ issues, because they were not out to their parents.

There were different youth who I worked with at different phases of the research. Table 1 clarifies each individual's role(s) and participation.

Table 1

List of Participants and Phases of Participation

	Name (Some names are pseudonyms at youths' request)	Location	Phase 1 Interviews & Script Writing	Phase 2 Rehearsal Process	Phase 3 Performance
1	Molly Mays	Edmonton	✔	Remained connected throughout & was updated on the rehearsal process via email.	✔ Attended and co-facilitated the post-performance discussion on Nov 16th, 2019, but did not perform.
2	Jen	Edmonton	✔		✔ Attended and participated only as an audience member on Nov 16th 2019.
3	Jake	Edmonton	✔ Was in grade 12 during this phase, but did not continue the following fall.		

4	Edmonton Boy	Edmonton	✔ Could not make it to Calgary for performances.		
5	Leland	Edmonton	✔ Could not make it to Calgary for performances.		
6	JC	Calgary	✔ Was in grade 12 during this phase. Could not continue on due to health reasons.		
7	Apollo	Calgary	✔ Wanted to participate in phase 2 and 3, but could not make it to the rehearsals or the performances.		
8	Anonymous YCC	Calgary	✔ Only participated in the interviews. Did not want to participate any further.		
9	Ryley	Calgary	✔ Wanted to participate in phase 2 and 3, but could not make it to the rehearsals or the performances.		
10	Infinity P	Calgary	✔ Only participated in the interviews. Did not want to participate any further.		
11	Loki B	Calgary	✔ Only participated in the interviews. Did not want to participate any further.		
12	Erik H	Calgary	✔		✔ Attended and participated only as an audience member on Nov 16th, 2019.

13	Jay	Calgary	✔ Had graduated the previous year and did not continue the following fall.		
14	Ben	Calgary	✔		
15	Bianca	Calgary	✔ Was in grade 12 during this phase, and did not continue the following fall.		
16	Asra	Calgary		✔	✔
17	Kat	Calgary		✔	✔
18	Quinn	Calgary		✔	✔
19	Samuel A	Calgary		✔	✔ Only Nov 1st, 2019
20	Steph B	Calgary		✔	✔
21	Andrew	Calgary	✔ Only participated in 1 interview. Received copies of the draft scripts but never replied.	✔	✔ Only Nov 16th, 2019
22	Jade	Calgary		✔ Attended as an observer & participated in conversation.	✔ Attended and participated only as an audience member at both performances.

The Interviews

The interviews took place starting January 2019 and April 2019. They were done individually or in small groups of 2-3 youths. I met with groups on four occasions, as some youth were more comfortable participating in a small group interview than individual interviews. On all occasions, the youth knew each other from their school. Table 2 shows the four groupings.

Table 2

Group Interviews

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Ryley Anonymous YYC	Loki B Infinity P Apollo	Jake Edmonton Boy	JC Jay

The remainder of the other youth were comfortable meeting with me one-to-one. Depending on the city, we either met at the Arts-based Research Studio at the University of Alberta, at a public library in Calgary, or in some instances, the youth preferred a quiet corner in a more public space such as a coffee shop (in each case precautions were taken to ensure privacy and confidentially so that members of the public could not overhear our conversations). I began each interview by telling the youth about myself, so that we could establish a rapport and a sense of comfort and trust. I endeavoured to utilize a reflexive and dialogical interview approach. As such, the interviews were semi-structured with some initial questions scripted to begin the conversation, which then became more iterative. This provided opportunities for reflection and dialogue so that I could engage with the participants and come to understand how they constructed meaning in their lives. The following are the eight initial questions that were utilized for the semi-structured interviews:

1) Did/do you belong to a GSA in high school? What was that experience like?
2) What were/are some of your favorite parts and aspects of being part of a GSA?
3) What are some of the biggest challenges that you or your LGBTQ peers have faced in high school, as it relates to sexuality and gender identity and expression?
4) Did you ever experience or witness any homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia in high school? What did that look like? What did you do in this situation? How did you overcome this difficult situation?
5) Is there another situation that you would like to share?
6) What would you say to others who may feel or experience a similar situation?

7) What did/does your school do to address issues of harassment and bullying based on sexuality and/or gender identity and expression? How do peers respond in these situations? How do adults respond in these situations?
8) What do you think teachers/schools could do to improve?

All of the interviews lasted approximately 40-60 minutes. After the conversations came to a natural end, I told the participants that I would then analyze the interviews for themes, and that I would follow up with them to validate that I had surfaced the themes correctly and that I had captured the essence of their narratives and what they were saying.

Coding of interviews

Since the purpose of my research was to investigate HBT bullying and harassment, a type of conflict, through the lens of a queer ethnodrama, dramaturgical coding was most applicable as it identified and categorized, compared and contrasted, the objectives, conflicts, tactics, actions and reactions, emotions and subtexts into themes in order to deepen my understanding of "power relationships and the processes of human agency" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 124). Thus, I used dramaturgical coding to interpret the data generated from the narratives into various themes. The codes in the table below are as follows:

OBJECTIVE (OBJ): promoting safety

CONFLICT (CON): disrespect, homonegative language

TACTICS (TAC): aren't really straightforward, covert, behind other people's back, judgmental, indirect

ATTITUDES (ATT): stereotypical, not open minded, Ironic

EMOTIONS (EMO): bothered/disturbed frustration, defeated, flustered, dismissed

SUBTEXT (SUB): Demoralized, ineffective policy, hetero/cisnormative oppression

This type of coding helped me better understand what the youth were feeling and experiencing, and what they perceived as the cause of the oppression. Similarly, this data could indicate what their hopes and desires were, and how they wanted to respond to a situation.

Table 3 is an example of raw data and the accompanying analysis:

Table 3

Dramaturgical Coding

JC: There's a lot of negativity,[1] but people aren't really straightforward about it anymore.[2] I think that's the number one thing that bothers me,[3] like when people talk about it behind other people's back.[4]	[1] CON: disrespect [2] TAC: aren't really straightforward, covert [3] EMO: bothered / disturbed, frustration [4] TAC: behind other people's back, judgmental
Jay: People called me names.[5]	[5] CON: homonegative language
JC: There's still some name calling, now it's kind of more judgmental,[6] people aren't open minded anymore.[7]	[6] ATT: stereotypical [7] ATT: not open minded
Jay: People call me faggot or stuff like that.[8]	[8] CON: homonegative language
JC: Freak is a big one as well.[9]	[9] CON: homonegative language
Jay: Yeah that one too.[10]	[10] EMO: defeated
JC: You usually overhear people saying it, but you won't hear them say it directly to you.[11]	[11] TAC: indirect
Jay: There was once when it was in class, and a couple of times outside of class.[12]	[12] SUB: demoralized
Researcher: Do the adults ever respond?	

JC & JAY: No.[13]	[13] ATT: ironic
Researcher: Do you think they hear it?	
JC: Probably sometimes but they just don't intervene, it's like they don't want to get into it.[14]	[14] EMO: flustered
Jay: Yeah.	
JC: Yeah [our school] has always been promoted[15] as like no tolerance for bullying but there's so much that people get away with…[16]	[15] OBJ: promoting safety [16] SUB: ineffective policy
Jay: Yeah.	
JC: And even if it's reported they don't really care, especially if it's someone who's gay or trans…[17]	[17] SUB: hetero/cisnormative oppression
Jay: Yeah.	
JC: or anything like that then they will push it even further aside.[18]	[18] EMO: dismissed

The above analysis in Table 3, raised a theme of ineffective polices and interventions at school that leave youth feeling helpless and that demand change. I followed a similar process for all the interviews. I ended up grouping like themes together based on similar experiences of oppression.

At our second set of meetings, I shared my understandings and the themes that had emerged with the participants and asked the youth to validate that my analysis, which I had generated from the data, was as authentic as possible. As Miles and colleagues (2014) insisted, "the critical question is whether the meanings you find in qualitative data are trustworthy and

'right'" (p. 277). I asked the participants to confirm that themes I had identified were indeed authentic to their experiences. I also asked them to expand on the themes, in case I had missed something and to verify that I was on the right path. At these meetings, I also asked more questions to clarify my understandings, elicit more details, and in many cases to see what, if anything, had changed since the last time we had met and to see if there were new stories they wanted to share. I further reflect on this process in chapter 5. With those participants whom I could not meet in person, I scheduled phone calls and similar conversations took place. After the interviews had been completed, and the analysis had been validated by participants, I moved on to the script writing phase.

The Scripting

During the validation meetings of coding and themes, I discussed with the youth how we could translate this into a script. We discussed what final form the script could take: a monologue or series of monologues or dialogue(s); there was consideration of a typical narrative (with characters and a beginning, middle and end), or alternately of a form absent of traditional characters and a clear-cut storyline (more choral and interactive). No matter what form the script would ultimately take, the writing process needed to remain collaborative and iterative, where meaning and themes merged to tell a story of the experiences of the youth. I reflect upon this process further in chapter 5.

Based on the themes, at the validation meeting youth identified that an overall storyline and setting could be a LGBTQ rally around raising awareness of LGBTQ students' experiences. Since I had met with different youth at different times, we agreed on two possibilities for the rally setting: the Edmonton participants agreed on the Alberta Legislature as the setting, and the Calgary participants selected a high school. If it were at a school, then youth would be barging

in, chanting and expressing their concerns to the teachers in the staffroom. If it were at a political rally, then they would be expressing their concerns to the general public. Both ideas worked and the participants agreed to incorporate both into the script to allow for choice.

In translating the data into a script, it was essential that nothing be "reduced" as that implied a negative process of elimination, but rather the text needed to be "distilled" or "condensed" to "capture its essence and essentials" (Saldaña, 2011, pp. 70–71). We agreed that themes that were pulled out of the interviews serve as the starting point. Each scene would be built upon the various interviews with a large part of the dialogue being verbatim.

I wrote out skeleton scenes including verbatim lines from the interviews around a particular theme and I referred to Saldaña (2011) for techniques in doing so:

> Monologic and dialogic snippets were pooled together according to their common topic, then strategically arranged or "spliced" together into a plausible conversational order of traditional turn-taking. These snippets sometimes originated from multiple participants who were interviewed individually, but for the ethnodrama the lines were assigned to … a fictional dialogue. (p. 100)

The draft scenes I wrote were then sent to all the participants for validation and feedback. The scenes that were created had a sense of urgency and need for action. Youth replied by adding their comments, adding more lines, changing words, and so forth. I drew on my experiences with "theatre for change" (Landy & Montgomery, 2012), devising theatre with youth, and teaching secondary students playwriting to tie it all together. Once they constructed feedback, additions and edits were returned to me. Then I compiled them again and sent them out to participants. The accuracy of the script, and the interpretation of participants' narratives were once again validated with the participants through consensual agreement via email, over the phone, or in person

(depending on youth availability). Once again, the intention was that what was included in performance script reflected the views of those involved to maintain authenticity and accuracy.

Since the participants acted as co-authors, they had a significant say in whether verbatim words were used within the script or parts were fictionalized. I predicted that some participants would want to fictionalize certain parts of the script in order to anonymize certain details of situations and the names of those involved so as not to cause any possible harm by revealing anyone's name, identity or school. For example, we ended up combining stories and characters to create more cogent messages, thus taking pieces from several stories and incorporating them into one. As Saldaña (2011) described, "theatre and performance events are bounded by time. Thus, the boring parts and what is sometimes called verbal debris need to be taken out of verbatim, unedited texts and the remainder spliced together" (p. 70). This does allow for a certain level of creative license, and my own perspectives and past experiences with theatre influenced the stories that became part of the play.

The script went through a few iterations as youth gave feedback. There was back and forth discussion and the script evolved until all agreed on a final draft script. Below is an example of a first draft of a scene based on the example of coded analysis in the Table 3 above, followed by a second draft incorporating participants' input.

First draft:

Actor 1: I get called fag or freak every day at school. What's worse is that the teachers hear it and don't do anything about it.

Actor 2: I hear it all the time too, and I find that it's mostly covert – but you're right, the teachers rarely react, it's like they don't know what to do.

Actor 1: Or they just don't want to get into it with the kid…

Actor 2: I don't get it, we have a zero tolerance for bullying policy, yet this happens all the time and people get away with it.

Actor: I find that especially true when it has anything to do with gay or trans issues, it's swept under the rug.

Second draft:

Actor 2: I feel like there's a perception that LGBTQ bullying isn't a thing anymore and it's just… pushed aside.

Actor 1: Maybe it's not in your face like with physical violence, but I hear words like *"freak"* daily. There's also a lot of like, covert negativity. People talk behind each other's backs all the time.

Actor 4: We have a *"no tolerance"* policy for bullying, but I hear indirect comments like *"queer"* and *"homo"* all the time and I never see adults intervening. Sometimes you can't really rely on teachers. It's just like they're too scared to deal with it.

Actor 1: Or don't know how to deal with it.

Actor 4: Or they don't want to deal with it. I wonder how'd they feel if I called them a fag. And it's not in the classrooms that it's rampant in. It's in the hallways!

Actor 1: The hallways are the worst! They can be a nightmare.

Actor 5: I kinda get the sense too that the school doesn't do anything. They don't bring it up. They keep things quiet. They don't bring it up at assemblies, or in newsletters, or even in those "no bullying" weeks and celebrations. I feel like… they're afraid of admitting there's a problem. It's almost like they're happy to support us, but not where we need it the most, yeah know?

On July 4, 2019, I met with my supervisor Dr. Diane Conrad, to enlist her help as a dramaturge. We reviewed the draft of the script line by line and she made several recommendations. These included breaking up the lines to make them read less like monologues; adding more dialogue between the actors; creating transitions between each scene to allow for movement; re-grouping and re-working some of the dialogue to make it flow better. Diane asked several questions to clarify certain topics, expressions, and references, so that it would be easier for an audience to understand. After this meeting, I once again emailed the participants the edited draft, and over the summer we finalized a script that all participants validated. We agreed to allow room for some further changes if required, dependent on the rehearsal process. Once again, this agreement was made on the principle that all youth would validate any changes. In addition to the script, youth came up with poster ideas to serve as props in the performance. The 10 posters were to be used as signs that were carried at a rally or protest. The posters were created with support from a gay art director in Calgary (see chapter 4, Figures 8–17).

We agreed that the participant Molly Mays would be listed as a co-writer as she had taken on a leadership role in the script writing process by becoming the greatest contributor. Some youth made minor changes, while others acknowledged receiving and reading the script but did not make any edits or modifications. As such, 15 participants were listed as participant interviewees/contributors and creators. Once the final script was validated by the participants, it was time to move onto phase 2, the rehearsal process.

The Rehearsal Process

In the Fall of 2019, I reached out to the Centre for Sexuality about the possibility of performing at the Annual GSA Conference. My goal during this whole research process was that the ethnodrama would be performed at a GSA Network or LGBTQ event, GSA school event, a

Camp fYrefly outreach event, or hopefully the Annual GSA Conference. The Conference was to be held in Calgary that year on November 16th, and it was the Centre for Sexuality that was organizing the conference and coordinating the program. The Community Development Coordinator, Hilary Mutch, from the Centre for Sexuality was the one responsible for planning most of the conference. I had built a relationship with her over the previous year as we had met on two occasions, including at the Edmonton GSA Conference the previous year. She was also the one I had been in contact with regarding sharing my call for participants within the Calgary GSA network. I awaited Hilary's confirmation that we would be able to perform at the GSA Conference, so that we would have a performance to work towards.

I had hoped that the ethnodrama performance would be partly cast with the research participants who were involved from the very beginning. This was only partially realized; one of the youth, Andrew (as indicated in Table 1), though he did not participate in the script writing, he did act in the second performance. Given that not all participants wanted to or could continue on with phases two (rehearsal) and three (performances) of the process, I needed to recruit additional participants through a second recruitment call. In late September and early October that year, I reached out again to my previous connections via email (GSA Network, Centre for Sexuality, PFLAG, Skipping Stone), as well as through social media to the theatre community via the Drama Undergraduate Society at the University of Calgary (UofC).[20] I also attached the original text-based call for participants along with the postcards to the "community call board" at the Drama Department of the UofC. I required a minimum of 5 actors to play the 5 characters, with a possible 6th actor to play the 6th optional character that had no lines or stage directions (see chapter 4).[21] For the rehearsal and performance phases, I was specifically looking for LGBTQ

[20] https://www.facebook.com/groups/321535294603808/
[21] Incidentally, this part was never cast, although participant 22 did this unintentionally.

youth who were comfortable with acting, and more so, comfortable with acting in front of strangers at a public event. A number of participants expressed interest this time around; however, some were disqualified because they were older than required, or could not commit to rehearsal times. Table 1 above, references who participated in the rehearsals and the performances.

The ethnodrama was fully cast by mid-October and the new participant-actors who I recruited were invested in the work, as they were part of the LGBTQ community and they all had various experiences with drama and theatre. They also expressed that these stories were not unlike what they, themselves, had experienced in high school. I began by explaining ethnodrama to them, and the journey thus far – how we had arrived at a script based on the interviews, and the themes that had emerged from them.

On October 24, 2019, Hilary confirmed that there was a spot available at the conference for us to present the ethnodrama. This presented us with an accelerated rehearsal timeline of only three weeks. My goal was to have at least one smaller performance before then – almost like a dress rehearsal, or a "preview night" as often referred to in theatre, so that we could gain some feedback prior to the GSA Conference performance. I organized a first performance for an invited audience for Friday November 1st.

The rehearsal process, which I directed, permitted the performers and me to bring the data from "page to stage" (Saldaña, 2011). I booked one of the large conference rooms at the Central Memorial Library for the rehearsals and the first performance. The room was a large space that could comfortably seat 40 people. I moved all the tables and chairs along the walls to make space to move around. I also purchased snacks and water for the youth to consume during the rehearsals. We placed chairs randomly in the centre of the room for the audience to sit on.

The intended experience for the audience that I was trying to create was a feeling that they were in the middle of a rally, as bystanders or even as rally participants. We workshopped different ideas about entering and how to move about the space to create the illusion of a rally. The actors could direct their lines from various positions, from in front of, beside or behind audience members to create this effect. Some of the actors also played with taking on different roles.

The performance ran approximately 25 minutes. In total, there were only five hours allocated to rehearsals prior to the first performance. The actors were permitted to take the scripts home with them so that they could practice their lines between rehearsal sessions. All but one of the actors were students, and we agreed that memorizing the lines was not a priority or realistic given the time constraints and their busy lives. Our goal during the rehearsal process was to become familiar with the lines and the characters, and most importantly, to capture and perform the essence of the original 16 participants' narratives. Additionally, throughout the rehearsal process Molly Mays was in regular contact with me via email, and while she was not able to witness or partake in rehearsals, she gave valuable ideas and suggestions about character development.

Ethnodramatic Performance

At the beginning of each performance, to give the audience some context and a reference point, I introduced myself and explained who I was and what they were about to see. I briefly explained what an ethnodrama was and summarized the process that we engaged in. I let the audience know that there could be some homonegative words and a story of physical violence that could be triggering for some. I handed out the audience consent form and questionnaire (Appendix 2) for the post-performance discussion and read it over out loud. Next, I asked if anyone had any questions and reminded everyone that participation in the post-performance

discussion was optional, as was completing the questionnaire, and by staying for the discussion and completing the questionnaire they were giving their consent for their answers to be used as data in the research. In order to expand our understanding in a safe space and in a safe way, I reminded the audience that the discussion required a respectful openness to others and to otherness. After the production, I invited the audience to ask any questions that may have surfaced from watching the performance.

Each performance started with a short video clip from Global News from the May 3, 2019, which included scenes from the provincial student walk-out (Global News, 2019). We used this video clip to set the context, tone and the setting of the play.

The first performance took place on Friday, November 1, 2019, at the Central Memorial Public Library in Calgary. This performance was for a small audience of 5 invited guests, which included 3 teachers and 2 mental health professionals. One of the teachers had experience with teaching drama, the other was completing a graduate degree in educational leadership, and the third had experience working with GSAs. The two mental health professionals had backgrounds in counselling and one was researching how drama could be incorporated into psychology research. I had worked with these individuals in professional capacities over the previous several years, and they had come to know what I was working on. As Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) commented, "researchers select their audiences based on a wide range of expectations and preconceptions as to what these audiences will get out of the performance and how they will react" p. 14). This was the first time we were going to share the work in front of anyone and so I opted to make the audience smaller. Initially, I had envisioned a larger audience, but in the end, I opted for something that was more comfortable to quell any feelings of vulnerability. After this performance, the audience completed a post-performance questionnaire (Appendix 2) and

participated in a post-performance discussion. Our conversation lasted for approximately 45 minutes. The data from the questionnaire and discussion is analyzed in Chapter 5. This small performance gave the actors an opportunity to present (and practice) in front of an audience. Afterward, minor adjustments were made to the performance based on the participants' and audience's feedback and incorporated into the final performance. Fortunately, the script remained unchanged. We opted to mount the posters onto wooden sticks to make them easier to carry, and to slow down some of the dialogue and movement around the room so that it was easier for the audience to focus on who was speaking. I further reflect on this performance in chapter 5.

The public performance took place at the 8th Annual Alberta GSA Conference on Saturday, November 16, 2019, hosted at Nelson Mandela High School in Calgary. This time 26 conference attendees came to see the play. Two members of the audience included youth who had been involved in the research since the very beginning. One travelled down from Edmonton and the other was from Calgary. They participated as audience members only. Additionally, Molly Mays also came down from Edmonton for the final performance. She joined us in the hour prior to our performance for a quick rehearsal, giving directorial notes to the actors. She also helped record the performance, co-facilitated the post-performance discussion and answered audience questions. The majority of the audience were adults, along with a handful of youth. While maintaining audience members' confidentiality and respect for their privacy, given the focus of the conference, I assumed that the adults in the audience were either GSA sponsor teachers, allies, teachers at large, or others affiliated with some type of LGBTQ community youth organization. At the end of this performance audience members were again invited to

complete a post-performance questionnaire, and participate in a post-performance discussion with the actors. This data is also included in my analysis in Chapter 5.

In ethnodrama, the final performance itself is a report of the research that is made accessible to a wider community through a live interaction that is special and different. As mentioned above, a post-performance discussion and written questionnaire to assess changes in the attitudes of the audience were facilitated at both performances. The purpose of the discussion was for participants and the audience members to reflect upon the performance and to begin envisioning possibilities for change – a shift in paradigms and/or an increased understanding of the issues brought forward from the performance.

Ethical Considerations

The form of ethnodrama, establishes a contract with and between both the performers and the audience and situates the piece within a relational framework. Throughout the research process, I was vigilant in attending to ethical considerations and cognizant that ethical issues would arise. I address several of these below.

Participant Ownership

Participant validation is situated at the very core of ethnodrama. Verifying and honouring the "truths" of participants' narratives provides the "theoretical authentication via validation of the script and of the performance" (Mienczakowski, 1995a, p. 244). Mienczakowski (2001) further expounded that authenticity within the script and the performance "returns the ownership, and therefore the power of the report to [the participants]" (p. 471). Both in the scripting and the rehearsal phase of my research, I provided opportunities for participant validation. At each of these junctures, the participants were asked to validate what they had seen, so far, with regards to how their experiences were represented in the script. The intention of these validation

opportunities was to represent participants' experiences in an ethical way through dialogical performance (Conquergood, 2003). Saldaña (2008) clarified that, "the back-and-forth nature of dramatic dialogue, however, is more than conversational sharing of differing perspectives. Dialogue consists of the character-participants negotiations over an issue, an opposition of wills, or a tense, conflict-laden exchange" (p. 199).

An example of this back-and-forth exchange was when one of the participants wanted to include a drag performance in the ethnodrama. The other youth questioned the relevance, as it did not relate to any story or shared experience from the interviews. Drag had not surfaced as one of the themes, nor was there any relation to a drag performance at school, or reference to drag and HBT bullying and harassment. The participant mentioned it in passing as something they were doing on weekends and that it was something they were becoming more and more passionate about. The conversation continued as the participant who wanted it included identified that it was "a part of who I am" and that it could not be separated from their reality. The others countered that while it may be a part of "their story" it was not part of "this story." I did reframe the conversation to remind that participants that this was a play about their experiences of HBT bullying and harassment at school. In the end, the door was left open, so that if drag could be tied to the performance in a meaningful way there would be an opportunity, and that we could also consider a character who was in drag. This seemed a fair compromise, and the issue did not resurface again. Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) offered a way to navigate these differing views when they state that:

> In "honouring the data," the responsibility of the ethnodramatist is not only to consider the different views of the participants and weigh them up against the interests of the audience but also to ensure that the piece moves beyond mono-messages. This is in

> addition to maintaining the overall aim of the project. It is through recognizing these competing demands and identifying appropriate compromises that ethnodramatists may become fully accountable for their work. (p. 43)

If the participants were nervous or self-conscious with any aspects of the work, there were options for details to be rewritten or withdrawn. For example, Scene 7, which was based on an interview with two youth, dealt with a Catholic school. The conversation during the interview took an unexpected turn and issues about clergy abuse and how the Catholic church is complicit in concealing sexual predators came to the forefront of the conversation. One of the youth had a strong response and shared their beliefs about Catholic education. During a follow-up discussion, where I identified themes from the interview, we agreed to redact this part as it took away from the focus of the inqueery, and was a separate issue in and of itself. This validation process at each phase honored the narratives of the participants, and in turn created a sense of integrity and accountability on my part to the participants.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, to the extent that they requested it, was protected at all times. Since the narratives from the interviews were written into the script in such a way that personal identifiers, such as names, places, schools, etc., were kept anonymous and/or fictionalized, participants who wished to remain anonymous were not identified. All participants had the option to choose an alias by which they were identified, including some of the participants who were actors. I did not distinguish in the script, the performance, or this thesis which names were aliases and which names were real. Lastly, I did not reveal the identities of participants who choose to attend the final public performance as audience members. Two participants attended the November 16th performance and participated as audience members.

Additionally, Molly Mays attended the final performance in an active role although she was not an actor in in the performance. Anonymity was not necessary if the participants chose to disclose who they were and self-identified during the post-performance discussions. This disclosure was completely voluntary and self-initiated; some still chose to use an alias despite knowing some of the audience members. This proposed ethnodrama was about authentically dramatizing the participants' lived experiences of bullying and harassment in school. It was not about outing anyone, assigning blame, shaming, or labeling any individuals as either victims or bullies, so fictionalizing certain elements of the narratives was necessary to protect peoples' identities. The participant validation process assisted in facilitating the process of fictionalization of the script, in that, if a participant desired for something to be removed or omitted from the script or performance, their request was honored, while maintaining the authenticity of their experience.

Ethics of Representation

In addressing authenticity of an ethnodramatic representation, Richardson (1993, 1994) suggested a "transgression" occurs when writing ethnography as drama; this is an issue of the ethics of representation. Richardson questions if it actually makes a significant difference to authenticity if the narrative is presented in an "ideal-typic" way or not. Here Richardson asked if the ethnographer needs to recreate the narrative word-for-word to remain authentic or if artistic license may be taken within the process. It is through the continual processes of participant validation that Mienczakowski (1995) addressed this transgression, and with reference to authenticity, he stated that, "text can achieve vraisemblance and appear truthful" (p. 371) even when it is fictionalized. Mienczakowski (1995) believed that vraisemblance "is one of the major goals of ethnodrama" and that it seeks "to evoke belief by representing (perceived) social realities in terms that mask the cultural influences affecting the constructors of the report" (p.

264). Ackroyd and O'Toole (2010) entered the conversation by expanding on this later point when they affirmed that the challenge of ethnodramatists was not only in achieving a "faithful presentation of the research data and the participants' voices," but also being aware that "their own positions inevitably drift into the frame, despite their oft expressed commitment not to bring their own attitude and opinions to the work" (p. 44). Belliveau and Lea (2016) spoke of "the ethic/aesthetic tensions" when they suggested that "when using empathic artistic research forms like ethnodrama … it is as important to work aesthetically as it is ethically [and] the complexity lies in the fact that both aesthetics and ethics are subjectively defined" (p. 70). As an artist and a researcher, I had an obligation to my participants and the audiences to "balance creativity with credibility and trustworthiness" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 207). The ethics of representation, "the moral and authentic use of participant materials in the form of interview transcripts, field notes, writings, and so forth as the basis for dramatic adaptation and performance" is often a contested tension in research-based theatre (Saldaña, 2011, p. 39). Saldaña (2011) offered advice on how to navigate these matters when he stated, "rather than needlessly navel gaze about these issues … whether you are or aren't representing your participants fairly and ethically, collaborate instead with your participants on how it can best be done" (p. 39). I addressed issues of representation by collaborating with my participants right from "the early stages of the ethnodramatic fieldwork because it [let] the participants know that they [were] an active part of the artistic process," (p. 40). The participants I worked with were given agency as co-researchers, and through this they had a voice in collaborating on how to best navigate these tensions of representation. By transposing details from interview data to drama, the text becomes an adaptation; the same words may not read the same or have the same meaning. Saldaña (2011) indicated that these "tensions are not anomalies but givens … [and] the resolution is not to shy away from these matters but

how you deal with them" (p. 40). The participants and I came to this work with different life experiences, intersectionalities, and points-of-view. Our interpretations through the processes had layers that acted as filters and guided our artistic choices that informed aesthetics and representation. It was vital that the participant validation process addressed these tensions so that we could collaborate on what was put in or left out, what was fictionalized, how much verbatim text was adjusted, how composite characters were developed, and so forth. As the producer of this work, I needed to navigate the interests of the participants, of the research, and the audience, as these informed artistic choices throughout. Ultimately, keeping to the goals of the research were important in moving the work forward.

Representing Trauma on Stage

One of the concerns in retelling negative outcomes, such as incidents of HBT bullying and harassment, is that they can possibly trigger and re-traumatize someone. With regard to how theatre can navigate possible trauma, Salverson (1996) questioned "what it means to speak and listen to difficult histories" (p. 183). Questioning the different narratives that were presented, how they could be understood, who the intended audience was, what the expectations were, and how the existence of trauma might affect the reception of the performance were important considerations in the process I facilitated. For example, in one of the interviews a participant shared a very detailed and graphic account of when they were physically assaulted, and the hate speech that was used in the assault. This story left us with a very unsettled feeling. For the ethnodrama, the participants felt that it was important to tell this story to the audience, but not to re-enact it. In this case, the particular youth indicated that it was important that audiences know that these types of things continue to occur, but that it had to be weighed against reproducing violence on stage – to create shock and possibly a traumatic event for the audience. We agreed

that there would not be any physical depiction of violence on stage, but that the story would still be told. Attention to aesthetic distance was also important to mitigate any risk to the audience as it has a "protective function" so that the audience can observe and participate concurrently (Jackson, 2007, p. 140). In addressing the performance of potentially traumatic material, Salverson (1996) believed that while maintaining authenticity is important, there is a safeguard inherent in the aesthetic form itself:

> through such aesthetic forms, the story and the act of the trauma are marked in such a way as to be visible and yet, at the same time, not utterly pinned down. The form then speaks of trauma, but remains open to possibilities of resistance, to different ways both trauma and agency are and can be known. (p. 188)

The dialogical nature of ethnodrama allowed opportunities to explore potentially traumatic spaces and address these important questions with the participants, as was the case with the above example. Saldaña (2011) addressed this very issue when he stated that "no ethnodrama is intentionally written to shock or offend" (p. 41). As I have explained above in relation to identity and intersectionality, this too applies to audience members. Ethnodrama can have "strong influences and affects [*sic*] on audience members, each one with a particular set of background experiences and values, attitudes, and beliefs" (Saldaña. 2011, p. 42). On this same subject, Saldaña (2011) asked, "what is our ethical responsibility toward our audiences?" (p. 43). In line with his answer, I felt that it was my ethical responsibility, as the play's producer and researcher, to inform the audience in advance as to what they were about to see, and to caution them about possible triggers. I used the following write up to describe the presentation, and this was included in the conference program:

> As part of my PhD in Education at the UofA, I've been working with LGBTQ+ youth across the province, to come to understand their lived experience of high school and how it relates to bullying and harassment. This session presents the research by dramatizing the data and giving the youth agency and voice, by sharing their stories.

At the beginning of the performance I verbally introduced the project and explained how we had arrived at the performance. I also warned the audience about the homonegative terms that were going to be used, and that a story of physical violence would also be shared. I shared the audience consent form, read it aloud and gave an opportunity for members to ask questions. Finally, similar to Saldaña (2011), I too believed that my responsibility ended there, "for I cannot control or monitor what every single audience member will think and feel during the performance" (p. 43).

Saldaña (2011) proposed one principle to resolve this conundrum of ethical representation: "participants first, playwrights second, and audiences third" (pp. 42–43). The premise of this principle is based on the fact that as an ethnographic researcher, my first responsibility was to the participants and their desires. After all, the data and how it would be portrayed needed their validation and approval. My second responsibility was to myself as a researcher and artist, in order to maintain my own excellence and integrity. Lastly, my third responsibility was to the audience, those who witness the final creation of this collaborative process. Without the audience there would be no ethnotheatre, and there would have been no post-performance dialogue, conscientization, or the possibility of enacting change.

Limitations of the Study

While the argument has been made that the transformative and emancipatory potential of ethnodrama can be significant, it is important to acknowledge that for the purpose of this study,

participants were only actively involved through the various phases, as outlined in this chapter, for approximately eight to twelve months from when I started to recruit participants to the end final performances. While I do not wish to minimize the possible effects that this could have on participants, I feel it is important to acknowledge this time limitation. This time limit was realistic for a doctoral study and the scope of my research, with my main purpose having been to answer the main research question: *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta high schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic harassment and bullying?* and also to answer the secondary question: *How can queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?* The participants' engagement in the ethnodramatic inqueery was limited to dialogic and reflexive interviews, serving as co-authors of the script, as participant-actors for those who chose to do so, and as contributors to the post-performance dialogues. Moreover, at the end of each phase participants took part in the validation processes. The emancipatory potential arose "[in] the extent [to] which there [was] a relationship between critical ethnography, dramatic presentation based upon ethnography, and democratic processes founded in critical ethnography which precipitate emancipatory outcomes" (Mienczakowski, 1995a, pp. 44–45).

Another possible limitation was that the final performance, even though it was public, it had an audience of only 26 and the audience was already supportive of LGBTQ issues and so the results of the post-performance discussion and questionnaire responses could be skewed in favour and support of the research. I speak to this in further detail in Chapter 5 when I reflect on the performances including aesthetics, and I analyze the questionnaires and post-performance discussions. Moving forward, I hope to offer performances of the ethnodrama to schools, where the play's potential to transform attitudes will truly be tested.

This study is further limited by the fact that the data has a very narrow scope. It involves a small number of participants and so the variety of narratives they offered were limited. The narratives were context driven and based on the lived experiences of the participants within two large urban settings – Calgary and Edmonton. As such, not all the stories were necessarily relatable to each audience member. However, I believe that the variety of stories permitted themes to emerge that were accessible, on some level, to all audience members and will be accessible to future audience members.

Since this is a form of qualitative research, the same standards as used in quantitative research do not apply. As Barone and Eisner (2012) wrote, "standards are indeed measures of quantity [and] they imply the employment of a quantitative metric that enables one to enumerate or to summarize quantity" (p. 147). Rather, for arts-based research, they proposed general criteria to judge the quality of the work. They suggested the following six criteria to evaluate arts-based research: "Incisiveness" – getting to the core of the issue; "concision" – keeping the work concise without adding unnecessary extras; "coherence" – is there a unity within the work; "generativity" – does the work allow for the audience to connect to it; "social significance" – is there a theme or question of social importance; "evocation and illumination" – refer to the influence the work has upon the audience; does it leave them thinking about the theme or topic, does it illuminate new perspectives and ways of thinking about the theme or topic (pp. 148–154). These criteria they proposed, guided me as the researcher to work towards and reflect upon, rather than being prescribed as a set of standards. They concluded that the criteria "may serve to ensure that [the work is] positioned to achieve the purpose of raising questions about important social issues in a powerful manner [that] will more likely be made available to others" (p. 155).

Concluding Thoughts on Queer Ethnodrama

My ethnodramatic inqueery examined the lived experience of LGBTQ youth by disrupting notions of heteronormativity and cisnormativity that youth experience every day at school. These heteronormative and cisnormative experiences create a hegemonic heteropatriarchy that contributes to HBT bullying and harassment. McNiff (2013) stated "that arts help us improve the way we interact with others by learning how to let go of negative attitudes and excessive needs for control" (p. 32). Since bullying is a relationship problem, an art-based approach in turn can open up avenues and possibilities for creating healthy relationships by "learning how to foster more open and original ways of perceiving situations and problems, gaining new insights and sensitivities toward others" (McNiff, 2013, p. 32).

This research can be utilized to create discourse around this very important topic, and at the same time it can reach a larger audience as it advances knowledge in a very different way than more conventional research approaches, with the aim of creating social change and creating safer more inclusive schools for LGBTQ youth.

Chapter 4 Findings: The Ethnodrama

Queering High School

Co-written by Patrick Tomczyk and Molly Mays (youth participant).

Participant interviewees/contributors & creators: Molly Mays, JC, Jay M, Apollo, Anonymous YYC, Ryley, Infinity Peterson, Loki B, Erik H, Jen, Jake, Ben, Edmonton Boy, Leland, Andrew.

Participant-actors: Bianca, Asra N, Kat D, Quinn L, Samuel A (Nov 1st, 2019 performance), Steph B, Andrew (Nov 16th, 2019 performance).

Participant-observer: Jade

Poster Creation & Co-Designer: Neil Smith

Characters:

Actor 1: Gender fluid, non-binary, OR trans youth, blunt and up front, holding sign, speaks fondly of GSA experiences

Actor 2: Lesbian cis female, outspoken articulate activist, holding megaphone, came out at GSA

Actor 3: Gay cis male, sarcastic, lots of personality and sass, likes sports, holding pride flag

Actor 4: Gay cis male, band and choir geek, witty, feminine and a little extra (teenage slang for over the top), holding sign, ex-boyfriend goes to GSA, not so great GSA experiences

Actor 5: Either male or female – doesn't identify – states they are "confused," goes to Catholic School, holding sign, strict parents

Actor 6: This character has no lines, it can be played by an ally, or an LGBTQ youth. They represent all youth that are silenced, too scared to have a voice or not ready to speak out. (this role is optional).

All actors may choose their character's name. This can either be a pseudonym or their own name.

Setting:

The 5-6 youth are gathered at a LGBTQ rights rally. This can be set outside a Government building (like the Alberta Legislature), or outside a public school.

Alternately, the setting can be inside a school, as youth "take over" a classroom, staffroom, or other public space within a school.

The youth are holding "homemade" posters, and a pride flag. If set outside, a youth is holding a megaphone.

Props:

Pride Flag

Figures 8 through 17 depict the participant created posters as props for the public performances. The posters are as follows:

Figure 8

LGBTQIA+ Poster

Figure 9

GSAs Save Lives Poster

Figure 10

Stop Bullying Poster

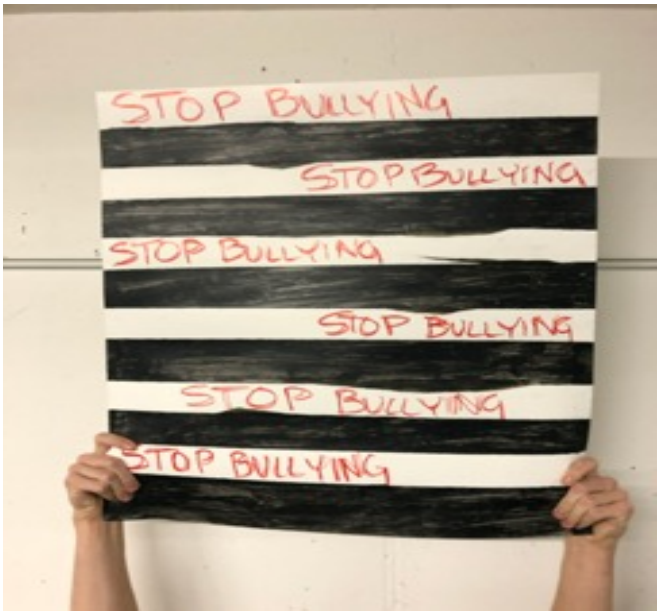


Figure 11

Safe Spaces (with bathroom symbol of gender-neutral washroom) Poster

Figure 12

*Stop Policing Gender Norms Poste*r

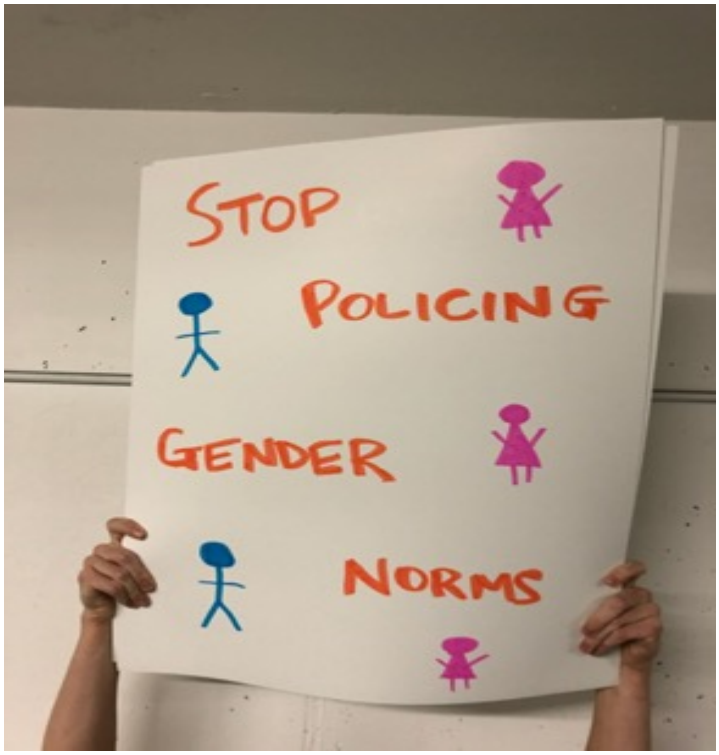


Figure 13

LGBTQ Policies Fail – Needs Improvement poster

Figure 14

Love is Love Poster

Figure 15

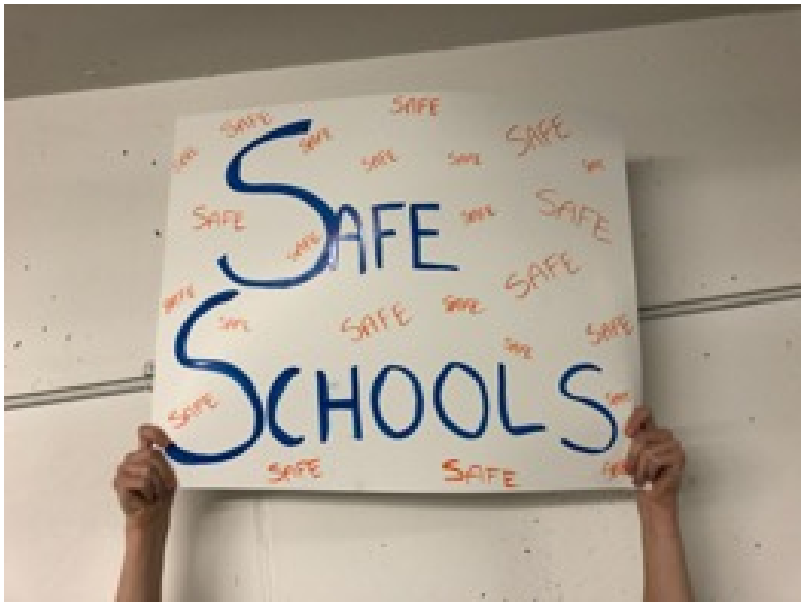
Stop Kenney – Don't Out Kids Poster

Figure 16

Stop the Trolling Poster

Figure 17

Safe Schools Poster



At the beginning of each scene, an actor will hold up a sign high above their head that reflects the topic and theme of the scene. Calls to action are directed to the audience. All actors freeze in that moment and the focus is on Actor 2 who is saying the call to action line. The calls to action are based on the themes of the script and they offer implications for change.

Scene 1: I'm Not an Acronym

Today marks the day hundreds of students across Alberta walked out the front doors of their schools at 9:30 a.m. Friday to protest the Kenney government's plan to change Bill 24. To set the setting, on a projector screen we see a news clip from Global News.[22] *The youth are off to the side during the video. As the video fades out, the youth begin chanting and enter the*

[22] Mertz, E., & Kornik, S. (2019, May 3). *Student-led walkout across Alberta Friday opposing government's GSA rules.* Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/5234181/student-walkout-lgbtq-gsa-alberta-ucp/

performance space. During their lines, the youth are speaking to the "public" – there is a sense of urgency, frustration, and a little anger.

Actor 4: *(holding sign "LGBTQIA+")* Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Actor 4: *(to audience)* Let me hear you! Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Call to action:

Actor 2: Rather than talk about us *(motions to others)* listen to us, and hear what we have to say!

Actor 1: My name is _____ *(depending on actor)*. I'm not an acronym, so stop calling me LGBTQ *(smirks)* – I'm not lesbian, bi, gay, trans, AND queer. The only thing I am is… I'm up front! Outside of school, LGBTQ people are marginalized enough, and when teachers reduce my identity to an acronym, they make me feel marginalized, they make me feel like I don't matter. *(more loudly)* And when they make me feel marginalized, small, and inferior, I don't feel welcomed, cared for, or safe. What does that teach the other cisgender and straight students?

Actor 2: An acronym doesn't define who I am. I'm not LGBTQ, I'm just lesbian. The way the acronym is used makes me feel different, separate, and othered; it reminds me that I'm not *(thinking)*… straight. My name is _____. *(Pointedly – the actor may insert their own name or a pseudonym).* The acronym has almost become a marketing ploy at this point; it's perpetuating a heteronormative attitude that all LGBTQ people are the same, and they have the same issues and therefore can all be lumped into a 5-letter, or more, acronym. They're making it seem like all gay

and trans people think and feel the same way. Lesbian issue aren't trans issues, or gay issues! We don't belong in the same category!

All: "We're here, we're queer and we'd like to say hello!"

Actor 3: My name is _____. And that's who I am. I'm not that gay kid, or gay ____. I'm just _____. My sexuality doesn't define who I am, nor is being gay my accomplishment. Just call me by my name! Today we walked out of class so that our voices could be heard and we're here to make some noise!

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Actor 4: I'm _____. *(Loud and proud)* I'm gay and I'm proud. When other kids call me "fairy boy" or "fag" it's hurtful. Earlier this school year I was assaulted at school. I woke up in the hospital. I had a concussion, a broken rib, spine, and neck damage. No charges were ever laid. Sad that in 2019 this kind of stuff still happens in schools.

Actor 5: *(actor is holding the stop bullying sign, a little more discreetly and is not as out there)* I'm… confused. But I'm here anyway. My name is _____. When I hear things like *(thinking as words come to mind) "fag," "freak," "that's so gay,"* and *"no homo,"* it makes me even more anxious about coming out. My parents don't know I'm here – my friends wanted to come too, but their parents wouldn't let them… so… I'm here to represent them, too.

All: "We're here, we're queer and we'd like to say hello!"

<u>Call to action</u>

Actor 2: Rather than talk about us *(motions to others)* listen to us, and hear what we have to say!

Scene 2: GSAs

Actor 3: *(Holds up sign GSAs Save Lives)* "Two, Four, Six, Eight! How Do You Know Your Kids Are Straight?" Let me hear you!

All: "Two, Four, Six, Eight! How Do You Know Your Kids Are Straight?"

(Speaking to each other)

Actor 5: *(looks at sign)* What's GSA?

Actor 2: It's the "Gay Straight Alliance" *(Makes air quotes)*

Actor 1: *(interrupts)* It's not just for Gay or Straight people. It's for LG… B… ugh. See, even I reduce it to an acronym. It's a club at lunch at my school. We meet on Wednesdays. It's a gender and sexuality alliance – it's supposed to be a welcoming and safe space for anyone and everyone.

Actor 2: It's somewhere to go and meet like-minded people. Sometimes kids don't feel safe in a school and at least there's a place in the building that's safe.

Actor 5: *(turns to actor 2)* Are you gay?

Actor 2: I'm lesbian. I prefer Lesbian. I just don't like appropriating terms that aren't mine.

Actor 5: Do you have to be LGBTQ to go?

Actor 1: No. G…B… ugh, AGAIN!!!! LGBTQ. It's for everyone; anyone can go! (*They laugh).*

Actor 5: But… why would *everyone* want to go? And besides it's always pitched as the gay club or the *(slowly, with air quotes)* L-G-B-T-Q club.

Actor 4: In some ways, you're right. It's mostly LGBTQ youth that go. It's about building school community, awareness, socializing, relating and accepting. At our school, every meeting is intentionally planned by the 2 supporting teachers.

Actor 2: *(as a matter of fact)* Are they straight?

Actor 4: Yeah, but they're allies.

Actor 3: *(sarcastically)* It's where the *"freaks"* go. And because of that mantra, sometimes I feel ashamed going. Straight kids look at me weird when they see me going into the GSA room at lunch. And plus, there's barely anyone there, and the people that go don't do much on top of it. I feel like they are the kids that have no friends to begin with *(sighs)*. "The social pariahs." The teacher doesn't even show up half the time. And when she does, she doesn't really know what she's talking about. I know she tries, and she's nice, but she's not gay herself so it's a hella awkward situation.

Actor 2: We are looking for somewhere safe to go that one day a week and the person there has no understanding of gay issues, let alone trans or lesbian issues.

Actor 5: *(looks at actor 3 and nods)* I totally get that. High school is already hard enough especially when you don't have someone to talk to.

Actor 3: *(turns to actor 5)* You know what: another reason I think GSA attendance has dwindled at my school is because it used to be a novel thing, and now it's not so much. It used to have all this buzz and energy around it. They aren't really doing anything that creative to build school community; it's just become a room. The bulletin boards are bare, too. They used to have monthly themes. The work of inclusion and building safe schools shouldn't have stopped when they made GSAs 5 years ago!

Actor 1: Well, My GSA is so cool. We're like activists. We promote diversity within the school. We want to make a safe and caring place for queer kids. We've hosted

monthly events all year as well, and our own pride week. We have guest speakers that come and we've even started doing a monthly potluck to get people to keep coming at least once a month.

Actor 2: My GSA is the place I came out. I felt safe there. Everyone was so accepting and open. I think I'd still be in the closet if it weren't for my GSA. What's interesting though, is there's a lot of straight girls that are allies. I don't recall any straight guys ever attending. I think straight guys are insecure about being an ally – their macho-ness may be on the line.

Actor 4: Oh man, I can never make it. It's just at lunch on Wednesdays and I have Band on Monday and Wednesday, and on Tuesdays I have Leadership, and on Thursdays I have Choir. I used to go in grade 10 and I really liked it. It made me feel like I belonged to a school community. It was a nice transition to high school. I had just come out at the end of grade 9 and then I stepped into this big high school and it was the best place to be at the time, because I didn't have any friends, and there I met people I could relate to.

Actor 2: I wish there was another option, and that we didn't have to choose between all the other stuff that's going on at school.

Actor 4: The other thing is that my ex goes to GSA. Things are still weird between us and it's just awkward going there at lunch because *he's* there.

Actor 1: I know what you mean. There's some teenage drama between some of the students, which then prevents some people from attending.

Actor 3: Yeah… Yeah know, I wish there was another option. Like why do we only have GSA once a week. *(sarcastically)* I'm gay all the time not just on Wednesdays –

so having access to that space more often would be super cool. We have no after school events either, and when we've reached out for speakers there wasn't enough student interest to stay late.

Actor 1: I wish we could turn my GSA into a homeroom, then we'd have GSA every day. Like the best thing about GSAs is having someone to talk to; it's like a peer support network. A homeroom would be awesome.

Actor 3: When we had a change of GSA sponsor teacher, it changed the culture of the GSA and enrollment really suffered. The success of the GSAs is so teacher dependent. I wish they could do some training for the GSA teachers other than just telling them they're going to be in charge of a GSA.

Actor 2: Diversity training would probably benefit all teachers. Like overall, GSAs change the culture of students and make people more aware and open about things, but more work needs to be done with staff; especially new teachers to the school.

Actor 3: And some of the old teachers could use some training too!

Actor 2: The other great thing about GSAs is that families are not as understanding or even sometimes accepting. They say things like "I support you," but they don't really understand what it's like. There's a difference between accepting, understanding and supporting.

Actor 4: *(Sighs)* My family makes homophobic comments. My stepmom called me "an effing fag" just the other week.

Actor 5: *(in agreement)* Ugh, I'm sorry, that's shitty. Yeah… My family doesn't even know.

Actor 2: At least at GSA, I can relate to people my age that are going through something even remotely similar. It's… nice to have a safe space with someone your age to talk to.

Actor 3: *(turns to actor 2)* Yeah, I agree, there's a huge difference between understanding and accepting and I think a lot of work needs to be done with that for the adults, so that they can model and teach others what's appropriate. That's what needs to be done to make kids feel safe!

Actor 4: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Call to action

Actor 2: Teachers and staff need to be better trained. Inclusion isn't just about kids who you think need help. It's about all kids, and that means it's also about gay kids.

Scene 3: Bullying

Actor 1: "Two, Four, Six, Eight! How Do You Know Your Kids Are Straight?" (*Holds up sign "Stop Bullying")* Let me hear you!

All: "Two, Four, Six, Eight! How Do You Know Your Kids Are Straight?"

Actor 4: Hey, have any of you ever been bullied? I get called "fairy boy" or "fag" almost every day. To be honest, I prefer fairy boy over fag. *(Shakes his head).* Earlier this school year I was beat up pretty bad, and I feel like the school didn't do anything. There was no restitution; they didn't think it was a hate crime.

Actor 2: I'm so sorry to hear that. I feel like there's a perception that LGBTQ bullying isn't a thing anymore and it's just… pushed aside.

Actor 1: Maybe it's not in your face like with physical violence, but I hear words like *"freak"* daily. There's also a lot of like, covert negativity. People talk behind each other's backs all the time.

Actor 4: We have a *"no tolerance"* policy for bullying, but I hear indirect comments like *"queer"* and *"homo"* all the time and I never see adults intervening. Sometimes you can't really rely on teachers. It's just like they're too scared to deal with it.

Actor 1: Or don't know how to deal with it.

Actor 4: Or they don't want to deal with it. I wonder how'd they feel if I called them a fag. And it's not in the classrooms that it's rampant in. It's in the hallways!

Actor 1: The hallways are the worst! They can be a nightmare.

Actor 5: I kinda get the sense too that the school doesn't do anything. They don't bring it up. They keep things quiet. They don't bring it up at assemblies, or in newsletters, or even in those "no bullying" weeks and celebrations. I feel like… they're afraid of admitting there's a problem. It's almost like they're happy to support us, but not where we need it the most, yeah know?

Actor 1: *(Rhetorically and sarcastically)* Right? And unless a student is an ally they don't care and won't say anything when they hear those slurs either.

Actor 3: Yeah, sometimes I feel like the adults would rather avoid it and not start a fight with some kid. And then it just perpetuates that covert homophobia, or transphobia is ok... and that they can get away with it, because it's just a *"joke."*

Actor 4: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Call to action

Actor 2: Something has got to be done! It's not okay for people to talk this way. I know teachers are busy getting their next lesson ready, but this amounts to sexual harassment and there needs to be some sort of intervention. Teachers need to know how to intervene.

Scene 4: Washrooms

Actor 5: *(Holds up sign "Safe Spaces" with bathroom symbol of gender neutral washroom)*

Actor 1: We have *(with strong emphasis and gesturing one with finger)* **A** gender-neutral washroom at my school.

Actor 2: *(picking up on the subtext and significance of "A" and gesturing with hand as well)* We have **one,** too.

Actor 3: Us too, but we have to share it with the Special Ed kids. There's hoists and lifts in the bathroom… last time I checked I was able-bodied. *(points to self)* I mean, trying to be PC about this… and I don't want to offend anyone, but why the hell are we being grouped with the disabled kids? I don't need a bathroom attendant to wipe my ass.

Actor 2: Don't be a jerk, not everyone needs their ass wiped!

Actor 3: Sorry you're right – but that just proves my point.

Actor 4: Don't you guys think that's a problem? **ONE** bathroom for everyone. It's so ridiculous. They say bathrooms aren't safe, so they go and make **ONE** for all non-cis kids and other LGBTQ kids which makes us feel even more segregated and different.

Actor 2: One of the things schools could do to improve is make us feel like we are not weirdos that can be gawked at when we go to the bathroom. We have to make the kids that need it feel good about using it.

Actor 5: Sounds like something they used to do in the 50s: have separate washrooms based on race. Now it's just based on sexuality or gender expression.

Actor 3: There's stuff written on the stall walls, too. They say they are going to clean it up, but when they do it's there again right away. Everyone used to use it. There were always straight couples in there making out or douche bags vaping, or who knows doing what else. So now it's just locked.

Actor 1: Yeah, and to add insult to injury and make it even worse, is that we have to walk across the entire school and up one flight of stairs to get to it. I'm at a big high school; it can take like 5-7 minutes to walk there each way. And not only that, but I have to ask the teacher in the classroom next door for the key, because it's always locked.

Actor 4: Oh my god! The other day there was a sub and she's like: *(ridiculously mimicking an old lady)* "Does anybody know where's the key to the "free-for-all" bathroom is?"

Actor 3: Ugh, that's super awkward!!! Interrupting someone's class to ask for a key to the "gender neutral washroom." So basically, you're announcing it to the entire class that you're going to use the "gender neutral washroom."

Actor 1: Yep! Might as well get the t-shirt. It doesn't end there though… then you use the washroom, and trek all the way back and then your teacher is mad at you for being gone for like 25 minutes and then you have to explain to her where you

went and why it took so long, and of course everyone in the classroom hears it again.

Call to action

Actor 2: There's got to be a better way to do this. The bathroom issue is a complete shit show! This makes schools unsafe for us. If we continue to disenfranchise people, then no wonder kids get bullied at school.

Scene 5: Physical Education

Actor 4: *(Holds up sign "Stop policing gender norms")* Gay and lesbian rights under attack. What do we do? Act Up! Fight Back! What do we do?

All: Act Up! Fight Back!

Actor 5: I've been playing on the basketball and football teams this year. A lot of the guys have really unhealthy hypermasculine attitudes and a sense of self. *(in a low deep voice) Yo Bro!*

Actor 2*:* *What's up bro?* (*They do that dumb slappy handshake thing).*

Actor 5: It's like they need to show how aggressive and dominant they are all the time. They even have their own fight club after school. They call each other fags, and it seems like a joke to them. They don't even *know* the repercussions of that word.

Actor 2: You have no idea how tired I am of the guys hypersexualizing lesbians or bi-girls. The girls sometimes get catcalled and whistled at when they hold hands or even show any kind of intimacy. Not to mention, it's one hundred percent okay for two straight girls to call themselves "girlfriends," but when a lesbian is actually talking about her actual girlfriend, suddenly it's a big deal. It's weird. It's like girl couples are ok as long as they **aren't actually gay**.

Actor 4: And to them, guy couples are for sure not ok. It's like the highest form of heresy for straight guys to even look at a gay guy.

Actor 2: Obviously, they have some unhealthy sexualized attitudes. They're probably watching porn and have some ultra-fetishized beliefs about lesbians. Disgusting.

Actor 1: It's true. It's not like you're there for their sexual amusement. It's like the lesbians have become sexualized by the straight boys because they think it's hot.

Actor 5: I've totally stopped caring about what people say or think and have chosen to surround myself with likeminded people.

Actor 4: And meanwhile, there's gender policing happening and we get weird looks if two guys were to hold hands or kiss. There's this weird fear of the gay male and that he's flirting with you. If he looks at you or says "nice shirt" they think of "he wants to get with me."

Actor 1: Whenever I'm around straight guys I don't act like myself. It's almost like I have to protect myself from them. Jeez, those douche bags aren't even my type.

Actor 3: Yeah there's a total double standard. The staff rarely do anything if straight couples are holding hands or making out in the halls, but as soon as there's a gay couple doing it, they are told it's not appropriate and *"that's not ok and we don't want to promote that here."*

Actor 4: Promote what? (*Shakes his head)*

Actor 1: There's so many socially conservative values at school. Like, the other day in PE, the teachers split us up into guys and girls. I hate having to choose one or the other. I don't identify as one or the other. For me, gender isn't binary! I hate being

misgendered! At least the school has been accommodating with separate change rooms.

Actor 3: At my school, I was asked if I wanted a separate change room to accommodate my sexuality. I didn't even ask for one. My sexuality doesn't need accommodating! It was humiliating. I heard all the other kids snickering. What's even worse is in the guys' change room now, I know they're all staring and acting super weird and cautious like I'm gonna do something to them. I'm not a predator!

Actor 4: Speaking of being split up, at my school we are always split up by sex. I was once told to go play on the girls' side. And the teacher was giving complements to the guys about their muscles and how in shape they are – like way to body shame and reinforce unhealthy body images. I had to act straight to hide who I was, and… I even took part in laughing at the "fag" slurs. It hurts. It really hurts to have to pretend like that's something normal.

Actor 1: How the hell are straight kids going to change their attitudes and stereotypes if the adults reinforce these old ways of thinking?

Actor 5: PE is definitely tolerable, but the last thing it is, is comfortable. It's a complete joke of a class anyways.

<u>Call to action</u>

Actor 2: How Phys Ed is run needs to be reconsidered! Ask yourselves how inclusive is it really?

Scene 6: Systemic Issues

Actor 4: Gay and lesbian rights under attack. What do we do? Act Up! Fight Back! Gay and lesbian rights under attack. What do we do?

All: Act Up! Fight Back!

Actor 2: *(Holds up sign "LGBTQ Policies F- Needs Improvement")*

Actor 5: I feel like there are some institutional practices that were created and appear to help LGBTQ youth, and reduce incidents, but they need some tweaking so that they don't risk marginalizing youth and putting them at risk by accident. Sometimes this outs kids.

Actor 4: Yeah, like for ONE, the whole washrooms debacle. I bet you anything most of the people creating these policies aren't even part of the LGBTQ community. A positive attempt by a school can inflict an unpleasant experience and circumstance.

Actor 1: For example, like, schools will honour your preferred name and gender, but sometimes on the report card it doesn't match up, and then your parents are like WTF. Or there's people in your class that look at your report card and see the different pronouns or name and then they're just like WTF?

Actor 2: It just leads to terrible conversations. I think this is especially true for trans youth and non-binary youth.

Actor 1: I remember someone once saying to me: "Oh they messed up your pronouns and your name." For a while after, I was teased and called by my "given" name. It was awful.

Actor 5: I've also heard other kids say things like: "I can't understand people that can't make up their mind and pick a side," or worse: "Sex is supposed to match your gender."

Actor 1: I mean, I still don't get why teachers make a big deal out of the pronouns. It's really not that hard. Aren't they supposed to get to know their students in the first place… *(sarcastically mimicking) "He, I mean she, sorry they…"* It's really not that hard dude. Get with it.

Actor 2: That's probably the only PD they've ever gotten: "definitions and pronouns," and they are still confused by it. There's way larger issues than pronouns.

Actor 5: I really think gender expression confuses teachers and they make everyone feel way more awkward. What sucks about this, is that other students get their cues from the adults, and if they aren't great role models, how can we expect youth to be more accepting and tolerant?

Actor 4: Once in Social class, we were discussing minority rights and the topic of GSAs came up and then the teacher totally singled me out, basically outed me in front of the class and started to pick on me because I was the only gay kid in that class. I called the teacher a shit and then got kicked out of class. But somehow, it's okay that he's being an ass.

Actor 1: Do you know what's also frustrating? The guidance counsellors aren't really counsellors, they're mostly academic advisors. I don't need help with my timetable, I need someone to talk to someone that can understand what I'm going through, and offer some **guidance**. Like we don't need to make a big deal about it

and call in a psychologist from downtown, but at least have someone on staff that's comfortable talking to a non-binary (or "trans kid" depending on actor) kid.

Actor 4: At grad photos, I was given a choice of either the football, or a scroll as the prop for my picture. I wanted the flowers, but those were for the girls. Simple for me to get, right? *(they all shake their heads)*

Call to action

Actor 2: School boards need better ways to identify and address the microaggressions. They need LGBTQ staff on these policy committees and they need to listen to our voices!

Scene 7: Catholic School and Band

Actor 1: (*Holds up sign "Love is Love")*

Actor 5: I go to a pretty big Catholic high school. Now I know what you're all thinking… but actually we are really progressive. We are a really big football school and we have a huge band program, too. Like we have to take religion in all three years to be able to walk the stage and participate in grad ceremonies, but we aren't taught anything that's anti-gay or anything like that. Our teacher adapted class to give it modern relevance and said we are all made in God's image, and I think that's pretty liberal. I mean we can't watch *Love Simon* for a film study, but otherwise LGBTQ issues aren't really ever brought up, or promoted, but they aren't put down either. We don't have a GSA. I think it's because we are so busy with everything else. I guess no one has ever asked for it, so there's not enough interest. Like I wouldn't have time for it anyway. I'm so busy with band and football. We do have a pride flag hanging in the band room and musical theatre

has become the quasi GSA anyways… and I'm pretty sure the band teacher is gay. So, at least we know that there's a safe space in the building and teachers that are supportive. We are a very tolerant and accepting high school.

Actor 4: *(doesn't skip a beat)* So basically you guys just don't deal with it…? Is that tolerance? Or acceptance?

(awkward pause…)

Actor 3: I remember when I was in band and we went on overnight trips, and I had to pretend I was straight so that my roommate wouldn't know. All the girls and guys got separated because they were worried about those dummies having sex and teen pregnancy. I could only imagine what would have happened if they knew I was gay. I'm pretty sure my roommate was gay too, but neither of us were out. The thinking is so flawed.

Actor 2: It's not a comfortable situation having to "act straight." It's bad enough growing up in a straight world.

Actor 4: It's so stupid. Even if the roommates don't have any issues with it, sometimes their parents do, so they just separate us. They are saying it's a safety issue and an accommodation… I'm not sure who or what they are protecting or accommodating. *(proclaims)* Once again, my sexuality doesn't need accommodating, thank you very much. It's fine just the way it is… *(rolls eyes)* At least I got my own room.

Call to action

Actor 2: This is about human dignity and human rights. It shouldn't matter if you go to a Catholic school, a private school or a public school. We all deserve to be treated equally. "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Scene 8: Coming Out

Actor 3: *(Holds up sign "Stop Kenney – Don't Out Kids")*

Actor 2: I came out at school first. First to my friends and then later to my family. If it weren't for GSA I don't know if I would have done it. It was nice having youth my age and going through similar things helped me with the whole process.

Actor 4: You're so lucky! I was outed at school, and things got super weird really quick. I told one person and then everyone knew. It… really kind of stole my coming out moment. Everyone started to gossip and then there were rumors about me and my best friend and all that. And then when my best friend found out, he stopped talking to me and we just… stopped being friends. I tried to forget, but it still stings.

Actor 5: I can't even imagine... Coming out is hard enough, going to school shouldn't be. My family still doesn't even know.

Actor 2: If I didn't have school for me to work through all this, I don't know where I'd be. At least the teachers at my school are somewhat understanding.

Actor 5: My parents are hardcore conservative Christians. They make awkward homophobic comments all the time. They are those (*with air quotes)* "gays will burn in the lakes of fire" type people.

Call to action

Actor 2: You shouldn't have to fear coming out at school. Give our kids a chance to be!

Scene 9: Social Media

Actor 5: *(Holds up sign "Stopping the trolling")* Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

All: "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Homophobia's got to go!"

Actor 4: While the bullying that happens at school may be covert or limited to the hallways, what's happening on social media is in your face, and it's hard to escape it and there's no accountability. People are posting comments and using religion as an excuse. Things like: "God says it's not right to be gay and you're going to hell."

Actor 3: Yeah! A random number once texted me, and then later that person even called me and called me a bunch of names like *fag*. I was so embarrassed. I kept it to myself.

Actor 2: The world is so messed up, and we get all these people and their stupid jokes about those super alt-right influenced, d-bags doing all those *"you gay"* jokes on social media. I see it all the time. It's passed off as funny, and what's worse, little kids can see that. Their friends laugh at it, then they think it's funny. A vicious circle that's probably never going to end.

Actor 1: I totally agree, like, it's going to end up going backwards if these "gay jokes" in those stupid meme videos keep getting more views. Making fun of gay people and using the word "gay" as a joke, or even an insult, won't make anything any better.

Call to action:

Actor 2: There needs to be better accountability. If it impacts school then the schools gotta deal with it. Put your actions where your policies are.

Scene 10: Microaggressions

Actor 2: *(Holds up sign "Safe Schools").* "We're here, we're queer and we'd like to say hello!"

All: "We're here, we're queer and we'd like to say hello!"

Actor 1: There's in your face things that happen regularly that are blatantly homophobic or transphobic, and those are obviously types of bullying and harassment.

Actor 2: It's the microaggressions that we need to start thinking about; that we need to start raising awareness about. It's really what contributes and lays the groundwork for the overt homophobia and transphobia.

Actor 3: Microaggressions breed harassment and bullying. They're a harsh reality gay kids have to face. And some of these are there because of systems put into place by straight adults with *(with air quotes)* "good intentions."

Actor 1: They accommodate other kids with spaces, celebrations, bringing in people with wisdom and experience, and that's great. Why can't gay kids be treated this way, too?

Actor 4: Yeah!!! These are systemic issues, that continue to reinforce stereotypes, gender policing, and homonegative attitudes.

Actor 5: Despite my confusion, I always tell myself: one day at a time. Despite how difficult some days can be, I know that we are making progress and that I'm learning about myself every day.

Actor 2: It's important to remember that it's ok to just be. Its ok to be you. You don't need to rush to find a label. You don't need to become gay or trans or lesbian. Sometimes it's ok to just sit in that space of vulnerability and to become over time. You don't need to pick a sexuality or a gender expression to be accepted by others. You need to do it for yourself. I can't stress that enough… it's ok to just be you.

Actor 1: Schools are where change happens. We *need* the adults to be better educated, so that they can make real change in their classrooms.

All: "We're here, we're queer and we'd like to say hello!" *Youth continue chanting as lights fade out. Youth begin to spread apart and walk away in different directions.*

Various chants/slogans used:

All: "Two, Four, Six, Eight! How Do You Know Your Kids Are Straight?"

All: Gay and lesbian rights under attack. What do we do? Act Up! Fight Back!

Actor 4: "Gay by birth, fabulous by choice."

All: They say get back. We say fight back!

End

Chapter 5 Reflection on the Ethnodrama Process, Themes and Post-Production Discussion & Questionnaire

The aspects of research I reflect upon in this chapter spans the time from when my ethics approval was granted in September 2018 to the final performance in November 2019. When I first set out on this research I focused on HBT bullying and harassment, but by the end of the process, I came to understand that the youth I had worked with experienced a threat to their safety that was significantly broader than HBT bullying and harassment alone. In this chapter I reflect on the research process, the themes that were raised in the performance, as well as the post-production questionnaires and discussion with audience members.

Reflection on Participant Recruitment

One of the most challenging elements of this process was recruiting participants. As a novice researcher, I made the assumption that participants would come out in droves and that creating a working group would be a fairly straightforward and uncomplicated process. I naively assumed that reaching out through the GSA network with my original call for participants would be sufficient and successful.

After my initial calls for participants, a month had passed and I had not received a single email or phone call from potential participants. Essentially, I had zero interest expressed in this research, and so I had to queer my approach. At this point, I needed to understand why youth were not interested, or at least curious, in participating in something that had so much to offer the LGBTQ community.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, my initial call was in the form of a text-based document that contained all the required recruitment information about the project, and it was approved by the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board. It was written in youth friendly language, so I knew the message would be understood, but I needed to ensure that the message was being read.

I immediately re-envisioned what the call for participants handout would look like – it needed to look more LGBTQ friendly, catchier for youth, and less institutional. With less than a month before the conference at which I hoped we would be able to perform the following year, I shifted away from the original text document, and designed a glossy postcard sized handout (Figures 7 and 8). The text did not change, but the format did. It looked less like someone from the University wanted to do a research experiment on "gay kids," and became more inviting and visibly queer, complete with pride colours. I believed this would stand a better chance of having youth at least be willing to lay their eyes on it, than the previous edition did.

At the 7th Annual GSA conference where I went to promote my research and recruit participants, I pinned a Pride flag to my table, had my postcards ready to go, and I made a small sign about who I was and what the research was about. That day, I spoke to several hundred youth, teachers, and other adults from LGBTQ organizations in attendance, and handed out over 250 postcards. While no one actually committed to participating that day, there were several youth and adults who expressed an interest and said they would reach out to me in the coming days.

I realized through this process of speaking to hundreds of people that day, that a personal connection was important, so that the potential participants could have an understanding of who I was, what I was doing and why I was doing it. The in-person connection also allowed for any questions to be answered immediately. In many ways, the call for participants was like an invitation, and the youth needed a reason to participate – they wanted to know what was in it for them. The answer to this question was quite simple – to make schools a safer and more inclusive place. However, by forming a personal connection I had to "invite them to be co-researchers,

where from the inception what they produce and their thoughts and opinions about it [would] be recognized as important data" (O'Toole, 2006, p. 107), and that the research was with them rather than on them.

A reoccurring question from would be participants at the conference and in later initial conversations was "Are you gay?" It struck me that this was my mistake right from the beginning of the recruitment process: I had not disclosed my queer identity in my call for participants. I realized how important that was towards breaking down barriers between me (and my relationship to the University of Alberta and its institutional and historic symbols of power) and the participants. In relation to her research, Rooke (2010) asked, "are we willing to risk relinquishing our often-unspoken attachment to the categories that offer us a sense of ontological security" (p. 34) – i.e. my authority as a doctoral candidate/researcher. She explained that while queer ethnographers are often "deconstructing the discourses and categories that produce … informants' subjectivities, [they] might consider the extent to which [they] are willing to be pulled apart or undone [themselves]" (p. 34). An explicit statement that I was queer and a member of the LGBTQ community was missing from my call for participants and information sheet. Those who had not connected with me in person and were only looking at the original sheet of paper, email, or online post, would not have known. Given the frequency of the question, youth might have assumed that I was an outsider, based on my name Patrick (an Irish catholic name) and Tomczyk (a traditionally eastern European name) that I was a white heterosexual cisgender male working at a university, and therefore would not be able to relate to them, let alone their stories. My insider status in the LGBTQ community, I believe gave me some leverage and perhaps even advantage, in terms of credibility, relatability and trust. As Giroux (1992) indicated, our politics of location are quite complex, and although:

> teachers and other cultural workers may not speak as Others whose experiences they do not share, or suggest that such Others have nothing to say, they certainly can speak about and to experiences of racism, sexism, class discrimination, and other concerns as historical and relational issues that deeply affect and connect various dominant and marginalized groups. (p. 4)

Once I peeled back that additional layer, I opened up about who I was and why I was doing the research, there was always a marked sense of relief on potential participants faces, and an openness to ask questions about the research. Rooke (2010) stated that queer field work:

> demands that the ethnographer work from an honest sense of oneself that is open and reflexive, rather than holding on to a sense of self which provides an ontologically stable place from which enter into the fieldwork and subsequently come back to. (p. 35)

Answering the "Are you gay?" question was a form of coming out to my participants and it leveled the playing field and marked a shift moving forward. However, I did not just stop there. I also needed to share some of my own life history in order to contribute to rapport building and to make connections. The politics of location are complex, and our backgrounds contain so many intricate layers. While I was cognizant not make this about me by centering myself, I did need to engage in some self-revelatory work with the participants in order to build trusting bonds. I shared with participants my age, and that while I am older than them, I am not quite old enough to be their parent. This in some ways situated me closer to the participants generationally and reaffirmed to them that my high school experiences "were from this century," as one of my participants joked. I shared with them some of my experiences of HBT bullying and harassment, how GSAs did not exist when I was at school and that the "drama kids" were the most accepting

in my school. Some of this sharing occurred right at the beginning, while other relevant facts came out over the course of our conversations, such as going to Catholic school, or my father's homophobia. Being vulnerable and sharing my experiences permitted me to develop a bond with the participants, to show that I had some similar experiences and could share a deeper level of understanding as an insider. This self-revelatory process helped reduce the perceived and assumed power that I held as an older, white cisgender gay male, in the role of a researcher, with more education and life experience than the participants. I acknowledged that I held a certain status. After all, I was the one responsible for this project coming to fruition; however, it was important to me that my participants had as much agency as possible and that they felt an ownership of the project in order for the study to be successful. O'Toole (2006) stated that:

> an understanding of power relationships operating within the research will enable the participants to be actively engaged with the researcher in generating the research knowledge, and in an exploration of the relationship between power and knowledge, and of the value systems involved in the research. (p. 16)

This act of de-powerment was part of "the unearthing of my own personal history" (Conrad, 2003, p. 50). I needed to be just as vulnerable with the youth as I was asking them to be, and so I also needed to share some of my experiences with HBT bullying and harassment. This shift acknowledged, right from the beginning, the participants as co-researchers – even at that early stage; they needed to feel like we had something in common in order for this to work. "Queer reflexivity" required that I draw attention to the central issue of my work – forms of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression, and I had to acknowledge to my participants that I was in and of the culture I was writing about (Rooke 2010). O'Toole (2006) explained that in "developing a bond of trust" researchers need to reconcile two "important destabilizing factors,"

curiosity and fear (p. 94). This is why it was important to explain who I was, what I was researching and why.

Considering that the participants were framed as active co-researchers in the ethnodrama "change[d] the basic power relationship between research and subject" (O'Toole, 2006, p. 25). The endowment of participants as co-researchers empowered them and gave them "a personal stake and ownership of the research that [made] them more enthusiastic and flexible in contributing to it" (O'Toole, 2006, p. 95).

Reflection on the Interview Process

A technical consideration of using participant data, such as interviews in research, is that it involves some complexities such as requiring setting up appropriate time and space. For me, finding appropriate space was not an issue, however being mindful and respecting the participants' time availability required some consideration. With regards to all of the youth who participated in the interviews, I needed to be flexible with scheduling. The first scheduling challenge that I identified was that January was busy with end of semester final exams for all high school students. Logically, most of the youth opted to prioritize studying for exams over meeting with me. Having taught high school for a number of years, I knew that the beginning of second semester in early February, would start up fairly slowly, but before long, students would be into the full swing of a regular academic schedule, with projects, homework, assignments and tests to study for – not to mention the typical teenager life: working part-time, and negotiating time with their family and friends. The second scheduling challenge I had foreseen being a barrier was spring break. I consulted with all participants and realized there were three different spring breaks depending on the calendars of the school districts in which they were students (Catholic school or public and in Edmonton or Calgary). I aligned my schedule with those of the

participants so that our 2 meetings occurred prior to their spring break, and all interviews and participant validations were completed before the end of April 2019.

By the time the interviews took place, the participants already knew who I was (including my queer identity) and something about my queer reality (growing up gay in Alberta, having a partner, etc.), what I was researching (HBT bullying) and why I was researching it (to create safer and more inclusive school and because I had lived through it as a teenager), formed the bonds of trust and confidence right from the start. Establishing these bonds is one of the requirements for conducting interviews, as participants will feel relaxed during the process and they will feel motivated to add to the data (O'Toole, 2006, p. 112).

As identified in my methodology chapter, I utilized a "semi-structured interview" process, because I was seeking qualitative data. I needed some parameters to guide the context of the conversation, and I needed to acknowledge that a wide variety of responses was possible. O'Toole (2006) indicated that "a semi structured interview gives the opportunity for the unexpected insight to be collected, and for the interviewer to seek clarification, invite expansion or explore a response further" (p. 115). I had a prepared interview brief of eight questions that I raised with all participants, and from there I listened as the participants answered and followed different tangents. At times, I redirected them to probe for more depth or clarification.

Having worked in high schools, and particularly with LGBTQ youth through GSAs, and having a solid understanding of the background literature, gave me a richer understanding of the problem I was inquiring into, so that I could probe and seek clarification as needed during the conversations. As O'Toole (2006) noted, "your own familiarity with the context will also enable you to elicit more specific answers and check [participant] responses and understandings" (p.

112). For example, when a youth shared that they had gender neutral washrooms at their school, I asked many questions to unpack this statement. Below is an excerpt from an interview:

Youth: Our school is very accommodating. We have gender neutral bathrooms.

Researcher: Oh, is that so? That's great! How many do you have?

Youth: Well, actually just one.

Researcher: Oh, that's too bad, that it's just one. How big is your school?

Youth: We have 1800 kids – ish.

Researcher: That's a lot of kids! Tell me more about the bathroom. Is it fairly central and accessible?

Youth: Well actually… no, since we have so many students… It's a big school, and the bathroom is located at the very far end of the building, so it takes some time to get there.

Researcher: That sounds inconvenient.

Youth: Yeah actually, because if you decide to use that bathroom, it takes forever to get there and forever to get back, and lately it's been locked because douchebags have been vaping in there.

Researcher: So how do you get in?

Youth: You have to ask the teacher in the room next door.

Researcher: Wow, ok, so is that teacher ever teaching? Like do you have to interrupt their class?

Youth: Well actually, it's the special ed class, so you can always knock. There aren't like formal lessons going on.

Researcher: So, I'm curious, do the special ed kids use that same bathroom, too?

Youth: Yeah actually, it's got this electronic lift and a huge change table in the corner.

(Participant Interview, January 12, 2019)

This example clearly demonstrates the need to probe to elicit more specific details. On the surface, if I had left it at the first statement, it would appear that this school is making some advancements to acknowledge gender and sexual minorities. I would question the name "gender neutral" as perhaps a term needing some modification, to perhaps contain more inclusive language, such as "student washroom" or "all-inclusive washroom," etc. Gender neutral has an implication of neutralizing something, and we know that gender and sexuality are not neutral. So, despite the fact that some steps taken in the right direction are being taken by the school, the student's initial response unintentionally masked the underlying oppression. By probing and eliciting further responses and seeking clarification, I learned the following: that there is only one bathroom; it is not centrally accessible; it is kept locked; and since it contains a lift and change table, it was probably created for special needs students (seeing as it was right next door), and was probably more of an afterthought for gender and sexual minority students.

Reflection on the Data Analysis

As described in chapter 3, I coded the interviews using "dramaturgical coding" (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013), and then used "tactics for generating meaning" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 277) to identify emerging themes from the verbatim extracts of interviews. Table 4 shows the themes that emerged through this process. I surfaced eight themes, which I shared with the participants and asked for their validation to ensure that I had gotten it right.

When I began this research, I had assumed that the themes that would emerge, based on my research question, would be examples of HBT bullying and harassment that were physical,

verbal, social, emotional, and on social media. I also anticipated there would be an element of after-school bullying that in essence was school related. This assumption was based on the statistics that demonstrated the ongoing seriousness of HBT bullying in schools. After the interviews had been completed and I began to analyze the themes I was surprised to learn that the themes that emerged were very different from my original assumption.

By eliciting stories of HBT bullying and harassment, I learned that the issues are more systemic. For example, the first theme of identity was significant. Most youth recognized that they were often identified by their sexuality or gender expression. They also expressed that often sexual and gender minority youth were grouped together, and through this practice, their uniqueness and individuality were often overlooked. Other understandings that contributed to this overarching theme were perceptions of the "LGBTQ" label, and how it is used to identify youth – the fact that it does not capture the complete spectrum of sexual and gender minorities, nor does the acronym really say anything specific about any of the youth. The concept of self-identification led to many participants sharing how teachers have struggled with pronouns, and how there have been steps taken by schools to be more cognizant of pronouns when it came to report cards, for example. However, there were often instances when there were errors or unforeseen complications such as printing errors where the wrong gender was printed or unanticipated outings of students. The participants identified that microagressions were one of the underlying factors that led to them feeling unsafe at school. Other examples of such microagressions included: when teachers or students described a student as "that gay kid" or by adding the word gay before their name, which perpetuated the belief that they were different and emphasized their minority status; when students were called by the wrong pronouns; or when their wrong name was used on their report cards, also led to feelings of alienation for the youth.

The participants described that these types of microagressions were a result of systemic issues and I found it noteworthy that our conversations frequently returned to notions of heteronormativity and cisnormativity, school culture, growing up in a straight world, being part of a minority, and ideas around power and privilege. At first, I was confounded, because I did not expect the data to focus on the macro (systemic) and micro (unconscious microagressions) levels of oppression. As a beginning researcher, I had anticipated that I would hear more overt stories of bullying and harassment. By the end of the analysis, I realized that the youth experienced a threat to their safety that was significantly greater than HBT bullying and harassment alone. This threat was as a result of the power and privilege of heteronormative and cisnormative cultures and how they contributed to normalizing oppressive attitudes and beliefs in schools.

I was also surprised that microaggressions appeared in almost every thematic grouping. It had become apparent to me that microaggressions were woven into almost all the narratives of the participants. Sometimes they were due to a macro systemic issue that presented itself such as the stories of "the one gender neutral washroom," and at other times they were perpetuated by individuals almost unconsciously such as when the substitute said, "where is the key to the free-for-all bathroom." As a result, I ended up adding a third column to Table 4 to represent heteronormativity and cisnormativity and their impact on school culture. It became more and more apparent that heteronormativity, cisnormativity and genderism were complicit in contributing to oppression.

Through the analysis process I worked with a "streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 13). This model follows a progression from data, to theme, to concept and eventually to assertion/theory development. Through this analysis, I

learned that HBT bullying and harassment may be the overt form that LGBTQ youth oppression takes, but the really insidious and more difficult levels of oppression occur at the macro/systemic and trickle down to the micro/unconscious levels and this is represented by the final column.

Table 4

Theme Development

Grouping of Extended Phrases or Sentences that Identified Themes	**Overarching Thematic Categories**	**Thematic Concepts As they Relate to Heteronormative & Cisnormative School Culture**	**Assertions / Theory**
• LGBTQ acronym feels reductive. • Sexuality presupposes other forms of identity • Homonegative labels • Self-identification / pronouns • Microaggressions	Identity	Queer identities are in the minority – overlooked, forgotten, excluded. The heteronormative and cisnormative majority operates from a place of privilege and power.	Heteronormative & cisnormative hegemony are the root causes for LGBTQ oppression. They manifest themselves differently at the macro, meso (overt HBT bullying and harassment), and micro levels.
• Safe space • Like minded youth • Success is dependent on sponsor teacher(s) • Practicality of GSA • Types of GSA • Microaggressions	Gay Straight Alliances	The experience of being othered, the invisible minority becomes visible in this space. GSAs operate within the parameters of a straight culture. Ineffective GSAs are silos.	
• Homonegative name calling. • Lack of intervention by	Bullying	Gendered harassment can be attributed to:	

adults despite policies • Gender stereotype policing • Physical violence • Microaggressions (as a contributor).		Heteronormative and cisnormative oppression Heteronormative and cisnormative privilege. Heteronormative and cisnormative power. Schools need to consider HBT bullying and harassment as forms of sexual and gender harassment and not one-off incidents, that do not take into account queer lives and realities.	
• Washrooms / physical education segregation based on sex • Reinforced heteronormative stereotypes. Access to washrooms can come with barriers • Overnight field trips • Hypermasculine attitudes • Separate locker/change rooms • Microaggressions	Gendered Spaces	Traditionally Heteronormative and cisnormative practice of binary segregation. Aggression and dominance are valued masculine qualities. Gender policing Homonegative slurs Social (hetero)norms about dating. Fetishized/sexualized attitudes towards lesbians.	

• Lack of student voice in policy • Accommodations sometimes have negative consequences. • Issues around teacher training • Washroom accessibility • Honouring gender identity and expression • Lack of support from guidance • Stereotypical grad photos • Microaggressions	Bigger Issues	Policymakers need to include queer voices. Microaggressions area a result of privilege and power – ignorance and lack of awareness. Intentions of modifications / and accommodations need to be questioned. Are they intended to make the majority feel at ease or the minority?	
• LGBTQ issues are silenced, not brought up and "not promoted." • No GSA. Music class is the quasi unofficial GSA • Overnight extracurricular trips. • Microaggressions	Catholic School	Human dignity and human rights impact all regardless of faith.	
• GSAs are a safe place to do so • Impact of rumours and gossip • Coming out at school first, before coming out to family • Family values (religion) • Being outed • Microaggressions	Coming Out at School	Fear of bullying and harassment. Fear of not being accepted.	

• Needs more regulation – feeling helpless to stop it • More overt bullying and harassment • Can be anonymous • Takes various forms (video, text meme, etc.) • Can happen 24/7 • Microaggressions	Social Media	Schools need to be better equipped to deal with it as it impacts students at school. Schools need to look at bullying and harassment in the context of gender/sexual harassment and not as one-off incidents.	

Reflection on the Participant Validation Process

After the interviews were completed they were analyzed, as described in chapter 3. I met with each participant to engage in the participant validation process. This validation process was important to maintain the validity and authenticity of what was shared at their interview. Below I offer an example wherein the validation process helped draw out subtext that I had misunderstood. In the first interview with one participant, the youth said:

> I hated going to gym class. Thank god, I only had to do a 3-credit class. The guys and girls were always separated, because apparently the guys were more athletic. The guys would walk around with their chests puffed out, and in the locker room they would make sexual comments about the girls and make fag jokes. I couldn't wait for the bell to ring to get out of there. (Participant Interview, January 18, 2019)

After the analysis, I met again with the youth to engage in the participant validation process. Table 5 is an example of the same passage once it was coded. This is what was presented to the youth.

Table 5

Dramaturgical Coding 2

Youth:	I hated going to gym class,[1,2] thank god, I only had to do a three credit class.[3] The guys and girls were always separated,[4] because apparently the guys were more athletic.[5,6] The guys would walk around with their chests puffed out, and in the locker room they would make sexual comments[7] about the girls[8] and make fag jokes.[9,10] I couldn't wait for the bell to ring to get out of there.[11]	[1]OBJ: get through PE [2]EMO: frustration [3]EMO: relief [4]TAC: gender separation [5]ATT: heteronormative [6]TAC: reinforced gender stereotypes [7]CON: hearing sexist language [8]ATT: sexist [9]CON: hearing homonegative language [10]ATT: homophobic [11]SUB: fly under the radar

OBJECTIVE: Get through PE

CONFLICT: hearing sexist language, hearing homonegative language

TACTICS: Gender separation, reinforced gender stereotypes

ATTITUDES: heteronormative, sexist, homophobic

EMOTIONS: frustration, relief

SUBTEXT: fly under the radar

I surmised that the overarching thematic category was about gendered spaces, and in particular how this youth felt that they had to go unnoticed in this class. After I shared the analysis with the participant for validation, in a second interview they clarified the subtext: “It wasn’t just about flying under the radar, it was about blending in. I wasn’t out at the time, and I laughed at the fag jokes, too. I had to pretend to be straight” (Participant Interview, February 1, 2019). The validation in this example drew out the subtext, and offered rich data: the youth was acting as both an oppressor and in an oppressed role in this case. This was also an example where the second meeting turned into another interview because new data was offered, and to incorporate it into the play script I followed the same process as outlined above.

While in others cases, the validation process did not generate any new data, the participants agreed that the analysis had surfaced the important themes. Based on all the interviews, the subsequent analysis, and the participant validations, there was a substantial amount of data. Saldaña (2015), stated that “sometimes we feel the need to encompass the entire scope of the study as a play when only the most salient portions of the data corpus merit dramatization” (p. 129). This point was important to remember during the writing phase, which I will reflect on below.

Discussions About Setting and Characters

As I mentioned in chapter 3, during the validation process, two important items were discussed. The first item that was discussed with the participants, was the setting. We knew that it had to be related to school, but we also did not feel the need to change the setting for every possible scene (gym, washroom, school office, classroom, staffroom, etc.). The conversation went around in circles a few times, as participants offered locations based on scenes that they had envisioned, but that had not been written at this point. We realized that maybe we were

getting ahead of ourselves with a setting and we opted to hold off on determining the location(s) until we had a better understanding of the scenes.

The second item was a conversation about characters. It followed a similar sequence. At the beginning, we discussed if it was essential to have a varied representation of queer identities. There was a general agreement that it was important to have characters representing individuals who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer. This was also important to me, as the researcher, because I had striven to include various sexual and gender minority youth in the recruitment of participants for the interviews. As the conversation about characters continued, there was some debate about whether we wanted to have oppressive characters (antagonists), such as bullies, straight characters espousing homonegative comments, attitudes and/or microaggressions, parents, unhelpful teachers, unfair administrators, or others. There was a consensus that the youth did not want to create a parody of these figures in their lives – Saldaña (2001) concurred that "stereotypes and caricatures should be avoided" (p. 143). It was decided to leave them out. This also had an implication on cast size; in effect reducing it to just queer characters was more manageable as it would require a smaller cast. A major implication to not having oppressive characters in the scenes, however, meant that it would be more difficult to create dramatic tension, as there would be no antagonists to create obstacles in the way of the characters' objectives. We decided that this piece was not necessarily about an antagonist who created oppressive moments, but rather about sexual and gender minority students and the larger societal issue that creates conditions for oppression of them.

Reflection on the Ethnodramatic Writing Process

The next step in the process was to take the interview analyses – the dramaturgical coding data and the identified themes and transform them into a script. Theatre making is a

creative and interpretive act and I used Saldaña's (2015) "exercises for thinking creatively" as my starting point for the script:

> Take a verbatim interview transcript and transform the data into a written [scene] for a five- to seven-minute stage performance. Not everything in the full-length transcript must be used, only those portions that seem noteworthy. Edit, rearrange, and revise the interview text as needed for a more coherent and self-standing performance piece. Include stage directions for suggested actor movement, plus any necessary set pieces and hand properties. (p. 135)

As I created drafts scenes I also utilized several conventions of Epic Theatre by writing the play as a series of connected, yet independent scenes, with chants and calls to action in between. It was also during this crucial phase that, in a Brechtian way, I opted to break the fourth wall through the "verfremdungseffekt," the distancing effect (Willet, 1967, p. 177). In order to do so, the script called on the actors to directly address the audience so that the audience members could not slide into passivity. "Brecht's stylized Epic Theater form [aimed] to distance the viewer from direct emotional connection to the characters, thereby encouraging a critical response to the … content" (Landy & Montgomery, 2012, p. 131). My goal was to engage the audience directly in a more thoughtful manner, so that they could not sit back and disconnect from the salient messages of the performance, but would be challenged to critically examine issues being raised. Selman and Heather (2015) explained that "Brecht objected to theatre that engendered passivity in the audience … and that the most influential for the development of participation was his articulation of what the theatre needed to do in order to engage audiences in critical thinking" (p. 120). The goal was for them to understand the LGBTQ characters' struggles and to reflect on their roles in heteronormative and cisnormative culture rather than to pity the

characters. “[Brecht] wanted audiences to be aware in the theatre, in hopes that that state would spark change in the world outside theatre” (Selman & Heather, p. 122). Similarly, I also wanted the audience to be/come aware through this queer ethnodrama. If change were to occur, it would need to happen through conscientization (being/becoming aware), and this would not be possible if the audience was too comfortable.

Once I had written a draft skeleton for a scene based on one of the themes I would circulate it amongst participants for feedback and validation. Typically, this back and forth iterative process continued until we reached a point with a scene where we were comfortable with what we had developed. There were some participants who were more engaged and active in the entire writing process than others, notably Molly Mays.

A critical point in the script writing phase was when a skeleton draft of all ten scenes was completed. I met with Molly Mays in person and we returned to the initial conversation about setting and character. I identified the common through-line or super objective that linked all the scenes: that youth were advocating for change. We discussed this context and landed on the idea of a protest at a school. This further led me to link back to the student walkouts against *Bill 8* in the spring of 2019, and ultimately, we agreed that it could either take place at a rally in front of the legislature, or in front of/inside any Calgary or Edmonton high school. At this stage, I also incorporated the various chants into the script to transition from scene to scene, and provide an opportunity for the actors to move around on stage. Molly Mays was key in delineating the characters in the scenes, so that we had consistency throughout the entire script. We ended up editing some of the characters lines so that specific characters could remain consistent throughout the scenes. As a group, we also agreed that we would not give the characters names, as the participants wanted to leave characters open for the actors to incorporate pieces of

themselves if they chose. Once we landed on a final draft, I sent it out again to all the participants for validation.

Remaining authentic and truthful to the participants' narratives was important to me as was maintaining a certain level of verbatim text in order to maintain the integrity of the ethnodramatic process. However, it was equally important to find the right aesthetic balance between distance and engagement, enjoyment and entertainment, so that the actors could emote and the audience could identify with their struggles while remaining entertained and engaged. While I indicated earlier that the participants were the experts in their lives, I also acknowledge that adolescents still have certain developmental and cognitive milestones to reach throughout adolescence. I reflect on this because one of the participants was not as diplomatic as others, and I worried that the script would come across as full of angst and the characters would appear to be only angry. I agree with Grace and Wells' (2015) statement that "queer rage is valid and justified" and that an "OUTburst" is called for to help LGBTQ youth "counter a turbulent history, make a better present, and create a hopeful and possible future" (pp. 135–136). However, in theatre, there is an expression about playing the verb or the action (in this case to alert or to agitate), in order to achieve the objective, rather than playing the emotion (in this case anger). Thus, I was intentional in some of my word choices when speaking with participants while still showing that I empathized with their oppression and their situations. For example, when working with one of the participants I reassured them by saying: "This is an important and urgent issue", and yet had to convince them to trust my artistic choice to not shout at the audience or shock them with a story, that this would be a more effective way to dramatize the data towards making change. At times like these, I had to navigate my roles of co-researcher, director, artist, and educator as I negotiated some of the artistic choices that we made.

Throughout this writing process, some participants worked on a particular scene that they could most relate with, or that contained verbatim words from their interview(s). Others were more on the periphery advising to ensure the script remained in line with their stories, that we had not drifted too far off topic from the original intention. As we were nearing the end of the school year, I experienced that some participants' replies became less frequent; their validations became short sentences expressing their approval – sometimes in the form of monosyllabic replies such as "ok," while others were non-responsive. Several participants attributed this decline in engagement to the fact that they were busy studying for final exams and others were too busy with the end of the school year. At that point, I relied on my educator experience to gently prod the participants along, because I knew that at the end of the school year most adolescents begin to prioritize their summer. I knew how hard it was to engage adolescents and retain their participation and attention. If monosyllabic replies were all I got, I was happier with that than with nothing at all. After meeting with my supervisor, Dr. Diane Conrad, and incorporating her suggestions to improve the script, participants again had the opportunity to approve and validate. The final script was completed in August 2019, concluding the script writing phase of the ethnodrama.

Reflection on the Ethnodrama Script

The final script consisted of ten scenes and is about five to six youth who are gathered at an LGBTQ rally. They are there to have their voices heard and to bring attention to their lived experiences of being queer and going to high school in an education system that is entrenched within a heteronormative and cisnormative culture. Their urgent message is reinforced with nine calls to action, which are implications for change within schools or school systems:

- Rather than talk about us (motions to others) listen to us, and hear what we have to say!

- Teachers and staff need to be better trained. Inclusion isn't just about kids who you think need help. It's about all kids, and that means it's also about gay kids.
- Something has got to be done! It's not okay for people to talk this way. I know teachers are busy getting their next lesson ready, but this amounts to sexual harassment and there needs to be some sort of intervention. Teachers need to know how to intervene.
- There's got to be a better way to do this. The bathroom issue is a complete shit show! This makes schools unsafe for us. If we continue to disenfranchise people, then no wonder kids get bullied at school.
- How Phys Ed is run needs to be reconsidered! Ask yourselves how inclusive is it really?
- School boards need better ways to identify and address the microaggressions. They need LGBTQ staff on these policy committees and they need to listen to our voices!
- This is about human dignity and human rights. It shouldn't matter if you go to a Catholic school, a private school or a public school. We all deserve to be treated equally.
- You shouldn't have to fear coming out at school. Give our kids a chance to be!
- There needs to be better accountability. If it impacts school then the schools gotta deal with it. Put your actions where your policies are.

These calls to actions were directly aimed at the audience. Saldaña (2011) claimed that:

> When a participant/character in performance makes eye contact with and speaks directly to an audience, [they] are presumably brought closer into [their] world. The connection is more intimate, immediate, and an unspoken contract that naturalism is suspended (yet a sense of realism can still be maintained). (p. 65)

The calls to action were representations of what the youth had identified as things that needed to be addressed or that needed to be changed. I believe these calls to action exemplify

conscientization for the youth participants – the raising of their awareness of oppression. These calls to action were a direct response to the heteronormative and cisnormative oppression the participants experienced and witnessed at school. We believed the effect that they could have on the audiences could be impactful as audience members hear about the youths' experiences, and then are called upon to act/react, think/rethink and to consider/reconsider their taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and attitudes. By directly addressing the audience members, the participant-actors, in a way, inserted the audience into the performance. They were not only audiences at a performance of a play, but also bystanders or other rally attendees. The intention was that the audience take up the play proactively as a vehicle for critically reflecting on their complicity / involvement in contributing to oppression.

Reflection on the Rehearsal Process

Once the script was done, the next phase of the process was the rehearsals. The script called for five to six characters; a number of the participants identified that they did not wish to be participant actors, some right at the beginning, and others throughout the various stages. This was anticipated, as it was always an option afforded to them. Some of the participants had graduated and moved on to post-secondary studies out of town. A challenge was that there was no way for the participants from Edmonton to travel to Calgary for rehearsals or vice versa. Faced with this reality, I opted to work with one group for the rehearsal process and performance in Calgary. This resulted in the remaining two participants in Edmonton not proceeding as actors, though they did attend the final performance.

I put out another call for participants through my previous networking channels to recruit additional actors. I was looking for participants who could play certain roles, as we required a

certain diversity in the cast to represent the various characters' sexualities and gender expressions. Eventually this came together as described in chapter 3.

What was critical with these new participants was that they "should exhibit an ethic of respect for the characters they're representing since it may [have been] possible those very people [would] be in the audience during the performance" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 143). So, I shared with them that we needed to maintain the authenticity of the script to honour the voices of the youth who had developed this ethnodrama.

Within the rehearsal process I utilized "studio exercises" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 47). We began with a "workshop reading – a trial run of the play with participant-actors seated, reading aloud from the manuscript" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 59). This allowed the participant-actors to get to know the script and the characters. One of the challenges I encountered here was that for some of the participant-actors, the words of their characters were obviously not their own. As I have experienced as a teacher, I knew that reading a new text out loud could sometimes sound very disconnected and robotic. I caught myself cringing and sinking into despair, afraid that the performance would sound terrible. Fortunately, by the second and third readings it started to flow naturally. Given that the participant-actors represented a range of queer identities, and most of them had had similar experiences in high school, I needed to be attuned to their needs as well and so the participant-actors were also asked to "share their perceptions of the characters they portrayed and whether they understood the … intent and whether they felt comfortable interpreting the lines" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 59). Once the youth understood the lines, and could draw on their own experiences, they became at ease and jumped right into exploring the script and playing with the various scenes. Some youth swapped characters to better suit them. This was important because "using role changes or reversals to give participants a different point of

view, then asking participants to comment on the situation or character from this other perspective" developed the actors' capacity to understand the characters (O'Toole, 2006, p. 110). Later, we moved into character development, by moving around the space to embody the characters physically. I drew on O'Toole's (2006) work when directing to help the actors identify a coherent and authentic interpretation of the characters. The participant-actors "observe[d] and investigate[d], subjectively and objectively, to find and establish the characteristics, motivation and appropriate image of the character" (p. 22). Since the participant-actors were of a similar demographic in terms of age, school experience and sexual and gender minority status, I emphasized that they draw on who they were to help them in informing their characters. In many ways, I did not feel we needed to envision characters who were all that different from them as actual persons. This was a directorial choice I made in the spirit of saving time in character development. Since I also took a Reader's Theatre approach, I wanted to focus more on the narrative, on the words and expressions, rather than on physical characterization. Once we had a sense of who the characters were, we moved into rehearsing the scenes. In theatre, there is a commonly known saying: *getting it* [the play] *up on its feet*. This is where the actors move from readings of the script to actual dramatization (acting). O'Toole (2006) described the process of engaging in dramatic work as:

> A way for an actor to get to understand and develop … character, [and] to analyze many other factors [including] the level of engagement, comprehension of the whole dramatic context or particular elements, understanding of the theme or the dilemma, imaginativeness in response to a challenge. (p. 110)

Given that this ethnodrama did not follow a traditional narrative structural arc, of beginning, middle and end, as the director, I strategically selected the "points of view that

[would] best serve the goals and style of the play and the kind of interaction between the performer and audiences that generate[d] the most appropriate relationship" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 66). We had situated chairs where the imagined audience would be seated to create an illusion that the action was happening all around, and that they had been enveloped into the rally. The actors practiced saying the lines to the audience except when they were in dialogue with one another. This was part of the effect I was after so that the audience could remain engaged critically, and aware of the salient messages of the play, by being a part of the play as bystanders or other rally attendees, rather than hiding and disconnecting behind the fourth wall.

One uncertainty I had about moving forward with the performance was the fact that the participant-actors did not have all their lines memorized. As an artist, I was concerned with the performance and its artistry. As O'Toole (2006) attested, "it is natural that we should try to manage our research 'elegantly' and aesthetically" (p. 158). I had produced many plays as a high school teacher, and as a creative person, I always strive for my version of perfection. I felt that not having the script memorized was taking something away from the performance, and I was concerned with timelines if we were indeed going to perform at the GSA conference in a few weeks' time. Saldaña (2011), addressed this issue of actors having scripts in hand when he suggested "some ethnodramatic productions employ a reader's theatre approach with binders containing the script in the actors' hands [and] if this is the case, directors should compensate for fewer hand properties with more whole-body movements throughout the performance" (p. 137). I had to make a decision to either postpone or go ahead knowing that the performance would take a more reader's theatre style. I was concerned that it would not stand up to what I had envisioned early on so many months ago, and I did not want to do disservice to all the youth who had contributed so many countless hours to the whole process. Moreover, it made me worry

about how the audience would respond, that the voices of the youth would be lost, and that the audience would pay more attention to the fact the participant actors were holding their scripts in hand during the performance, rather than to their actual words. I felt a sense of vulnerability on my part, and as O'Toole (2006) identified "[ethnodrama's] special challenge is that we not only have to put our artistry and research skills up for scrutiny; we have to marry them, without one harming the other" (p. 42). I spoke to some of the participants who had been on this journey from the beginning about my dilemma to ask what their thoughts were. One of them stated: "That has nothing to do with it. It's a queer play. Why are you worried about applying traditional norms and beliefs about theatre and aesthetics on this?" Equally, I checked in with the actors to ensure they were comfortable performing with the scripts in hand, and they responded with great relief. These confirmations made my decision that a script would not take away from the value of the work. This ethnodrama process was about bringing personal experiences and narratives to life, and the distinctiveness of the ethnodrama method gave it an incredible energy and potency; it would not matter if they had scripts in their hands. I was struck with how powerful the voices and the narratives were, and I was reassured that would not be lost on the audience because their lines were not memorized. Throughout this rehearsal process I had to negotiate my own roles again. The artist in me was seeking perfection, the director was very forward with what I wanted on stage, the educator was more diplomatic and open to discovery, and the activist wanted to ensure the message was heard loud and clear. Finding the right balance was key because I knew that we really had only one shot to get this right. I knew the first performance would be a practice run, but what really mattered was the final performance at the GSA conference. I believed that if the performance tanked, it could sink this whole project and so throughout the rehearsal process I was very direct and mindful that every minute was used productively.

Reflection on the Performances

The period leading up to the performances was nerve wracking. It is one thing to write a research report and put it out there; it is certainly something different to prepare an ethnodrama and then perform it to an audience and then open up the stage for discussion. I learned that there was something to be said about the researcher's vulnerability through this process. As I indicated above, within this arts-based research paradigm, I was wearing several hats, and negotiating many roles - notably one as an artist (and director), and the other as the researcher. Ethnodrama marries the two, and it opens both up for scrutiny.

The first presentation was for a small invited audience. I opted to have this first performance to act as trial run. This allowed the actors a chance to become familiar performing for an audience before we presented to a larger group of strangers at the conference. While we followed the same process for both performances, as Saldaña (2011) indicated "an invited audience might be present to offer responses … as to what engaged them, what confused them, and even what bored them" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 59). As described, in chapter 3, this opportunity to perform calmed some feelings of vulnerability for me and for the actors, and we incorporated some of the feedback into the next performance.

The second performance, at the conference, started off in a bit of a frenzy – one of the participant-actors was an hour late. With ten minutes to go before our presentation time, I was considerably worried that we would be short one performer. I asked Molly Mays if she would consider taking on the role, as she was so familiar with the script, but she politely declined saying, "acting is really not my thing." One of the other participant-actors offered to ask a friend of theirs, a conference attendee, if they would consider reading the lines at the last minute. Faced with this uncertainty, I debated if I should take on the role or if this volunteer would suffice. I

opted to remain out of the performance as it was important that the youth had the voice and agency in this performance. The optics of being the researcher, co-writer and then performer did not sit well with me. Thus, at the last minute I agreed and had the new volunteer start reading the script so that they could familiarize themselves with the lines. Fortunately, as we were about to enter our presentation space, the late participant-actor arrived.

I assumed that we would be performing in a classroom at the high school venue. During rehearsals, we had prepared to shift the setting of the play to inside a school, perhaps a staffroom as I had intended in the script. Given that I was anticipating rows of desks, I ultimately decided that we would assume that the characters were barging into a classroom. Unfortunately, the room was used by other conference presenters in the prior time slot, so we had only a few moments to setup before our time to begin and I was faced with the second dilemma of the performance. The space was a science lab, with big square shaped lab worktables secured to the floor and stools all around. Since the second performance also had a larger audience, this also reduced the amount of space in the room left to move about. While this posed a challenge, we had to go ahead, as there was no other option. The science lab minimized the participant-actors' capacity to be able to move around the space as freely as they had in rehearsal and for the first performance; for the most part, they were stuck in between workbenches and stools. Saldaña (2011) acknowledged this type of venue limitation when he stated "ethnodramatic performances at conference most often occur in whatever room has been assigned for the session by the conference organizers" and that "audience members acknowledge the performance limitations [and as such] they may expect a more scholarly approach to the creative work" (p. 134). Once we entered into the space, I could see that some of the participant-actors needed reassurance that we could still perform what we had rehearsed given our spatial limitations. This was a dilemma, that required some

quick thinking and fortunately I managed to problem solve this issue with minimal time to prepare. I positioned actors at various rows of science benches and identified the centre of the room as where most of the action would take place. I did not want to create a proscenium, so I moved all the stools for audience members to sit on in such a manner that the actors could still move about the space and interact with the them.

Saldaña (2011) portrayed an "ethnotheatre aesthetic" as one that "captures on stage a complex rendering of what [he] labels ethnotainment" (p. 212). He described the responsibility of ethnographic performances was to entertain ideas and entertain spectators by "creat[ing] an entertainingly informative experience for an audience, one that is aesthetically sound, intellectually rich, and emotionally evocative" (Saldaña, 2005, p. 14). He further explained that there are no formalized criteria to determine good versus bad ethnodrama: "The success of a work is jointly constructed and determined by the participants, the artistic collaborators, and their audiences" (p. 14). Saldaña (2011) purposefully avoided providing a definitive argument or answer about ethnotheatrical aesthetics. He did state that "the mounting of ethnographic reality on stage is at its most effective when the production assumes a nonrealistic – read: 'theatrical' – style as its presentational framework" (p. 204). As I reflect on the statement I consider his assertion that "an ethnotheatre aesthetic emerges from the theatre artists' creative approaches to stage productions of natural social life" (p. 204). I noted that the lived experiences of the interviewed youth "took on a new interpretive meaning and became rich opportunities for creative production" (p. 205). While the performance adhered to real stories based on real experiences, they were not depicted in a stereotypical performance about school – there were no desks, or lockers, the actors did not wear backpacks, we did not have a school bell, and there was no teacher character. The intention was to keep the audience engaged throughout the entire piece,

and this was done through the chanting, the calls to action and breaking down the fourth wall. Saldaña's second assertion is that an "ethnotheatre aesthetic emerges from theatre artists' application of available and new theatrical forms, genres, styles, elements, and media onto the ethnodramatic play script and its production" (p. 205). I considered the various elements that I utilized in this production, such as not following a singular chronological linearity, breaking down the fourth wall, and moving the performance in amongst the audience. All the while, maintaining fidelity to the interviews and honouring the participants' stories did "not paralyze [me] from thinking about [the] research study's staging potential" (p. 207). As Saldaña pointedly stated, "ethnodramas are not play scripts in the traditional sense, but essentialized fieldwork reformatted in performative data displays" (p. 206). This then leads me to Saldaña's third assertion that "an ethnotheatre aesthetic emerges from theatre artists' integrity to truthfulness as well as truth" (p. 207). By nuancing truthfulness and truth, Saldaña is referring to a "measure to assess whether a play's qualitative background research and dramatization merit its classification as an ethnodrama" (p. 207). One of the guiding principles in this ethnodramatic inqueery was participant validation to maintaining integrity to the truth, and honouring the voices of the participants at every phase of the process. Another guiding principle was to maximize the amount of verbatim text included in the script, while not losing sight of our perspectives and the artistic choices that informed the script and performance. Recalling that my first ethical responsibility was to my participants, it was critical that I used their words and ideas in the script. Even though the majority of the text within this ethnodramatic inqueery was verbatim, as I described earlier in my discussion of the ethics of representation, there was room to fictionalize, omit, and enhance, as long as a collaborative participant validation occurred.

Saldaña's next assertion is that "an ethnotheatre aesthetic emerges from theatre artists' capacity for thinking theatrically as well as ethnographically" (p. 209). To find a right balance between research and art, I employed "dramaturgical coding" (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013) to begin "thinking theatrically" (Saldaña, 2015). Thinking theatrically is "not just about creating a written script out of your research but imagining it realized as performance" (p. 130). The goal of this ethnodramatic inqueery was always to perform in front of a live audience, and the magic of theatre began to take shape in the script writing phase as scenes and characters started to materialize out of the interviews, until it finally came to life in front of the audience. Lastly, Saldaña's (2011) final assertion on an ethnotheatre aesthetic is that it "emerges from theatre artists' production and publication of research and creative activity in the genre to advance the field and to encourage dialogue among its practitioners" (p. 211). I certainly aspired to move the field forward by merging queer theory with ethnodrama and articulating an ethnodramatic inqueery. Additionally, to my knowledge this is the first ethnodrama that deals with the topic of HBT bullying and harassment at school. I remain hopeful that this research can add a voice to the dialogue in the field.

After the performance, the audience was reminded that they could stay for the post-performance discussion and to fill out the questionnaire. This leads me to the following section wherein I discuss the audience responses to this piece.

Reflection on the Questionnaire and Post-Performance Discussion

In both cases, after the performance was completed, I allowed time for the audience to complete the questionnaire before starting the conversation. I observed that some audience members continued filling out their questionnaire during the conversation, while others completed it after the conversation was done. The conversation focused on the questions from

the questionnaire and also allowed for audience questions. Molly Mays, co-facilitated the question and answer portion at the final performance. Molly's participation from the very beginning of the process right through to the end was powerful, as it offered another form of participant validation. As a co-researcher, Molly was able answer the audience members' questions and was representative of the youths' voice. As such, her answering the questions maintained the integrity and authenticity of the process. Conversely, it was not me answering on the youths' behalf, because that would have negated the validation process. I offered clarity as needed from a research and methodology perspective, but with regard to the actual data, Molly was very successful in answering all the questions.

In the following section, I will highlight audience members' responses and themes that emerged for each of the nine questions based on the questionnaire answers and my notes from the discussion.

1) Did you enjoy the play? Themes identified: the power of ethnodrama and its ability to raise issues that youth are grappling with.

The common answer was that the audience enjoyed the presentation – their answers ranged from a simple "yes" to "yes a lot," "a great fit for this conference," to "very much so." Some audience members expressed the magnitude of the performance: one audience member related, "The presentation of research collected through ethnodrama is very powerful as it speaks to the humanity of the core themes addressed." Another member wrote, "I thoroughly enjoyed the play, and I found it powerful to experience. It was very well presented – excellent introduction, excellent timing & transition – youth were fabulous!"

Other audience members brought to light how ethnodrama surfaced issues. One member described that "there was a decent amount of content I found enlightening." Another wrote, "It

was very engaging. The youth were so articulate and the piece touched on a wide range of really important issues." Finally, "it was informative and hammered home some things I need to do that have been put on the backburner."

2) What did you like best about it? Themes identified: the authenticity of the themes in the ethnodrama and the need for reflection in teacher practice, as well as the theme on ethnodrama itself.

The audience used words such as "personal," "genuine," "honest," "real," "self-expression" and "authentic" when they were describing the diversity of themes, stories, social commentary, and characters that they witnessed in the performance. One audience member wrote, "The ways the youth tugged at the themes, through dialogue and chanting gave their voice a tangibility that was palpable." Another member stated, "The multi-layered conflicts and questions illustrated in the work really focused the audience's attention to the narrative told by each character." Lastly, "I loved that it was youth presenting and portraying actual feelings and experiences of youth."

On the theme of the need for teacher reflection, audience members brought up how the ethnodrama raised important issues about LGBTQ youth. One audience member said, "We need to do a better job at listening to the experiences of our youth." Another acknowledged that "it validated my hunches, but much more powerful than statistics." Some of the written comments included, "It helped me reflect on our school's GSA through a student's lived experience," and they liked the "discussion of teacher shortfalls and hopes students have." As a summative point, it was noted that there was "lots of thinking about how, as teachers, and especially admin and system leaders, we still have a lot to do."

The last theme that emerged for this question was focused on the ethnodramatic method. Audience members again reiterated how impactful ethnodrama was over a more traditional research paper, and how the stories resonated much more than statistics. They expressed that having youth "perform the data" was effective, and that they preferred "the genuine honesty and direct approach and speaking of the script. It felt personal and important." One member said, "I've never been so emotionally touched by data" and "I've never felt such a strong sense of urgency after seeing dramatized research." A few responses included comments on some of the dramatic choices within the ethnodrama itself: "I loved the chants separating the themes" and "the movement throughout in conjunction with the script."

3) What did you not like about it? Themes identified: feelings of heightened emotion from the audience from the issues that were raised, and a minor theme with regard to ethnodrama and technical issues (space, setting and pacing of dialogue).

This question did not garner a lot of discussion. I was worried that perhaps the audience did not want me or the performers to feel bad about what they had to say, so I assured them that if their answers were written down they would be anonymous. Equally, in an attempt to be vulnerable and get the conversation going, I asked the audience about the fact that the actors were holding the scripts. Those who responded indicated, "I didn't notice," "That it didn't take away from the message," and "I don't feel like it was an issue." I did not push this question further, and instead hoped that audience members had written something down. About half of the audience did not respond to this question, or simply wrote "nothing," or "it was awesome." Five audience members responded about how the ethnodrama made them feel knowing that these issues are really happening. In their written responses, they used words like "feelings of not doing enough," "hard to watch," "past memories," and "past trauma." The following comment

encapsulates this theme: “Slight discomfort because of the complexity of [the] social issue – however – this was one of the play’s greatest strengths.” These participants acknowledged that there was a sense of discomfort, and yet at the same time, it was necessary in order to bring awareness to the issues.

With regard to the technical aspects that I had identified as a theme, there were only four responses, and they were more directorial notes, than an actual theme. Some of the discussion and comments were more about the physical space like “the room was too small” and “the small class size,” to “it may feel more compelling if the setting was a GSA meeting, not in a science lab.” Other comments included in this theme were more about acting or playwriting: “I recommend the pacing of the piece to slow down to provide adequate time or the audience to grasp the content,” and similarly, “I would have enjoyed a bit more connection between the performers and more clarity of certain themes.”

4) In what ways was it accurate? Themes identified: authenticity of youth’s experience and its connection to current topics in society and schools.

Words used in these responses included “authentic” and “genuine.” The audience identified that the accuracy lay in the direct connection to the youths’ voices and by extension their experiences. Some audience members acknowledged that the themes represented their context: Catholic schools; their experience of non-binary youth; pronouns, and safe spaces. Others wrote that “the drama is so relevant to the current social and political climate of our province at this time,” and that “the themes the youth discussed are the ones adults are grappling with.” Finally, audience members wrote that “it was very all encompassing, it was inclusive and shared many viewpoints,” and that “it helped to solidify and remind me of things that need to be continuously done to keep a safe space for queer youth in schools.”

5) In what ways was it inaccurate? No themes identified.

This was another question that did not generate much discussion or many written responses. Most responses on the questionnaire were left blank or stated, “I can’t think of any.” Two responses indicated that not all the themes in the ethnodrama were necessarily applicable to their specific school context, and one person responded by wondering how much of my (the researcher’s) voice was involved.

6) How do you think plays like this can make a meaningful change in schools and/or the community? Themes identified: this type of play can serve as an eye opener, and a call to action because it is more engaging then regular research.

Words used in responses to this question were “awareness”, “change,” “action,” “point out problems,” and “contemplation.” The audience agreed that a play has a different impact than a traditional research report. Some members indicated that they came to see the presentation because they knew there was a dramatic element to it. They described that had it been just a panel, or a PowerPoint lecture type presentation, they would have lost interest quite quickly. They said that a play of this magnitude does not let you tune out. One of the most important aspects of the research that the audience identified was that it was effective because the youth were present and active members throughout the process. Written responses included, “plays bring forth the human experience and vulnerable voices and stories are portrayed and the audience absorbs it and listens to it.” This was reinforced by comments such as “it allows student voice to be explored in a safe manner – the student voice has a mask of anonymity with the performance.” Audience members also discussed that plays like this can not only make an impact within its own LGBTQ community, but also within the larger school community. This is summarized in the following response: “The play can be a powerful medium through which the

hopes and frustrations can be passionately expressed to those with the ability to positively model and affect change." Some audience members gave specific examples where this play could be shown next, including as a professional development session for teachers at a school or teachers' convention, developing accessible YouTube videos to be shown anywhere and at any time, and presenting to staff and students at a school and/or within a GSA.

7) The director is greatly interested in your feelings and thoughts about this project? What would you like to say to him? Themes identified: there was a general theme of gratitude and encouragement and within that another theme that specifically included an acknowledgment of the magnitude of ethnodrama.

There were words of encouragement and gratitude from the audience, which included words like "thank you," "thank you for giving the youth a platform," "proud of the youth," "keep up the work," "thank you for setting this in motion," "awesome," and "phenomenal." Some of the comments were a little more detailed: "I genuinely feel this was the most useful session I have been to all day."

Other more specific comments included that the play was a powerful tool to open up a topic and get the discussion flowing. The audience also brought up that by its dramatic virtue, the play was an engaging way to get information across. One of the audience members indicated that change in Alberta needs to be political because human rights in Alberta are unfortunately inherently political, and this type of research has the potential to not only share research, but also have a political impact and a political voice. This was reinforced by audience members who wrote: "I think this is valuable and essential work. I believe it will make a powerful impact on those who take part and see it," and "I feel this is important work to help bring the issues further into the spotlight and to come together to work towards solutions." Finally, there were two

written comments that stood out that reaffirm ethnodrama's potential: "the powerful feelings I felt were anger for the maltreatment of youth, sadness for the bullying experiences, and pride in how they were expressing their views," and "it made me feel uncomfortable in a supportive way, calling me to reflection and improvement for the betterment of myself and the community."

8) Did you learn something new from this play? If so what did you learn? Themes identified: a deeper understanding of issues.

Generally, the audience agreed that the play dove deeper into issues they were already aware of to some extent. They accepted that generally adults have a surface level understanding of the issues. A few audience members acknowledged that they learned something new about a specific issue. The discussion and written responses centered around the fact that there remains more to be done and this ethnodrama was a reminder that work in ensuring that schools are safe and caring places needs to continue. Audience members also spoke about how the youths' experiences in the ethnodrama have changed their understanding of the issues, and that we need to peel back the layers within the issues because sometimes they need to be further worked on.

One audience member realized that "youth are more aware of the issues and feel [more] strongly than we sometimes think." This was reinforced when an audience member wrote, "I learned a lot! Almost all of the themes touched on brought forth new information. We don't think that labeling, bathrooms, timing of GSA's… has such a big impact until we hear about it." A few comments centered around the fact that ethnodrama was an "accessible way to convey the unique perspectives that youth hold." Audience members expressed that through ethnodrama they were better capable of understanding how youth feel about these issues: "I feel like I gained a deeper understanding of what some of the youth go through. It's a highly intense and vulnerable time."

9) Did your thoughts, attitudes, or beliefs change after seeing this play? How so? Themes identified: a sense of reflection on teaching practice.

Generally, the response was that a change occurred for the audience. This change was characterized and described as the need to reflect on practice and move forward to engage in meaningful progress as well as the need to listen to youth. Throughout the conversation and in the written responses the following statements were articulated in relation to practice and next steps: “I realize there are still important steps to make;” “I feel that I now understood these students a bit better and at least got a small idea of their daily difficulties and barriers;” “I need to reflect on my language;” “I’m even more committed to creating safe spaces;” “I will now consider how much support that I, as a GSA support leader, give.” One written response that summed up this theme was: “I gained a deeper understanding and awareness of the work that needs to be done both by myself and the education community.”

In relation to listening to students and giving them agency and voice, audience members commented: “I’ll try hard to acknowledge the feelings of my students;” “Youth voices are essential in the conversation;” “Made me more aware of the issues that need to be addressed that our students don’t talk about;” Finally, a written comment reinforced the need for student voice: “It’s really powerful to actually receive information from students. Their words mean more and carry more weight than adults even if the message is the same.”

To summarize this section on the post-performance discussion and questionnaire, the main themes that emerged when looking at the overall conversation and questionnaire responses are the following: 1) Ethnodrama is a powerful vehicle that can raise issues that lie beneath the surface in an engaging manner. 2) Ethnodrama has the ability to maintain authenticity of real life issues that are relevant to youth by giving the participants voice and agency. 3) Ethnodrama has

the capacity to cause a visceral experience that asks the audience to reflect on their understanding of the issues, which in turn, can lead to conversations about actions that need to occur to move issues forward.

Reflection on Youth Responses

In speaking to the youth after the second performance, and after the audience had departed, Molly Mays expressed that being part of the entire experience was empowering: "I was part of something bigger than myself." I could see that she was beaming with pride because she had been an integral player over the prior twelve months of the process. For her, watching the performance – the product of our work, and co-facilitating the discussion was tremendously empowering. One of participant-actors expressed that they were in awe of how powerful the script was, and that it was not until they had performed it for the larger group that they realized how significant the lines were. Another shared their observation that this process brought many singular voices together, voices that perhaps were not often heard, or even given a chance to be heard, but when they joined with other voices a collective ensemble was created that needed to be heard. Some of the members also expressed that they had learned about issues that their peers potentially face that they had not considered in the past. One youth stated: "We all go to GSA, but we all have different issues that affect us, and this shines light on some of those issues."

Although I did not gather formal feedback from the participants and their various experiences within the different stages of research, those with whom I have since spoken from the interview and script writing phase have expressed gratitude for being empowered to share their voices, and an appreciation for the care that was taken to honour their truths by creating an authentic performance.

In this chapter, I reflected on the various aspects of the project. My reflections began with participant recruitment and the interview process, through to script writing, rehearsal and the performances. Additionally, this chapter offered a synthesis and analysis of the data garnered from the post-performance discussion and audience questionnaire. Throughout my reflection I wove in elements from the literature on ethnodrama to support and frame my reflexive thinking. In the following and final chapter, I include a summary of the study, and I return to my original research questions to discuss how the study addressed the research questions. Then, I review the significance of the study and I draw on the calls to action from the ethnodrama to highlight implications for practice in schools and school systems. I make suggestions for further research and then offer some concluding thoughts.

Chapter 6 Concluding Thoughts, Implications and Recommendations

My doctoral study sought to understand what LGBTQ youth experience in Alberta high schools related to HBT bullying and harassment, through an ethnodramatic inqueery, with the aim of generating awareness of their lived experiences for audiences, and with the ultimate goal that this awareness could lead to dialogue about more safe and inclusive schools. In this chapter, I review the study in general terms, revisit the research questions, and discuss the significance of the study by highlighting implications for school culture, policy, and curriculum, teaching and learning. Finally, I propose recommendations for further research before concluding.

My literature review concluded that students have continued to be victimized at school through bullying and harassment over the last 30 years, and despite interventions, and anti-bullying programs, the statistics of affected youth remained constant and consistent; LGBTQ youth were more likely to experience bullying and harassment in schools compared to their heterosexual peers. The research also identified that victims of harassment and bullying were also at higher risk for suicidality, depression, substance use, and a host of other high risk behaviours and negative outcomes. This was also corroborated by higher ACE scores for youth who experience bullying and harassment at school. Despite, continued research, and anti-bullying interventions, nothing measurable seems to have changed. The big question that surfaced for me was: Why? After all the research that has gone into school violence and bullying, I realized that something was still missing.

In my reading of more recent writing, including *Queer Pedagogies: Theory, Praxis and Politics* (Mayo & Rodriguez, 2019) and *Am I Safe Here: LGBTQ Teens and Bullying in Schools* (Short, 2017), my thinking started to coalesce with the understandings in this contemporary literature. In 2019, Meyer identified a serious omission in the majority of bullying research and related bullying prevention programs: “they rarely identify or examine social group memberships

(race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation), biased attitudes, and how they may interact with the bully-victim phenomenon" (p. 43). Now that I have had time to reflect, I have come to understand that what was missing in much of the research with regard to combatting HBT harassment and bullying was the necessity of recognizing queer realities and lives within intersections with other relational differences, and the laden heteronormative and cisnormative practices within school cultures that contribute significantly to bullying and harassment.

Meyer (2019) elaborated on the challenges and difficulties of anti-bullying and bullying prevention programs: "when the qualities that bullies embody are the ones most valued by many and demonstrate a form of power" typically respected and espoused by heteronormative hegemony, and when "the pressure on boys to conform to traditional notions of masculinity is great, … the risk of being perceived as gay is an effective threat in policing the boundaries of acceptable behavior" (p. 45). Further research also supported the assertion that the social structures that maintain the systemic oppression of queer identities and realities are heterosexism and heteronormativity (Smith, Shin & Officer, 2012), and genderism, cissexism, and cisnormativity (Serano, 2016). Therefore, since dominant school culture assumes that everyone is heterosexual and fits the male-female binary, I came to understand that schools validate and perpetuate heteronormative and cisnormative hegemony. I also learned that the taken-for-granted assumptions around gender and sexuality provide power and privilege to the heterosexual, cisgender students composing the majority and create an oppressive system for those who fall outside perceived norms.

I found that within the Alberta context, LGBTQ students are provided certain rights and protections, and there are policies and laws in place to ensure schools are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Provincial legislation that gives LGBTQ students the

legal right to form GSAs, the ATA's position on LGBTQ rights, the PRISM materials, and individual school boards' policies are all designed and intended to ensure safe and inclusive schools. These are noteworthy and significant advancements in the right direction, but as I have stated earlier, we still require so much more in order to address forms of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression. Since there are strong correlations between patriarchal gender roles and negative attitudes and violence toward lesbians and gays (Bufkin, 1991; Whitley, 2001), legislation, policies, and teacher resources on their own do not suffice in making significant change. Consequently, what became fundamentally essential to this ethnodramatic inqueery, was to take the heteronormative and cisnormative cultural contexts of bullying into account, because, in order to disrupt the power laden practices of bullying, I had to expose the hegemony of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression operating in schools.

I drew on queer theory and critical pedagogy to situate my research. The ultimate goal of critical pedagogy is what Freire (1970) called "conscientization," the raising of awareness of oppression in systemic and structural forms. In order to "engender a queer conscientization," I utilized queer theory to "augment critical pedagogy" (Hackford-Peer, 2019, p. 77). Hackford-Peer (2019) explained that queer pedagogy "utilizes elements of critical pedagogy to engage in theoretically queer projects – projects aimed at naming, interrupting, and destabilizing normative practices and beliefs" (p. 76). At the root of this process was "praxis," a combination of action and reflection that informed strategic action to enable social and structural/cultural change (Freire, 1970/1990). Meyer (2019) stated that "in queer pedagogy, this reflection is focused on how patterns of what is 'normal' are created and reproduced in schools and asks [us]… to examine and question them to make space for other bodies and identities that have been marginalized" (p. 47). These patterns and practices of "normal" are most often defined by

heteronormative and patriarchal attitudes and beliefs. With queer praxis, education has the potential to become a transformative and liberating practice for LGBTQ youth through queer conscientization.

In order to achieve the goal of queer conscientization, I sought to understand the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth by working from a queer ethnodrama perspective that I referred to as ethnodramatic inqueery. I believe my research is an example of a queered process and product. It was emergent, fluid, dynamic and there was a consistent openness to change. The intersections of critical and queer theory enabled me to explore notions of ethics, equity, and justice, in ways that highlighted oppression related to sexual identity and orientation, and gender identity. While ethnodrama is rooted in ethnographic and theatre traditions, what I realized in queering the method was that community and identity are highly contested terms. Our contemporary understandings demonstrate that they are both always evolving and that there is volatility, fluidity and change as they are both dynamic concepts always in flux. Communities are often presupposed on the basis of its membership, which include a common identity. This is problematic because community membership is never a straightforward issue. Sullivan (2003) stated that "identities are culturally and historically specific which means that their intelligibility is context-specific, as is the value accorded to particular identities" (p. 83). She further explained that "identity categories are open to debate, and in and through conceptual conflicts identities are continuously fracturing, multiplying, metamorphosing [and as such] identity is social, unstable, continually in process and to some extent, is both necessary and impossible" (Sullivan, 2003, p. 149). For me, one of the highlights of the inqueery was to consider how identities and communities intersect. Understanding this intersection requires a sensitivity to multiplicity, and this work created a space to explore this. I found working within queer and critical intersections

helpful in reconstituting humanness in the dramatization, as I believe that intersectionality, notions of community, and our understandings of culture cannot be ignored when creating ethnodramatic work. I indicated earlier that while this was a form of qualitative research, it told a very similar narrative of oppression to the quantitative studies I referenced in chapter 2. However, what I have learned through this process is that the humanness lives within the telling of the stories. For the audience, the participants, and myself it is the stories that will live in our memories and not the specific statistics, and it will be these stories that drive our work forward to make meaningful change happen. Ethnodrama as pedagogy reinforces this point as it holds the potential for participants and audience members to locate themselves in the world in order to witness themselves and others. In so doing, they can begin to see their role and the role of others in oppressive systems.

Revisiting the Research Questions

My primary research question was *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta High Schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic harassment and bullying?* And the secondary question was: *How can Queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

Throughout this work I engaged in dialogue with LGBTQ youth to understand what, in their views, contributes to HBT bullying and harassment at their schools. Through a participant validated process we co-developed a script that was then rehearsed and presented on two separate occasions. A post-performance discussion ensued about the calls to action that had been raised. Additionally, audiences completed a post-performance questionnaire to offer insight on how an ethnodramatic inqueery can be a tool for inclusive practices in schools.

With respect to the primary question, the data analysis of the participants' stories and the (re)articulation of their school experiences through the ethnodramatic inqueery led participants to combine narratives of their lived experiences and to cultivate the courage to create a performance in which they highlighted several calls to action. To develop the script, I analyzed the data I collected through individual interviews with the youth and we identified several overarching thematic categories that had emerged, including identity, GSAs, bullying, gendered spaces, bigger issues (which were later identified as systemic issues), Catholic school, coming out at school, and social media. These categories further led to a number of realizations: the existence of a reductive model of identifying LGBTQ students; ineffective anti-bullying school policies; stigma associated with gender neutral bathrooms, use of pronouns, and GSAs; heteronormative and cisnormative assumptions and microaggressions based on systemic failures that have good intentions. Finally, the assertion that came out of the data analysis, was that heteronormative and cisnormative hegemony compose the root cause of LGBTQ oppression, and that consequential forms of oppression manifest differently at various levels and within various systems.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory is a way to understand and situate the various levels oppression that this study has uncovered. Bronfenbrenner saw "human beings as active participants in the world. In his view, we are always interacting with our environment, and these interactions are reciprocal: the world interacts with us" (Shelton, 2019, p. 13). Students navigate social spaces every day and "their behaviors are influenced by not only their own traits but also by the ecological contexts with which they are interacting" (Lee, 2011, p. 1667). Bronfenbrenner posited that "the person exists in a system of relationships, roles, activities, and settings, all interconnected" (Shelton, 2019, p. 10).

The microsystem, which is the immediate environment denotes "a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships experienced" (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, p. 227) by LGBTQ students in a given setting such as a classroom, GSA, the gym, or the hallway. At the micro level, I believe is where LGBTQ students experience overt forms of HBT bullying and harassment, such as physical violence, homonegative remarks and genderism that takes form through gender policing. Furthermore, covert forms of oppression, such as microagressions, take place at this level as well.

The mesosystem encompasses the "linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1645). In other words, the mesosystem is a system of microsystems. Here, I believe is where the school setting is located as LGBTQ students experience and negotiate various interactions between all the microsystems at school. This is also the site where the entirety of the school community and home/family systems reside (and of course there are many more – employment, after school activities, and so forth). The HBT bullying that resides at this level includes all the above identified under microsystem, plus any homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia, experienced at home. Additionally, any school-wide policies that cause more harm than good and inadvertently create oppressive circumstances fall under this category.

The exosystem "refers to the social setting in which children can be influenced, but they do not necessarily actively participate" (Lee, 2011, p. 1667). These are the settings and processes in which LGBTQ students do not participate in such as the ministry of education or even district level decision-making around curriculum and policy. Unfortunately, the LGBTQ youth in my study often experienced that their voices were not heard or represented in discussions that ultimately impacted their lives.

Finally, macrosystem refers to where our social and cultural values exist which includes belief systems, norms, and ideologies. This level has the most significant impact on LGBTQ youth as it is comprised of all the other levels, and I believe it directly influences HBT bullying and harassment as this is where heteronormativity and cisnormativity reside and operate. While anti-bullying and bullying prevention programs target the micro level, I believe that more targeted focus needs to occur at the cultural level in order for any significant long-term change to occur.

Overall, this ethnodramatic inqueery found that, based on the lived experiences of the participants, heteronormativity and heteronormative oppression coupled with genderism and cisnormative oppression constitute serious and direct threats to participants' queer realities and identities. I now fully understand Grace's (2015) statement that "it is the hetero-patriarchy itself that is to blame, inculcating heterosexism, sexism, genderism, and homo/bi/transphobia as everyday dangers for [sexual and gender minority] youth" (p. 22). These negative systemic forces fuel HBT oppression in various forms. This was evidenced throughout the script with a protest, chanting, and nine calls to action, whereby the actors exposed the nature of oppression for the bystanders/rally attendees (i.e. audiences for our performances) and demanded change.

With reference to the secondary question, it was evident that a queer ethnodrama can be an effective pedagogical tool to create more inclusive schools. This ethnodramatic inqueery aesthetically engaged audiences in a live performance and in a post-performance discussion about the lived realities and experiences of LGBTQ youth. Through the discussion and the responses to the questionnaire the audience indicated that they had become aware of issues that LGBTQ students experienced in school. While all the audience members worked with LGBTQ individuals, most identified that the ethnodramatic inqueery was a powerful call to action based

on the new information it offered. Grace (2015) indicated "the way forward begins with institutional knowledge building, understanding, and transformation that abet youth development and their transformation through recognizing, respecting, and accommodating their personal differences" (p. 22). Heteronormative and cisnormative oppression is traditionally silenced in discourse, and this performance empowered the audiences, comprised mostly of educators, to explore and challenge hegemonic normativity that includes power and privilege and to consider their complicity in what are perceived as normative sexual and gender identities.

This type of ethnodramatic inqueery opens up avenues for the audience to learn, to question, to explore and reflect on their own practices and their impacts, by taking into consideration how a majority heteronormative and cisnormative school culture can often be the greatest source of oppression and exclusion for LGBTQ youth who long to feel safe and included. Based on the post-performance data, ethnodramatic inqueery was an engaging research method that presented data creatively, effectively and with a visceral impact. Specifically, unlike traditional forms of research, the performance caught the attention of the audience, and they felt empowered and motivated to begin conversations and make changes in their own classrooms and GSAs. The audiences indicated that in order to create more inclusive schools, unpacking all the layers of school culture and its relations to heteronormativity and cisnormativity was essential. In reference to policy implications this queer ethnodrama identified that safety and inclusion have to be defined in ways that significantly impact school culture in general, not just defined by programs and procedures that are followed in response to bullying and harassment. The audience voiced a desire for this ethnodramatic inqueery to be shared at other venues, so that other educators could learn about the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth so that they too could engage in praxis by querying and reflecting on their contexts and their schools.

Implications

In this section, I outline implications from the study, with reference to the nine calls to action from the script, related to three general areas: school culture; policy; and curriculum, teaching and learning. I also reference examples from the script to support my understandings and assertions.

Implications for School Culture

Heteronormativity and cisnormativity are considered natural and normal by the majority of people and most schools are implicated in conveying associated dominant roles and norms. Heteronormative and cisnormative school culture needs to be queried in order to understand its complicity in contributing to the continued oppression of sexual and gender minority youth. As witnessed in the opening scene of the play, students articulated a further minimizing and reductive effect that compounded feelings of not belonging and being a member of a minority group when one of the actors acknowledged that they were not an acronym. Reducing one's identity and grouping it with others, compounds feelings of marginalization. LGBTQ students ought to feel included and welcomed in their school culture, and their realities and identities ought to be celebrated. For example, LGB students are reminded that they are not straight when heterosexual students use the phrase "that's so gay," which can be stressful and harmful mentally and emotionally. In scene 5 of the play, when discussing gender norms and gender roles in physical education class with their peers, an actor noted that heterosexual males demonstrated stereotypical masculinity as aggressive and dominant. He related that one of the ways they did this was to use homonegative expressions. Backing up this statement, another actor expressed how the youth police each other's behaviours to reinforce their stereotypic masculinity, so that no doubt would ever be cast upon their heterosexuality. Moreover, participants also identified the

unhealthy sexual attitudes toward lesbian and bi females by heterosexual males, which led to forms of sexual harassment. One actor expressed how she was the victim of sexual harassment, due to sexual fetishizing. Consequently, for LGBTQ students, these homonegative expressions, and heteronormative and cisnormative gender roles/norms, are a continuous reminder that their safety and inclusion are threatened.

In maintaining the heteronormative status quo, the participants noted that LGBTQ youth often heard homonegative comments that were demeaning and meant to marginalize sexual and gender minority youth. One of the actors in scene 6 of the play described comments and attitudes overheard from their peers about sexuality and gender identity being perceived choices. Several scenes later, another actor reinforced this idea that systemic issues continue to encourage stereotypes, gender policing, and homonegative attitudes. As Pinar (1998) argued, we must try to "find ways to decenter, destabilize, and deconstruct … heterosexist [and genderist] normalization" (p. 44). I believe the implications for school culture relate directly to safety and inclusion; as such, we must question the consequences of heteronormativity and cisnormativity in schools.

Scene 3 of the play primarily focused on the participants' experiences of bullying and how it continued to be rampant in schools. Within this scene, the actors also acknowledged that HBT bullying needed to be treated as a multifaceted form of sexual and gender harassment, rather than as one-off incidents. In their call to action at the end of scene 3, the actor stressed that more work needed to occur in schools, and that perhaps, if we started treating bullying as sexual and gender harassment, it would be taken more seriously. In schools, the focus of addressing HBT bullying and harassment needs to be broadened beyond LGBTQ youth, to include all youth in the school, including heterosexual and cisgender youth. As Meyer (2019) maintained:

> Schools can do more to challenge and disrupt traditional ways of knowing and encourage students to question all that is normally assumed and taken for granted in society so that all students have a fair chance to learn in a physically and psychologically safe environment. (p. 48)

HBT bullying and harassment are not just generic, or broad experiences, they are types of gender and sexual violence that can no longer remain divorced from cisnormative and heteronormative cultural and ideological foundations. Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are products of hegemony.

Considering that HBT bullying and harassment in schools has been linked to school culture, there is a need to apply this knowledge in order to make schools safer and more inclusive for LGBTQ students. LGBTQ youth may feel threatened in ways that may be different from the experiences of their heterosexual peers. Schools are ripe with uncompromising heteronormativity and cisnormativity that pose a challenge when LGBTQ youth fail to see their queer identities and realities reflected and supported anywhere in their school. It begins with instances that appear banal, but are in fact microagressions. For example, grad photos became a space which reinforced gender norms in scene 6 of the play, when the youth was denied flowers as a prop because they were reserved for girls. On the surface, this could be perceived as trivial, but can have serious consequences and implications for sexual and gender minority youth. This necessitates querying the taken-for-granted assumptions of normality, and entering into a discourse on how heteronormativity and cisnormativity infiltrate schools, how they authorize what is acceptable, and how LGBTQ youth perceive them as threatening to their own queer identities and realities.

Participants shared how, on many occasions, it was safer to remain invisible and silent in order to avoid being perceived as different and risk becoming a victim of HBT bullying and harassment. In scenes 5 and 7 of the play, the actors expressed how they had to step back into the closet, or avoid coming out for fear of their safety and well-being. Examining these underlying cultural expectations and how they promote feelings of safety and inclusion, not just for the majority of students, but for all students, is important; no one should have to pretend to be something they are not in order to avoid being victimized. There is fear of being rejected by coming out and HBT bullying and harassment are a manifestation of that rejection. This was evidenced again at the end of scene 8 of the play when the youths' call to action demanded they should not have to fear coming out at school and that schools should be safe spaces. This comes down to the need for feelings of safety and acceptance. In certain cases, the heteronormative and cisnormative culture of a school can impede this.

When I worked in a major urban high school, I would sometimes hear the attitude expressed that nothing ever changed: the kids came and went and they were always young, but the adults stayed and only thing that changed was that the adults got older. I recall this sentiment because I realize that while the youth can become empowered to become agents of change, I do believe that the adults can also play a role in sustaining that change. As my colleagues implied, high school is a transitional place, and most youth move on after three years. Teachers can carry forward the momentum to ensure that positive change continues in schools. This ethnodramatic inqueery empowered LGBTQ students to take a stand for their rights because they were not satisfied or content with being marginalized by the dominant heteronormative/cisnormative culture. As a queer activist, educator, and artist, I produced a theatrical platform that gave a group of LGBTQ youth an active role, wherein they "became queer critical change agents who

used innovative resistance strategies to interrupt the heteronormative, genderist social climate and heterosexualizing culture of schools" (Grace & Wells, 2015, p. 201), and experienced a catharsis through this ethnodrama. The participants' time in high school is finite, and I believe there is a responsibility for adults in schools to take up some of this countercultural work too. Otherwise, as one of the youth pointed out, if there is little to no shift in teachers' practices, then meaningful opportunities for students to learn become mitigated. One way of addressing a macro issue such as heteronormativity and cisnormativity in culture is by developing intentional policy that can subvert some of the hegemonic cultural practices in schools. In the following section, I offer implications for policy.

Implications for Policy

The taken-for-granted practices that shape school culture must be queried when developing new policies for school safety and inclusion. The implications from this study were that school policies need to shift from generic concepts that are removed from culture, to be examined through the role that multifaceted heteronormative and cisnormative culture plays in HBT bullying and harassment. As a result, I believe that the ways that schools deal with bullying is ineffective, as they often do not deal with the core cultural problems – heteronormativity and cisnormativity. In referring to this very issue, one of the actors in scene 3 of the play reinforced that a culture of silence is still the approach most often taken in dealing with the problem. Silence can be understood as an act of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. Policies that account for queer voices in their development are often lacking, and so fail to demonstrate a sincere consideration for sexual and gender minority issues. The first scene in the ethnodrama is the only scene with a call to action both at the beginning and the end of the scene. I believe this is one of the most important calls to action in the play and one of the most important implications

for designing and implementing policy decisions. As Giroux (1997) reminded us "schooling often functions to affirm the Eurocentric, patriarchal histories, social identities, and cultural experiences of middle-class students while either marginalizing or erasing the voices, experiences, and cultural memories of so-called minority students" (p. 233). The youth expressed that they often felt as though their voices were not heard, especially in relation to policy decisions that affected them directly. I believe that youth need to be empowered, their voices need to be heard; lip service can only produce minimal effect in addressing problems.

I realize that the silencing effect that results from top down decision-making processes is also typical of school culture and the wider culture. When I considered who was generally at the top of decision-making processes, I identified the dominant majority as fitting society's perceived normative sexual and gender norms. It is no wonder that LGBTQ youth experience marginalization when they are not heard, and when the majority is making decisions for them and on their behalf.

Policy makers need to empower youth to contribute to policy development and implementation. In scene 6 of the play, an actor expressed that issues have resulted from policy that was, no doubt, designed with the intention of supporting LGBTQ youth, and yet had the opposite effect. Use of incorrect pronouns and/or names (given name vs. chosen name) was one example that was raised. I believe that if schools cannot get something like that right, then they have a long way to go before they can begin to unpack some of the larger issues. I recognized that microagressions, such as creating an all-inclusive washroom for students and then locking it, were a byproduct of the well-intended policies, and as I witnessed in the post-performance discussions and questionnaires, many audience members were not aware of such microagressions resulting from policy. Scene 6 of the play ends with a call to action that reinforces the under

representation or even lack of representation of queer voices on committees – voices that could identify oppression and recommend simple, yet effective change.

I argue that in order for transformational change to occur, the impacts of heteronormativity and cisnormativity must be explored and a queering of existing policies is equally important to determine how to continue to further support youth. When the youth discussed the pros and cons of their experiences with GSAs, a key issue that was raised was the limiting impact they could have. I agree with the youth that GSAs can be safe spaces within schools that allow students to freely express their gender and sexual identities and they do hold the potential to change the wider school culture. I found it ironic, however, that in many cases the students' need for such spaces was far greater than just one day a week which is common for GSA meetings. Furthermore, I noted that not all GSAs were as effective as their counterparts in other schools. The youth agreed that more needed to be done to promote safe spaces and further supports were needed in schools building on the GSA model. While I agree that changes are being made, they have been insufficient. Policies aimed at supporting students sometimes inadvertently caused more stigmatization.

Another ineffective policy that was surfaced, already touched on above, was portrayed in scene 4 of the play: policy regarding washroom use. While schools have taken steps in the right direction in creating safe and inclusive bathroom spaces, I surfaced several challenges with this practice. Notably, the fact that in the participants' experiences, schools commonly had only one washroom in the entire building designated as an inclusive washroom. At first this might not have seemed oppressive but when I inquired deeper during the interview, we came to an understanding that one locked bathroom was not an ideal situation, nor was one single stall bathroom for a school with an enormous population. Also in scene 4, participants shared several

challenges, which, at times, made accessing the bathroom problematic; these included, its distance from their classroom, it being kept locked, the stigma associated with using the space, and so forth. It was a moment of irony during the performances, when the adult audience members were beaming with pride, acknowledging that they come a long way by including a universal bathroom, until their perceived altruism was crushed when they realized that one locked bathroom was not good enough to meet the needs of the students.

I also uncovered that policy and guidelines that highlight behaviour management, discipline and punishment fail to notice the cause of the problem that HBT bullying and harassment are extensions of heteronormative and cisnormative cultural values deeply rooted in power and privilege. I contend that policymakers need to shift from zero-tolerance policies, to include addressing problems of equity and social justice. Furthermore, I assert that anti-bullying programs and bullying intervention strategies that are designed specifically to address HBT bullying and harassment, with no consideration of overall school culture, offer little to address how oppression and violence are manifested in schools. Participants raised the issue of teachers not being able to deal effectively with HBT bullying and harassment, because they were either ill equipped or uncomfortable. *The Every Teacher Project,* a national study on LGBTQ inclusive education (Taylor et al., 2015), found that a large majority of teachers across the country supported the idea of LGBTQ inclusive education, but only half practiced it. Two of the most important findings from that study were that a perceived lack of institutional support (from system and school-based leadership and colleagues) and a lack of training and resources constituted significant reasons for teachers not undertaking LGBTQ inclusive work in their classrooms. This was also evident throughout the play as youth indicated that teachers either did

not interfere, did not know how to interfere, or would rather not interfere in instances of HBT bullying and harassment.

While the participants noted that all of their schools had some sort of anti-bullying policies, what I found ironic was that the policies were ineffective as the teachers either could not or would not respond. I believe these perspectives can be attributed to a lack of training and leadership support for teachers. The youth saw adults' misunderstandings of gendered sexual harassment only implicating individuals and not the dominant culture. Moreover, I feel that interventions that explicitly target homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia have the effect of othering LGBTQ youth and further marginalizing them, while offering little to acknowledge multiple subjectivities and the intersectionality of identities of all involved parties.

Through ethnodramatic inqueery, I have come to understand that safety needs to be viewed through a larger lens beyond the overt anti-bullying and bullying prevention policies, to be more aligned with the promotion of equity and inclusion at the systemic level. This was highlighted throughout the ethnodrama as the youth kept returning to microagressions as one of the main forms of oppression that needed to be acknowledged and dealt with. Scene 10 of the play specifically acknowledged that microaggressions were one of the leading forms of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression. This was surmised by one of the youth when they acknowledged that microagressions bred bullying and harassment and that the system was rife with microagressions that trickled down to daily interactions. I consider well intended policies, such as allowing students to self-identify by allowing them to use their preferred names and genders, can have negative consequences when, for example, the name and pronoun do not match up on the attendance roster or the report card, or when teachers misname or misgender students in interactions with them. I believe the latter, in turn, leads to the normalization of

certain behaviours, such as when teachers stumble over which pronoun to use, or confuse the student's given and chosen name, perpetuating HBT bullying and harassment and feelings of exclusion and not being safe at school. On the surface, it reveals teachers' ignorance or lack of care. However, when heterosexual students witness this behaviour time and time again, the underlying message that is communicated through the hidden curriculum is that this behaviour is acceptable. Teachers have a significant role in shaping which lessons are passed onto students and "ironically, schools make efforts to de-sexualize the experience of students while they simultaneously, subtly yet clearly, affirm heterosexual behaviours and punish those who appear to deviate from it" (Meyer, 2010, p. 54).

The pervasiveness of microagressions lead to more overt heterosexism and its accompanying homophobia, along with other forms of gender and sexual oppression, was amplified in scene 9 of the play. In response to ongoing bullying on social media that was masked as jokes, memes or even under the guise of religion, the scene ended with a call to action where students demanded greater accountability of schools in dealing with social media and online bullying. While schools will often have policies that deal with social media and online bullying, what I learned from the youth is that these are often ineffective and rarely address the larger issue of gender and sexual harassment.

At the end of scene 7 of the play the youth expressed that all policy and decisions should be grounded in human dignity and human rights and that such policies could be effective means for creating positive change in schools and ensuring inclusion, equality and respect. The call to action in this scene was based on youths' discussion that surfaced differing policies between public and Catholic schools, and inconsistent double standards under the guise of accommodations. In this scene, the youth indicated how students would be grouped together

based on biological sex to determine roommates for overnight field trips; however, there was an exception to the rule if one of the roommates was not heterosexual. The youth questioned if accommodations were in place for sexual and gender minority youth or if the accommodations were really being used to accommodate heterosexual youth or even perhaps their parents. This story had a similar sentiment to scene 5, when a youth shared that they were asked if their sexuality needed accommodating in the change rooms in the gym. These stories beg questions about the intention of accommodations, who they are meant to accommodate, and if they are indeed rooted in dignity and respect. Arguably, I would conceive that neither of these examples promote a safe, inclusive and respectful school environment, and in fact have quite the contrary effect. Seeking ways to challenge and transgress the heteronormative and cisnormative status quo in schools is challenging work. Grace and Wells (2015) argued that "given that heterosexism, genderism, and homo/bi/transphobia are so culturally ingrained that they are residual and lingering in public spaces, this political and pedagogical work focused on greater accommodation and respect is taxing" (p. 178). On the surface level, it would appear that accommodations are being made. However, the challenge in this (taxing and difficult) work needs to focus on "problematizing queer-exclusive educational policies and practices, enhancing communication in the intersection of the moral and the political, and monitoring the state of the struggle, the extent of the transformation and the need for further social and cultural action" (Grace & Wells, 2015, p. 179).

I believe the implications for policy development from this study are significant. First and foremost, it is essential for administrators and teachers to regard LGBTQ rights as human rights protected by law. Human rights legislation provides support and justification for LGBTQ inclusive education. Decisions and policy development need to be supported by legislation and

existing policies that support human rights; they should not be mired by oppressive heteronormative and cisnormative beliefs and attitudes. Students' perceptions of what makes school safe and inclusive often does not align with established protocols and therefore, student voices, which represent multiple subjectivities (not just LGBTQ) need to be included in the development of policies.

Implications for Curriculum, Teaching & Learning

Mayo and Rodriquez (2019) conceived that "normative assumptions are seamlessly embedded in all levels of educational practice, from pedagogies to lessons to policies to assumptions about the aims and goal of education" (p. 2). As the professionals charged with teaching the outcomes of the Programs of Study, teachers are situated in an overt place of power within the classroom. Not only are they explicitly teaching the formal curriculum, but they are also teaching an unofficial curriculum that risks reinforcing oppressive heteronormative and cisnormative attitudes and beliefs. The unofficial curriculum, most often referred to as the hidden curriculum in academia, is no less overt and no less impactful as a learning experience. As McLaren (1994) expressed:

> The hidden curriculum deals with the tacit ways in which knowledge and behavior get constructed, outside the usual course materials and formally scheduled lessons. It is part of the bureaucratic managerial "press" of school – the combined forces by which students are induced to comply with the dominant ideologies and social practices related to authority, behavior and morality. (p. 191)

The principle thrust of the concept of the hidden curriculum is that it has unintended consequences that are learned, and in the case of this study, particularly with respect to reinforcing existing gender and sexual inequality. In order to maintain their power, privilege and

dominance, heteronormativity and cisnormativity must secure their hegemonic stances at the expense of sexual and gender minorities. Speaking to the sexual quotient in this hegemony, Fuss (1991) explained that:

> The language and law that regulates the establishment of heterosexuality as both an identity and an institution, both a practice and a system, is the language and law of defence and protection: heterosexuality secures its self-identity and shores up its ontological boundaries by protecting itself from what it sees as the continual predatory encroachments of its contaminated other, homosexuality. (p. 2)

Britzman (2000) explicitly addressed how sexuality is inserted in the school curriculum. She stated, "this has to do with how the curriculum structures modes of behavior and orientations to knowledge that are repetitions of the underlying structure and dynamics of education: compliance, conformity, and the myth that knowledge cures" (p. 35). In scene 5 of the play, one of the youth shared their experience in Social Studies class when minority issues were being discussed. The youth explained that the topic of GSAs came up and the teacher singled him out, by outing him in front of the class. The teacher was asking him his thoughts about GSA as a sexual and gender minority student. This example demonstrated poor judgment on the part of the teacher in outing a student, and how the hidden curriculum in this context teaches the other students that this type of outing behavior is acceptable. Not only does it reveal the overwhelming power that a teacher holds in the classroom, but it can also stigmatize and hurt sexual and gender minority youth. Hackford-Peer (2019) noted that "without paying careful attention to the context of the classroom and the power dynamics embedded within it … educators are likely to reinforce the very oppressive practices they are trying to disrupt" (p. 87). The youth expressed how the teacher believed it was acceptable practice to out him, positioning him as odd or unusual in front

of the whole class. Nevertheless, when the student called the teacher out on their behaviour, he was blamed for the incident and asked to leave the classroom. Hackford-Peer (2019) suggested that asking LGBTQ youth to openly share their experiences allows opportunities for issues to be raised and perspectives to be heard, "but it might also reinforce the spectacle of LGBTQness and allow heterosexual and cisgender students to listen passively to the painful experiences of their peers without acknowledging their own role in the continuation of heteronormativity [and cisnormativity]" (p. 87). The hidden curriculum is a tool that is used to police heteronormative and cisnormative culture in schools, and is as equally powerful outside of the classroom, as queer youth are required to navigate the hidden curriculum of heteronormativity in their peer interactions at school, in the halls, cafeteria, gym, in extra-curricular events, and other cultural spaces.

Meyer (2019) described that it is seemingly "difficult to effectively intervene to stop bullying when the qualities that bullies embody are the ones most valued by many and demonstrate a form of power generally esteemed in a male-centered, or patriarchal, society" (p. 45). This form of power is evidenced in the hidden curriculum and portrayed in scene 5 of the play where the youth discussed their experiences of physical education class and how they needed to police their behaviour and interactions out of fear of being perceived as anything other than heterosexual and stereotypically masculine. Meyer (2019) explained that "the pressure on boys to conform to traditional notions of masculinity is great, and the risk of being perceived as gay is an effective threat in policing the boundaries of acceptable behavior" (p. 45). This 'acceptable behaviour' is delineated in heteronormative ways of being through anticipated gender roles and traditional expectations of behaviour. I argue that we need to query how we define and what we define as acceptable.

The youth voiced that traditional gender norms, and gendered spaces continued to exist in schools. Also in scene 5 of the play, when talking about physical education class, the youth described how they were often segregated by biological sex, and how they were forced to make choices to join the girls or the boys even if their own gender expressions did not conform to either, and that joining the girls was always seen as inferior. This is an example of how heterosexism leads to misogyny and demonstrates that femininity is inferior and looked down upon. Below, I propose several different types of accommodations that the youth and audience identified through this ethnodramatic inqueery.

Certainly, every LGBTQ student's needs and concerns are unique to them. What each student needs in order to feel supported enough at school in order for them to learn ought to be considered on an individual basis. What is good for most is not good for all, and not all requests need to be accommodated in the same way. A discussion with the student and, dependent on their age, sometimes with their parents or caregivers, is necessary to determine best practices to support the student's needs. There are various factors that contribute to making the best decisions and accommodations for a student, such as, personal, school, and family contexts.

Respecting how a student identifies (gender, name, pronouns) is one such accommodation that can be provided in the classroom. Self-identification is the one and only measure of an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Self-identification is not only limited to name, pronoun usage and gender identification, but also has implications for established heteronormative and cisnormative teaching/learning practices and spaces. These practices include the language that is used in the classroom, how students are grouped, the ways spaces like washrooms and change rooms are set up to accommodate, and the ways curriculum and instruction include and nurture students across differences. When these

diverse elements are considered together, teaching can be an inclusive cultural practice that contributes to a safe and inclusive classroom space for everyone. As one of the youth participants noted, some of the traditionally gendered spaces (e.g. physical education class) can be problematic, even when accommodations are provided. The intention of providing accommodations needs to be queered as well. Meyer (2010) indicated that "the ideological power of schools is significant due to their role in teaching what the culture has deemed as important and valuable to future generations" (p. 54). Asking youth if their sexuality needs accommodating, I believe demonstrates an ill-conceived intention, one that is demonstrably located within the boundaries and limits of heteronormative and cisnormative attitudes and beliefs. Meyer (2010) stated that:

> By continuing to live within narrow boundaries of language and behaviour, the hierarchical binaries of male–female and gay–straight remain unchallenged. This work of dismantling socially invented categories [and reasons to accommodate them] is necessary to create educational space that liberates and create opportunities as open to limiting and closing down the diversity of human experiences. (p. 55)

The youth raised many issues related to physical education class. It is my belief that the youth were not challenging the actual physical education Program of Study, but rather, the hidden curriculum of physical education. Since schools endeavor to create inclusive and safe conditions for all students, consideration of gender identities and gender expressions is essential. Reducing gender-segregated activities and spaces helps students express themselves in ways that are congruent with their queer identities and realities. This focus on gender diversity leads to the discussion below on the cisnormative hidden curriculum and how teachers need to become

disruptors of cisnormative oppression in supporting students who identify as transgender and non-binary or fluid.

The notion that teachers select what to teach, and the manner in which they teach it, either perpetuates social oppression (as in the physical education examples above) or disrupts it. The possibility of queering the intentions of lessons and pedagogy provide an opportunity to interrogate the hidden curriculum that communicates heteropatriarchal social values and encourages perceived normative practices and beliefs. As Apple (1975) described the hidden curriculum:

> [It] serves to reinforce basic rules surrounding the nature of conflict and its uses. It posits a network of assumptions that, when internalized by students, establishes the boundaries of legitimacy. This process is accomplished not so much by explicit instances showing negative value of conflict, but by nearly the total absence of instances showing the importance of intellectual and normative conflict in subject areas. The fact is that these assumptions are obligatory for the students, since at no time are the assumptions articulated or questioned. (p. 99)

I propose that by queering intentions, teachers can destabilize what is considered the normative status quo by examining the locations of tension and conflict. Teachers can disrupt heteronormative and cisnormative attitudes and beliefs by looking beyond the recommended Program of Study texts, as the vast majority of these recommendations feature characters who are usually white, male, European, Judeo-Christian, heterosexual, and represent binary gender identities. Scene 7 in the play is based on a participant's experiences at a Catholic school. I believe this scene was a strong example of what Grace and Wells (2015) called "the Catholic Church's institutional efforts to privatize queer – to keep it hidden, invisible, silent, unannounced

– in religion, education, and culture" (p. 146). The participant shared how the hidden curriculum was navigated at school in religious studies class. There was no discussion about LGBTQ issues, overt or otherwise. The youth indicated that the teacher was stealthy when it came to sexual and gender minority issues. In this sense, the teacher explained that everyone was made in God's image, which negated any Catholic beliefs that are heterosexist, or by extension homophobic, biphobic or transphobic under the guise of religion. Moreover, the youth explain that while *Love Simon* (Berlanti, 2018)[23] would not be permitted for a film study, LGBTQ issues are never brought up, or conversely put down either.

This instance highlights the tension of hidden curriculum at play within this classroom. It was evident that this teacher had chosen a less dogmatic stance on same-sex relationships and how it related to Catholic beliefs of sin and damnation. This teacher attempted to find a middle ground, although they did not allow an LGBTQ movie such as *Love Simon* (Berlanti, 2018) in order to adhere with Catholic religious beliefs. I believe these are all examples of systemic exclusion, '[a] process whereby positive role models messages, and images about lesbian, gay and bisexual people are publicly silenced" (Friend, 1993, p. 215). As Grace (2015) noted, "the [education] system has historically positioned [sexual and gender minority] bodies within a politics of silence, exclusion, and debasement, often deliberately, sometimes by default" (p. 115). This reinforces my earlier assertion that a politics of silence and invisibility is still at work and that "there is a dire consequence for sexual and gender minority students: as heterocentric and genderist cultural sites, schools can hurt; as a means of transferring dominant cultural knowledge

[23] The movie focusses on a closeted gay high school student named Simon. When his secret is threatened, he must come to terms with his sexuality and face his family, friends, and classmates, all the while navigating his feelings for an anonymous classmate he has fallen in love with online.

to the exclusion of [sexual and gender minority] knowledges, schooling can hurt" (Grace, 2015, p. 115).

Additionally, the youth described that the Catholic school did not have an official GSA, but did have a pride flag hanging in the band room and that musical theatre had become the unofficial GSA (which has stereotyping written all over it as there were no visible pride flags anywhere else in the school). This example illustrates how a Catholic teacher had to be covert in creating space for queer lives and realities to be acknowledged within the unofficial curriculum (to the extent that this was acceptable within a Catholic school setting). These are the types of disruptions of traditional heteronormative and cisnormative spaces that teachers can create to support sexual and gender minority students. However, Catholic teachers also need to be mindful of their administration and faith-based community. After all, they have signed a contract to uphold Catholic values in their teaching, and they risk putting their careers on the line if their transgressions are too overt.

I propose that teachers can be agents of disruption, and doing so can have significant impact on how queer youth see themselves at school and how heterosexual youth perceive them, which makes for a more productive teaching and learning environment. LGBTQ persons are often overlooked or only included in highly stigmatized ways in classrooms, and in media and popular culture. The exclusion of positive acknowledgments of LGBTQ issues or history is troublesome for LGBTQ youth wanting to feel that they belong in the world. Take for instance Shakespeare's (1597) Romeo and Juliet, a tragic heterosexual romance between two teenagers. While this classic text addresses the subject matter of human sexuality, as well as suicidality and murder, a notice to parents is unnecessary, while *Love Simon* (Berlanti, 2018) would require one. Here we witness an unequivocal double standard that privileges heterosexuality. The absence of

diverse LGBTQ realities and identities in education creates conditions for misunderstanding amongst students, suggesting that LGBTQ people are non-existent or are in some way inferior.

One approach to address this deficit is for teachers to incorporate queer theory into their teaching practice. I would also suggest that teachers learn about this in their teacher preparation programs, so that when they enter classrooms they are better equipped to deal with LGBTQ issues. By being aware of the issues and how to respond to them, teachers could meet several of the competencies outlined in the *Teaching Quality Standard* (Alberta Education, 2018), notably Fostering Effective Relationships, Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge, and Establishing Inclusive Learning Environments. Blackburn and Beucher (2019) suggested that "queer theory can provoke the queering, challenging how a teacher approaches seemingly axiomatic assumptions about social identities and the expected behaviors of those exhibiting those identities" (p. 23). By queering, I attest that teachers can challenge curriculum by confronting heteronormative and cisnormative stereotypes and by including positive content about LGBTQ history and persons into their classrooms and lessons on a regular basis. Language Arts and Drama classes are two excellent examples of opportunities for LGBTQ youth (and all youth) to encounter characters that share queer identities and realities in the texts they read. Through reading such texts, LGBTQ youth can realize that their experiences are not so different as to never be felt or experienced by others. We also know that through books and stories students meet characters who are different from themselves, and so they learn about different ways of being in the world.

What I have discovered through this ethnodramatic inqueery is that there is a heteronormative and cisnormative hidden curriculum at work not only in the classroom, but also in other parts of the school as well. As curriculum modernization is discussed in the province, I

urge educators and stakeholders to consider the power and privilege of hegemonic forces such as heteronormativity and cisnormativity. As new curriculum is developed, it must examine the social construction of heteronormative attitudes and beliefs about sexuality and cisnormative attitudes and beliefs about gender in order to contest cultural hierarchies that create conditions for HBT harassment and bullying to exist. Teachers and school administrators need to examine how heteronormative and cisnormative gender scripts are privileged in the curriculum.

Through this ethnodramatic inqueery, I noted that that youth felt that teachers, regardless of how long they had been teaching, required more support and professional development around diversity. The youth stated that often teachers do not have all the tools they require to handle difficult and uncomfortable situations – these range from dealing with homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic remarks to speaking about gender and sexual minority issues in the classroom. They felt that most teachers had a basic level of understanding about gender identity, especially with respect to pronoun use. However, they also felt that there was further opportunity for professional development. This was evident in the play when the actors were discussing student supports such as guidance counsellors. In scene 6 of the play an actor expressed, that a psychologist had to be called in from central office just because they had confirmed they belonged to a sexual and gender minority, making them feel it had mushroomed into a big deal that was not necessarily called for. This was again highlighted in the second call to action when the youth indicated school staff needed to be better trained, because inclusive practices include all students, not just those who are part of a sexual and gender minority. Participants rejected the need for seeking out support from a specialist such as a psychologist, as the side effect would be reinforcement of the idea of the "contaminated other" (Fuss 1991, p. 2) – that there is something psychologically wrong with the student who needs help from a specialist.

Equally, the audience members, during our post-performance conversations, acknowledged that they had more work to do to improve their practices and expressed that this ethnodramatic inqueery could serve as a useful tool for building capacity amongst teachers. There is a need for school leaders, school boards, the Ministry of Education and the Alberta Teachers' Association to continue to develop resources and professional development opportunities for teachers, because as *The Every Teacher Project* (Taylor et al., 2015) indicated, there is a willingness to do the work, there are just barriers that need to be removed.

Attending to the above implications can create significant change at classroom and school levels as well as in the wider culture. The significance of this study is in advocating for creating safe and inclusive schools for LGBTQ students.

Significance of the Study

Grace (2015) identified three goals to immediately improve the lives of sexual and gender minority youth:

> (1) exclusionary policies and practices in education, culture and society have to be exposed;
>
> (2) communication in the intersection of the moral and the political has to be enhanced; and
>
> (3) the state of the struggle, the extent of the transformation, and the need for further social and cultural action have to be monitored. (p. 95)

Through the process of this inqueery, I have come to understand that the root causes of LGBTQ oppression are forms of heteronormative and cisnormative hegemony at work. I have learned about the exclusionary policies and practices that enable heterosexism and cisgenderism, creating conditions for HBT bullying and harassment to become overt expressions of heteronormative

and cisnormative oppression. There are various systemic forms of oppression that create the culture in which overt oppression is validated and that trickle all the way down to insidious forms of microagressions that are in many cases unconsciously mobilized. I consider that queer theory's critique of normalcy must be inserted into any discourse about HBT bullying and harassment as it enhances the aims of critical pedagogy, including ethics and equity. Schools cannot upend the power laden practices of HBT bullying and harassment if they are not seeking to disrupt, destabilize, and deconstruct the regulatory constructs of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression such as normative binaries that maintain sexuality and gender identity as fixed concepts. Finally, while the data that was surfaced is undoubtedly qualitative in nature, it tells a similar narrative to the quantitative studies I referenced in my literature review. I contend that this queer ethnodrama and following post-performance discussion and questionnaire, not only highlight but evidence the struggle of LGBTQ students, as well as demonstrate a level of conscientization and the need for further transformative action.

One of the goals of this work was to seek an emancipatory effect. I have come to understand how learning is, at its core, a critically liberating act – it has emancipatory potential. The significance of this ethnodramatic inqueery as a pedagogical tool, then, is in its emancipatory potential. Rincón-Gallardo (2019) explained that the process of education for emancipation:

> Involves getting immersed in and making sense of questions that matter … with autonomy to decide the pace and form of our learning, connecting our experiences and knowledge to making meaning … transforming ourselves and … changing the world in the process. (p. 11)

Queer pedagogy performs a significant role as it encourages students and teachers to delve into and question normative structures and institutions that produce positions of power and contribute to a hierarchical society across a magnitude of intersectionalities. What is further significant is that in raising queer consciousness about the very issues that oppress LGBTQ youth in Alberta high schools, I have come to understand how our lives are impacted by the dominant sexual and gender cultural norms, and how I can and must queer my own context and practice. This is because "hitching our hopes to policies to fix intractable problems, when policies themselves are designed to protect a normative status quo, is not enough" (Mayo & Rodriquez, 2019, p. 3). In conclusion, the significance of this study is in its queer critique of heteronormativity and cisnormativity to interrupt HBT bullying and harassment and, moreover, to queerly highlight how school culture, policies, and teaching, learning and curriculum, reinforce normalized beliefs and attitudes around power, privilege and oppression in schools.

Further Recommendations for Research

We need queer theory now more than ever in education as we see a resurgence of heteronormative and cisnormative conservative and patriarchal attitudes and values spreading throughout the world. "Queer scholarship … is anti-normative and seeks to subvert, challenge and critique a host of taken for granted 'stabilities' in our social lives" (Browne & Nash, 2010, p. 7). Queer pedagogy is well positioned to respond to what Mayo and Rodriquez (2019) noticed as a resurgence of conservatism. They stated that "if normative power continues to try to recuperate itself through backlash, there is and has always been something quite queer about teaching and learning" (p. 3). We need further research on the heteronormative and cisnormative cultural experiences of going to school and their relationships to the hidden curriculum. Queer theorists like Meyer (2019) called on educators to query "how they teach, reinforce, or expand normalized

gendered practices in schools; how heteronormativity is repeated or questioned; and how they embrace or challenge other repetitions of normalcy in their classrooms" (p. 48). So, despite policies designed to protect the heteronormative status quo being championed by populist leaders, we need research that deconstructs power and privilege at all levels of intersectionality. "At the root of queer theory is a very simple practice: questioning what is 'normal' or normative, complicating any simple framework by asking critical questions about who is excluded and what is assumed" (boyd, 2020, para. 4).

Queer theory has been utilized as an agent of disruption and transgression for social justice means; however, we also need to consider how it can be used as an agent that sustains what has already been gained, without getting too comfortable and becoming drawn into a new normalization. Mayo and Rodriquez (2019) suggest that "queer pedagogies may give us a way to help encourage the multiple and disconnected truths that are already in our classrooms" (p. 3). As we continue to queer intersectionality, "queer attentiveness may encourage interest in the slide toward and away from one another as we try new forms of connection and difference" (Mayo & Rodriquez, 2019, p. 3). This state of queer attentiveness also raises a queer conscientization in order for change to occur that queers relational intersections.

As I have described previously, despite years of interventions and research, HBT bullying and harassment continues, erasure of LGBTQ identifies and realities continues, and so our querying needs to continue. "Queer desires continue to motivate the push for more: more than simple recognition, more than simple inclusion, more interest in what desires do to keep us wanting more" (Mayo & Rodriquez, 2019, p. 2).

Queer theory is uniquely capable of amplifying and enhancing other theories and pedagogies such as social justice education, feminist theory, and critical pedagogy. An

intersectional collision of theories allows us to better understand lived experience, identities and realities as we move "closer to queer" (Blackburn & Beucher, 2019). Mayo and Rodriquez (2019) believed that regardless of "whether queer theory can provide intentional strategies for pedagogy and action or whether it is best thought as an inadvertent source of disruption within normativity, its operations continue to prod at cemented practices in education" (p. 2). It is through this prodding that we chip away at power and privilege and forms of heteronormative and cisnormative oppression. Queer research on HBT bullying needs to continue to examine how school cultures perpetuate and enforce the dominant social order fixing sexuality and gender in particular ways and how this in turn, gives rise to students policing traditional sexual and gender roles and norms through HBT bullying and harassment. Continued research into how heteronormativity and cisnormativity live in schools is necessary. It is only by accepting the view that bullying and harassment are embedded with the larger school culture that solutions begin to be effective.

Concluding Remarks

Having grown up in a heteronormative world in the 1980s and 1990s, there was little to no public discourse about LGBTQ rights in school. My identity and reality were largely assimilated into the dominant culture as I experienced it. I did not have any gay heroes, role models, or friends until much later in my schooling, and even then, there was an understood silence. I experienced bullying and harassment in high school, and then was also a witness to it when I became a teacher. Having experienced the power of drama and theatre on multiple occasions, I realized that it has the ability to hold a mirror and window on humanity – a mirror so that we can see ourselves and a window so that we can witness others. Through this realization, drama became a powerful pedagogical tool for me, and that is how this journey began.

In putting my passion for theatre to work with the aim of sharing LGBTQ youths' experiences, so that educators could realize there is so much more that needs to be done, I encountered ethnodramatic inqueery. While this process has taken several years to come to finality, it has been an inspiring process and at every step of this journey I have learned something new about myself, about ethnodrama, about working with LGBTQ youth, and about thinking queerly. Ethnodramatic inqueery has immense potential as a pedagogical tool, but also raises many questions. Questions that I continue to think about are: How should we understand the multiple subjectivities we all hold? Can or should we tease them apart? As one of the participants said. "I'm not an acronym and trans issues aren't lesbian issues."

Mayo and Rodriquez (2019) suggested:

> As we continue to insist on the complications that, race, class, gender, gender identity, disability, and ethnicity bring to what is defined as either LGBT, queer or other terms that resonate more with members of other communities, we're both insisting on queer presence and being careful that queer doesn't itself keep becoming another form of normalizing power. (p. 4)

This leads me to question: How can I continue to redeploy the term queer, beyond how I have already used it? By destabilizing heteronormativity and cisnormativity, are we normalizing queer identities and realities? Does this indicate a slide into normal and further away from queer? While I have gained new understanding from this ethnodramatic inqueery, I have more questions than answers. As I have learned from queer theory, knowledge is not static and queering is not about coming to finite terms or answers. Queer theory has permitted me to gain insights that will continue to inform my practice as a teacher, a school leader, a researcher, and a concerned human being who cares about others.

I hope that those who read this thesis come to see HBT bullying and harassment as only symptoms of the problems faced by LGBTQ students. For educators, students, and parents to fully come to terms with why HBT bullying and harassment continue to impact LGBTQ youth, the entire heteronormative and cisnormative cultural experience of going to school must be deconstructed. The participants identified heteronormative and cisnormative forms of oppression as key contributors to them feeling unsafe at school. If we do not *decenter, destabilize, and deconstruct* these ideas, then we ignore the harsh reality that we are all complicit in this oppression to varying degrees. This ethnodramatic inqueery is one of many shifts in bullying research that begins querying the heteronormative and cisnormative processes of normalization and the structures of power and privilege that permit them to exist. Britzman (2010) noted that "open-mindedness made from a willingness to be affected by the lives of others is our best pedagogical resource but also the most difficult to sustain" (pp. 325–326). By being open-minded and drawing an awareness to the lived realities of LGBTQ youth, I helped empower them by giving them agency as co-researchers to share their narratives, write a script and then perform their stories. My hope was that the audience members who were witness to their performances could come to a realization that despite all the work we have done in Alberta, we still have more work to do. While I realize that this ethnodramatic inqueery is one small drop in the bucket of our hopes and dreams of a better world, if we continue, one day the bucket will overflow.

References

Ackroyd, J. & O'Toole, J. (2010). *Performing research: Tensions, triumphs and trade-offs of ethnodrama.* Trentham Books.

Alberta Education. (2016). *Guidelines for best practices: Creating learning environments that respect diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions*. Government of Alberta. https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/f76ede77-626b-4c19-b649-43a3c6a448e8/resource/5431a12d-d051-4116-8062-7596f2689adc/download/91383-attachment-1-guidelines-final-2016.pdf

Alberta Education. (2018). *Teaching quality standard.* Government of Alberta. https://education.alberta.ca/media/3739620/standardsdoc-tqs-_fa-web-2018-01-17.pdf

An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect Our Children, S.A., Bill 10, Third Session, 28th Legislature, 63 Elizabeth II, (2014). https://docs.assembly.ab.ca/LADDAR_files/docs/bills/bill/legislature_28/session_3/20141117_bill-010.pdf

Antongi, E. (1992). *Popular theatre: The theory of Ross Kidd (1974-1986).* [Master's thesis, University of Alberta]. Education and Research Archive. https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/6c941f57-cd8e-4cdc-87d3-e278b8472e2f

Apple, M. (1975). The hidden curriculum and the nature of conflict. In W. Pinar (Ed.). *Curriculum theorizing: The reconceptualists* (pp. 95–119). McCutchan.

Bailey, S. (2009). Performance in drama therapy. In R. Emunah & D. R. Johnson (Eds.), *Current approaches in drama therapy* (2nd ed., pp. 374–389). C. C. Thomas.

Bappa, S. & Etherton, M. (1983). Popular theatre: Voice of the oppressed. *Commonwealth, 25*(4), 126–130.

Barone, T., & Eisner, T. (2012). *Arts based research*. Sage Publications.

Beale, A. V., & Scott, P. C. (2001). "Bullybusters": Using drama to empower students to take a stand against bullying behavior. *Professional School Counseling, 4*(4), 300–305.

Beauregard, M., Stone, M., Trytan, N., & Sajnani, N. (2016). Drama therapists' attitudes and actions regarding LGBTQI and gender nonconforming communities. *Drama Therapy Review, 2*(1), 41–63. https://doi.org/10.1386/dtr.2.1.41_1

Beck, J. L., Belliveau, G., Lea, G. W., & Wager, A. (2011). Delineating a spectrum of research-based theatre. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *17*(8), 687–700. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411415498

Bellefontaine, M. (2014, November, 27). Premier Jim Prentice counters Bill 202 with Tory version. CBC News. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/premier-jim-prentice-counters-bill-202-with-tory-version-1.2852810

Belliveau, G. (2007). An alternative practicum model for teaching and learning. *Canadian Journal of Education, 30*(1), 47–67. https://doi.org/10.2307/20466625

Belliveau, G., & Lea, G. W. (2016). *Research-based theatre: An artistic methodology*. Intellect.

Binnie, J. (2007). Sexuality, the erotic and geography: Epistemology, methodology and pedagogy. In K. Browne, J. Lim & G. Brown (Eds.), *Geographies of sexualities: Theories, practices and politics* (pp. 29–38). Ashgate.

Blackburn M.V., Beucher, B. (2019) Productive tensions in assessment: Troubling sociocritical theories toward an advancement of queer pedagogy. In C. Mayo & N. M. Rodriquez (Eds.), *Queer pedagogies: Theory, praxis, politics* (pp. 23–40). Springer.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_3

Blatner, A. (2000). *Foundations of psychodrama, history, theory, and practice* (4th ed.). Springer.

Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the oppressed* (C. McBride & M. McBride, Trans.). Pluto Press. (Original work published in 1974)

Bolton, G. (1998). We do drama: The cultural dimension of classroom drama. In C. O'Sullivan & G. Williams (Eds.), *Building bridges: Laying the foundations for a child-centered curriculum in drama and education* (pp. 20–25). The National Association of the Teaching of Drama.

Bowles, N. (Ed.). (1997). *Friendly fire: An anthology of 3 plays by queer street youth.* A.S.K. Theater Projects.

boyd, d. (2020). *Apophenia: The politics of queering anything.* www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2011/03/24/the-politics-of-queering-anything.html

Bram, J. (1953). Application of psychodrama to research in social anthropology. *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences 15*(7), 253–257.

Berlanti, G. (Director). (2018). *Love Simon* [Film]. 20th Century Fox.

Britzman, D. (1995). Is there a queer pedagogy? Or, stop reading straight. *Educational Theory*, *45*(2), 151–165. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.1995.00151.x

Britzman, D. (2000). Precocious education. In S. Talburt & S. Steinberg (Eds.), *Thinking queer: Sexuality, culture, and education* (pp. 33–60). Peter Lang.

Britzman, D. (2010). Teachers and eros. *Sex Education, 10*(3), 325–330. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2010.491627

Brook, P. (1990). *The empty space*. Penguin Books.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development* (Vol. 6, pp. 197–249). JAI Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 1643–1647). Pergamon/Elsevier Science.

Browne, D. R., Michiewicz, E. P., & Firestone, C. M. (1994). *Television/radio news and minorities.* Aspen Institute.

Browne, K. & Nash, C. (Eds.). (2010). *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research.* Ashgate.

Bryson, M. & Castell, S. (1993). Queer pedagogy: Praxis makes im/perfect. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *18*(3), 285–305. https://doi.org/10.2307/1495388

Burton, B. (2008). Acting against bullying in schools. In A. O'Brien and K. Donelan (Eds.), *The arts and youth at risk: Global and local challenges* (pp. 139–55). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Campenni, C. E. (1999). Gender stereotyping of children's toys: A comparison of parents and nonparents. *Sex Roles*, *40*(1–2), 121–138.

Callaghan, T. D. (2007). That's so gay: Homophobia in Canadian Catholic schools. VDM Verlag Dr. Müller.

Centre for Disease Control. (2020). *Preventing adverse childhood experience*s. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html

Chapman, J., Sykes H., & Swedberg, A. (2003). Wearing the secret out: Performing stories of sexual identities, *Youth Theatre Journal, 17*(1), 27–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/08929092.2003.10012548

Chödrön, P. (2002). *Comfortable with uncertainty: 108 teachings on cultivating fearlessness and compassion*. Shambhala.

Clancy, C. (2018, November, 14). Twenty-eight private schools defying GSA law risk losing public funding, says David Eggen. *Edmonton Journal*. https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/alberta-government-cracks-down-on-private-schools-defying-gsa-law

Clifford, J. (1986). Introduction: Partial truths. In J. Clifford & G. Marcus (Eds.) *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography* (pp. 1–26). University of California Press.

Conquergood, D. (2003). Performing as a moral act: Ethical dimensions of the ethnography of performance. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Turning points in qualitative research: Tying knots in a handkerchief* (pp. 397–414). AltaMira.

Conrad, D. (2003). Unearthing personal history: Autoethnography & artifacts inform research on youth risk-taking. *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, (23), 44-58. https://sites.ualberta.ca/~dhconrad/PDFs/UnearthingPersonalHistory.pdf

Conrad, D. (2004). Exploring risky youth experiences: Popular theatre as a participatory, performative research method. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 3*(1), Article 2. http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_1/pdf/conrad.pdf

Conrad, D. (2012). *Athabasca's going unmanned: An ethnodrama about incarcerated youth*. Sense Publishers.

Conrad, D. & Unger, D. (2011). Violence at school, the violence of schooling: Restorative alternatives. In J. Charlton, P. Verrecchia & D. Polizzi (Eds.), *International perspectives on restorative justice in education* (pp. 30–68). Centre for the Study of Crime, Restorative Justice and Community Safety.

Craig, W. & McCuaig Edge, H. (2012). The health of Canada's young people: A mental health focus – bullying and fighting. Public Health Agency of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/childhood-adolescence/publications/health-canada-young-people-mental-health-focus/bullying-fighting.html

Crenshaw, K. (1993). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43,* 1241–1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Crothers, L. M., Kolbert, J. B. & Barker, W. F. (2006). Middle school students' preferences for anti-bullying interventions. *Psychology International*, *27*(4), 475–487. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034306070435

Denzin, N. (1997). Performance texts. In W. G. Tierney & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the text: Re-framing the narrative voice* (pp. 179–217). State University of New York Press.

Denzin, N. (2001). The reflexive interview and a performative social science. *Qualitative Research*, *1*(1), 23–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410100100102

Denzin, N. (2003). *Performance ethnography: Critical pedagogy and the politics of culture*. Sage Publications.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2005). Series editors' foreword. In J. Saldaña (Ed.), *Ethnodrama: An*

anthology of reality theatre (pp. ix–xi). AltaMira Press.

Dorais, M., & Lajeunesse, S. L. (2004). *Dead boys can't dance: Sexual orientation, masculinity, and suicide* (P. Tremblay, Trans.). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Edelman, L. (1994). *Homographesis: Essays in gay literary and cultural theory.* Routledge.

Ellen, R. (1984). *Ethnographic research: A guide to general conduct.* Academic Press.

Eisner, E. (2002). *The arts and the creation of mind*. Yale University Press.

Eisner, E. (2006). Does arts education have a future? *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research, 48*(1), 9–18.

Eppert, C. (2008). Fear, (educational) fictions of character, and Buddhist insights for a witnessing curriculum. In C. Eppert and H. Wang (Eds.), *Cross-cultural studies in curriculum: Eastern thought, educational insights* (1st ed., pp. 55–108). Lawrence Erlbaum, Taylor and Francis.

Etherton, M. (1985). Third world popular theatre. In *Reaching and Helping Unorganized and Disadvantaged People. Courier, 33,* 30–33. Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education. https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED257973

Evans, N. (2000). Creating a positive learning environment for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 82*, 81–87. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.8208

Evans, R. (1996). The culture of resistance. In *The human side of change: Reform, resistance, and the real-life problems of resistance* (pp. 40–50). Jossey-Bass.

Ferraro, G. & Andreatta, S. (2010). *Cultural anthropology: An applied perspective* (8th ed.). Wadsworth.

Finkelhor, D., Shattuck, A., Turner, H., & Hamby, S. (2013). Improving the adverse childhood experiences study scale. *JAMA Pediatrics, 167*(1), 70–75. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013.420

Fosse, G. K. (2006). *Mental health of psychiatric outpatients bullied in childhood* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Norwegian University of Science and Technology. http://hdl.handle.net/11250/263986

Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). Continuum Publishing Corp. (Original work published in 1970)

Freire, P. (1978). *Education for critical consciousness.* Seabury Press.

Freire, P. (1987). The importance of the act of reading. In P. Freire & D. Macedo, (Eds.), *Literacy: Reading the word and the world* (pp. 20–24). Bergin and Garvey.

Freire, P. (2005). *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach* (D. Macedo, D. Kolke, & A. Oliviera, Trans.). Westview Press.

Friend, R. (1993). Choices, not closets: Heterosexism and homophobia in schools. In L. Weis & M. Fine (Eds.). *Beyond silenced voices: Class, race, and gender in United States schools* (pp. 209–235). State University of New York Press.

Garcia, A. & Buchanan, D. (2009). Psychodrama. In D. Johnson & R. Emunah (Eds.), *Current approaches in drama therapy* (2nd ed., pp. 393–423). Charles Thomas.

Giroux, H. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Bergin Garvey.

Giroux, H. (1992). Literacy, pedagogy, and the politics of difference. *College Literature, 19*(1), 1–11. http://www.jstor.com/stable/25111937

Giroux, H. (2001). *Public spaces, private lives: Beyond the culture of cynicism.* Roman &

Littlefield.

Giroux, H. (2005). *Schooling and the struggle for public life: Democracy's promise and education's challenge.* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Giroux, H. (2011). *On critical pedagogy*. The Continuum International Publishing Group.

Giroux, H. (1997). Is there a place for cultural studies in colleges of education? In H. Giroux, & P. Shannon (Eds.), *Education and cultural studies: toward a performative Practice* (pp. 231–248). Routledge.

Glew, G. M., Fan, M., Katon, W., & Rivara, F. P. (2008). Bullying and school safety. *The Journal of Pediatrics, 152*(1), 123–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2007.05.045

Goldstein, T. (2006). Towards a future of equitable pedagogy and schooling. *Pedagogies: An International Journal, 1*(3), 151–169. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15544818ped0103_1

Goldstein, T. (2013). *Zero tolerance and other plays*. Sense Publishers.

Gorman-Murray, A., Johnston, L., & Waitt, G. (2010). Queer(ing) communications in research relationships: A conversation about subjectivities, methodologies and ethics. In K. Browne, & C. Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 97–112). Ashgate.

Government of Alberta. (2020). *Bullying – know what it is: Recognize bullying and know the warning signs.* http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/18312.html

Government of Alberta. (2020). *Alberta education act.* Alberta Queen's Printer. http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=E00P3.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779816286

Government of Alberta. (2017b). Homophobic bullying. Prevention tips for youth.

https://web.archive.org/web/20160325214808/http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/homophobic-bullying-prevention-tips-for-youth.pdf

Government of Alberta. (2017c). Transphobic bullying. https://web.archive.org/web/20181024194534/http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/transphobic-bullying.pdf

Grace, A. P. (2015). *Growing into resilience: Sexual and gender minority youth in Canada* (Part I). University of Toronto Press.

Grace, A. P. & Wells, K. (2015). *Growing into resilience: Sexual and gender minority youth in Canada* (Part II). University of Toronto Press.

Grace, A. P., & Wells, K. (2016). *Sexual and gender minorities in Canadian education and society, 1969-2013: A national handbook for K-12 educators*. Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks.* International Publishers.

Greene, F. L. (1996). Introducing queer theory into the undergraduate classroom: Abstractions and practical applications. *English Education*, *28*(4), 323–339.

Greenwood, J. (2005). Journeying into the third space: A study of how theatre can be used to interpret the emergent space between cultures. *Youth Theatre Journal, 19*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/08929092.2005.10012573h

Hackford-Peer K. (2019) "That Wasn't Very Free Thinker": Queer Critical Pedagogy in the Early Grades. In C. Mayo & N.M. Rodriquez (Eds.). *Queer pedagogies: Theory, praxis, politics* (pp. 75–92). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_6

Halperin, D. M. (1995). *Saint Foucault: Towards a gay hagiography.* Oxford University Press.

Hays, P. A. (2008). *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, and*

therapy. American Psychological Association.

Heckert, J. (2010). Intimacy with strangers/intimacy with self: Queer experiences of social research. In K. Browne, & C. Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 41–54). Ashgate.

Hesse-Biber, S. & Leavy, P. (2011). *The practice of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Hill Collins, P. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment.* (Revised 10th ed.). Routledge.

Holman Jones, S. & Adams, T. E. (2010). Autoethnography is a queer method. In K. Browne, & C. Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 195–214). Ashgate.

Jackson, A. (2007). *Theatre, education and the making of meanings: Art or instrument?* Manchester University Press.

Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer theory: An introduction*. New York University Press.

Kidd, R. (1980). People's theatre, conscientization, and struggle. *Media Development, 27*(3), 10–14.

Kidd, R. (1985). Popular theatre, conscientization, and popular organization. *Courier, 33,* 18–29. https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED257973

Kincheloe, J. (2011). *Key works in critical pedagogy*. Sense Publishers.

Kosciw, J. G. (2004). *The 2003 national school climate survey: The school-related experiences of our nation's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth*. Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED486412.pdf

Kosciw, J., Greytak, E., Giga, N., Villenas, C., & Danischewski, D. (2016). *The 2015 national*

school climate survey: The school-related experiences of our nation's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/GLSEN%202015%20National%20School%20Climate%20Survey%20%28NSCS%29%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf

Kosciw, J., Greytak, E., Zongrone, A., Clark, C., & Truong, N. (2018). *The 2017 national school climate survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools.* GLSEN. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Full_NSCS_Report_English_2017.pdf

LeCompte, M. (2000). Standing for just and right decisions: The long, slow path to school safety. *Education and Urban Society, 32*, 413–429.

Lambda Legal. (2010). When health care isn't caring: Lambda Legal's survey of discrimination against LGBT people and people with HIV. www.lambdalegal.org/health-care-report.

Landy, R. (2009). Role theory and the role method of drama therapy. In R. Emunah & D. R. Johnson (Eds.), *Current approaches in drama therapy* (2nd ed., pp. 65–88). C. C. Thomas.

Landy, R. & Montgomery, D. (2012). *Theatre for change: Education, social action and therapy.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Lee, C.-H. (2011). An ecological systems approach to bullying behaviors among middle school students in the United States. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *26*(8), 1664–1693. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260510370591

Lofgren, H. & Malm, B. (Eds.). (2005). Bridging the fields of drama and conflict management:

Empowering students to handle conflicts through school-based programmes. Dracon International, Malmo University, School of Teacher Education. www.laraforfred.se/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/DRACON-international.pdf

Luhmann, S. (1998). Queering/querying pedagogy? Or, pedagogy is a pretty queer thing. In W. F. Pinar (Ed.), *Queer theory in education* (pp. 141–156). Earlbaum.

Macy, J. (2007). *World as lover, world as self: Courage for global justice and ecological renewal.* Parallex Press.

Malinowitz, H. (1995). The politics of outsiderhood go to school: Liberatory pedagogy. In *Textual orientations: Lesbian and gay students and the making of discourse communities* (pp. 92–107). Boyton/Cook Publishers.

Martino, W., & Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2003). *So what's a boy?: Addressing issues of masculinity and schooling.* Open University Press.

Mayo, C. & Rodriquez N.M. (Eds.). (2019). *Queer pedagogies: Theory, praxis, politics.* Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_1

McLaren, P. (1994). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education.* (2nd ed.). Longman.

McNair, R. P. (2017). Multiple identities and their intersections with queer health and wellbeing. *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 38*(4), 443–452. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2017.1341398

McNiff, S. (2013). *Art as research: Opportunities and challenges*. Intellect.

Mertz, E., & Kornik, S. (2019, May 3). *Student-led walkout across Alberta Friday opposing government's GSA rules.* Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/5234181/student-walkout-lgbtq-gsa-alberta-ucp/

Meyer, E. J. (2006). Gendered harassment in North America: School-based interventions for reducing homophobia and heterosexism. In C. Mitchell & F. Leach (Eds.), *Combating gender violence in and around schools* (pp. 43–50). Trentham Books.

Meyer, E. J. (2007). "But I'm not gay": What straight teachers need to know about queer theory. In N. P. Rodriguez, W. Pinar (Eds.), *Queering straight teachers: Discourse and identity in education* (pp. 15–32). Peter Lang.

Meyer, E. J. (2008). Gendered harassment in secondary schools: Understanding teachers' (non)interventions. *Gender & Education, 20*(6), 555–572. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250802213115

Meyer, E. J. (2009). *Gender, bullying, and harassment: Strategies to end sexism and homophobia in schools*. Teachers College Press.

Meyer, E. J. (2014). New solutions for bullying and harassment: A post-structural feminist approach. In R. Schott & D. M. Sondergard (Eds.), *School bullying: New theories in context* (pp. 209–240). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139226707.013

Meyer E. J. (2019) Ending bullying and harassment: The case for a queer pedagogy. In C. Mayo & N. M. Rodriquez (Eds.). *Queer pedagogies: Theory, praxis, politics* (pp. 41–58). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27066-7_4

Meyer, I. H. (1995). Minority stress and metal health in gay men. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 36,* 38–56. https://doi.org/0.2307/2137286

Meyer, I. H. (2015). Resilience in the study of minority stress and health of sexual and gender minorities. *Psychology and Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 2*(3), 209–213. https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000132

Mienczakowski, J. (1995a). *The application of critical ethno-drama to health settings* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Griffith University.

Mienczakowski, J. (1995b). The theatre of ethnography: The reconstruction of ethnography with emancipatory potential. *Qualitative Inquiry, 1*(3), 360–375. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049500100306

Mienczakowski, J. (2001). Ethnodrama: Performed research – limitations and potential. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 468–476). Sage Publications.

Miles, M., Huberman, M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1995). Translator translated: Interview with cultural theorist Homi Bhabha. *Artforum, 33*(7), 80–84. https://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bhabha/interview.html

Moreno, J. L. (1946). *Psychodrama* (Vol. 1). Beacon House.

Morris, M. (2000). Dante's left foot kicks queer theory into gear. In S. Talburt & S. Steinberg (Eds.), *Thinking queer: Sexuality, culture, and education* (pp. 15–32). Peter Lang.

Muñoz, L. (2010). Brown, queer and gendered: Queering the Latina/o 'street-scapes' in Los Angeles. In K. Browne, & C. Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 56–67). Ashgate.

Nadal, K. L. (2013). *That's so gay: Microaggressions and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.* American Psychological Association.

Nadal, K. L., Issa, M., Leon, J., Meterko, V., Widerman, M., & Wing, Y. (2011). Sexual

orientation microaggressions: Death by a thousand cuts for lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 8*(3), 234–259. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2011.584204

Nadal, K. L., Skolnik, A., & Wong, Y. (2012). Interpersonal and systemic microaggressions toward transgender people: Implications for counseling. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling, 6*(1), 55–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/15538605.2012.648583

Nolte, J. (2000). Re-experiencing life: Re-aligning art with therapy and education. In J. O'Toole & M. Lepp (Eds.), *Drama for life: Stories of adult learning and empowerment* (pp. 77–84). Playlab Press.

North American Drama Therapy Association. (2017). What is drama therapy? http://www.nadta.org/

Olweus, D. (2011). Bullying at school and later criminality: Findings from three Swedish community samples of males. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health, 21*(2), 151–156. https://doi.org/10.1002/cbm.806

Olweus, D. & Limber, S. P. (2010). Bullying in school: Evaluation and dissemination of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 80*(1), 124–134. https://doi.org10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01015.x

Onions, C. (Ed.). (1996). Drama. In C. Onions (Ed.). *Oxford dictionary of English etymology* (p. 288). Oxford University Press.

Onions, C. (Ed.). (1996). Ethnos. In C. Onions (Ed.). *Oxford dictionary of English etymology* (p. 329). Oxford University Press.

O'Shaughnessy, M., Russell, S., Heck, K., Calhoun, C., & Laub, C. (2004). *Safe place to learn:*

Consequences of harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender non-conformity and steps for making schools safer. California Safe Schools Coalition & 4-H Center for Youth Development. http://www.casafeschools.org/SafePlacetoLearnLow.pdf

O'Toole, J. (2006). *Doing drama research: Stepping into enquiry in drama, theatre and education.* Drama Australia.

O'Toole J., Burton, B., & Plunkett, A. (2005). *Cooling conflict: A new approach to managing bullying conflict in schools.* Pearson Education.

Ouchi, M. (2014). *The bully project.* Concrete Theatre. https://www.concretetheatre.ca/productions/the-bully-project-2/

Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. Jossey-Bass.

Parsons, L. (2005). *Bullied teacher, bullied student: How to recognize the bullying culture in your school and what to do about it.* Pembroke.

Perez, A. (2005). Internalized oppression: How it affects members of the LGBT community. *The Diversity Factor, 13*(1), 25–29.

Pinar, W. (1998a). Understanding curriculum as gender text. In W. Pinar, W. Reynolds, P. Slattery, & P. Taubman (Eds.), *Understanding curriculum*: *An introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses* (pp. 358–403). Peter Lang.

Pinar, W. (Ed.). (1998b). *Queer theory in education*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Pinar, W. (2003). Queer theory in education. *Journal of Homosexuality, 45*(2–4), 357–360, https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v45n02_21

Powell, A. (2016). Embodied multicultural assessment: An interdisciplinary training model.

Drama Therapy Review, 2(1), 111–122. https://doi.org/10.1386/dtr.2.1.111_1

Prentki, T. & Selman, J. (2000). *Popular theatre in political culture: Britain and Canada in focus*. Intellect Books.

Quinlivan, K. & Town, S. (1999). Queer pedagogy, educational practice and lesbian and gay youth. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *12*(5), 509–524. https://doi.org/10.1080/095183999235926

Rahman, M. (2010). Queer as intersectionality: Theorizing gay Muslim identities. *Sociology, 44*(5), 944–961. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038510375733

Richardson, L. (1993). Poetics, dramatics, and transgressive validity: The case of the skipped line. *The Sociological Quarterly, 34*(4), 695–710. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1993.tb00113.x

Richardson, L. (1994). Nine poems: Marriage and the family. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 23*(1), 3–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124194023001001

Rincón-Gallardo, S. (2019). *Liberating learning: Educational change as social movement.* Routledge.

Rigby, K. (1996). *Bullying in schools – and what to do about it.* Australian Council for Educational Research.

Rivers, I., & Cowie, H. (2006). Bullying and homophobia in UK schools: A perspective on factors affecting resilience and recovery. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education, 3*(4), 11–43. http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/2752

Rivers, I. (2011). *Homophobic bullying: Research and theoretical perspectives.* Oxford University Press.

Roberts Jr., W. B. (2006). *Bullying from both sides: Strategic interventions for working with*

bullies and victims. Corwin Press.

Rooke, A. (2010). Queer in the field: On emotions, temporality and performativity in ethnography. In K. Browne, & C. Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 25–39). Ashgate.

Rossiter, K., Kontos. P., Colantonio, A., Gilbert, J., Gray, J., & Keightley, M. (2008). Staging data: Theatre as a tool for analysis and knowledge transfer in health research. *Social Science & Medicine*, *66*, 130–146.

Ryan C., Huebner, D., Diaz, R. M. & Sanchez, J. (2009). Family rejection as a predictor of negative health outcomes in white and Latino lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults. *Pediatrics, 123*(1), 346–352. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2007-3524

Ryan C, Patraw, J., & Bednar, M. (2013). Discussing princess boys and pregnant men: Teaching about gender diversity and transgender experiences within an elementary school curriculum. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 10*(1–2), 83–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2012.718540

Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, S.A. Bill 202, Third Session, 28th Legislature, 63 Elizabeth II, (2014). https://docs.assembly.ab.ca/LADDAR_files/docs/bills/bill/legislature_28/session_3/20141117_bill-202.pdf

Salas, J. (2009). Playback theatre: A frame for healing. In R. Emunah & D. R. Johnson (Eds.), *Current approaches in drama therapy* (2nd ed., pp. 445–460). C. C. Thomas.

Saldaña, J. (Ed.) (2005). *Ethnodrama: An anthology of reality theatre*. Altamira Press.

Saldaña, J. (2011). *Ethnotheatre: Research from page to stage*. Left Coast Press.

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Saldaña, J. (2014). *A selected annotated bibliography of titles in ethnodrama, ethnotheatre, and arts-based research.* Unpublished manuscript. Arizona State University.

Saldaña, J. (2015). *Thinking qualitatively: Methods of mind.* Sage.

Saldaña, J. Finley, S. & Finley, M. (2005). Street rat. In J. Saldaña (Ed.), *Ethnodrama: An anthology of reality theatre* (pp. 139–179). AltaMira Press.

Salverson, J. (1996). Performing emergency: Witnessing, popular theatre, and the lie of the literal. *Theatre Topics 6*(2), 181–191. https://doi.org/10.1353/tt.1997.0012

Sawyc, E., Poon, C., Wang, N., Homma, Y., Smith, A., & the McCreary Centre Society. (2007). *Not yet equal: The health of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth in BC*. McCreary Centre Society.

Scheff, T. J. (1979). *Catharsis in healing, ritual, and drama.* University of California Press.

Schneider, M., & Owens, R. (2000). Concerns for lesbian, gay, and bisexual kids: The benefits of all children. *Education and Urban Society, 32*, 349–367.

Sedgwick, E. K. (1993). *Tendencies*. Duke University Press.

Selman, J. & Heather, J. (2015). *Theatre, teens, sex ed: Are we there yet?* The University of Alberta Press.

Serano, J. (2016). *Outspoken: A decade of transgender activism and trans feminism.* Switch Hitter Press.

Shakespeare, W. (1994). *Romeo and Juliet.* NTC. (Original work published 1597)

Shelton, L. (2019). *The Bronfenbrenner primer: A guide to develecology*. Routledge.

Short, D (2017). *Am I safe here: LGBTQ teens and bullying in schools.* On Point Press / UBC Press.

Smith, L. C., Shin, R. O., & Officer, L. M. (2012). Moving counselling forward on LGB and

transgender issues. *The Counselling Psychologist, 40*(3), 385–408. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000011403165

Smith, P. & Ananiadou, K. (2003). The nature of school bullying and the effectiveness of school-based interventions. *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies*, *5*(2), 189–209.

Statistics Canada. (2008). Leading causes of death in Canada: Table 1-3 ten leading causes of death by selected age groups, by sex, Canada, 15 to 24. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/84-215-x/2011001/tbl/t006-eng.htm

Stein, A. & Plummer, K. (1994). I can't even think straight: Queer theory and the missing sexual revolution in sociology. *Sociological Theory, 12*(2), 178–187. https://doi.org/10.2307/201863

Sternberg, P. & Garcia, A. (2000). *Sociodrama: Who's in your shoes* (2nd ed.). Praeger Publishers.

Stevenson, L. & Deasy, R. (2005). *Third space: When learning matters*. Arts Education Partnership.

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation.* Wiley.

Sullivan, K., Cleary, M., & Sullivan, G. (2004). *Bullying in secondary schools: What it looks like and how to manage it.* Paul Chapman.

Sullivan, N. (2003). *A critical introduction to queer theory.* New York University Press.

Supreme Court Judgements. (1998). *Vriend v. Alberta*, 1 S.C.R. 493, 1998 *SCC 25285*. https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1607/index.do

Taylor, Y. (2010). The 'outness' of queer: Class and sexual intersections. In K. Browne, & C.

Nash (Eds.), *Queer methods and methodologies: Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 69–84). Ashgate.

Taylor, C., Peter, T., McMinn, T. L., Schachter, K., Beldom, S., Ferry, A., Gross, Z., & Paquin, S. (2011). *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools. Final report.* Egale Canada Human Rights Trust. https://egale.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2011/05/EgaleFinalReport-web.pdf

Taylor, C., Peter, T., Campbell, C., Meyer, E., Ristock, J., & Short, D. (2015). *The every teacher project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada's K-12 schools: Final report.* Manitoba Teachers' Society. https://egale.ca/every-teacher-project/

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2005). *Gay straight alliances.* https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity-Equity-and-Human-Rights/Sexual%20Orientation/Gay-Straight%20Student%20Alliances/Pages/Index.aspx

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2016). *PRISM: Toolkit for safe and caring discussions about sexual and gender minorities for elementary students.* (Original work published 2014) https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/For%20Members/ProfessionalDevelopment/Diversity-Equity-and-Human-Rights/PD-80-15cPrismToolkitBooklet_Web.pdf

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2017). *PRISM: Toolkit for safe and caring discussions about sexual and gender minorities for secondary students.* (Original work published 2016)

https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/PD-80-15e%20PRISM.pdf

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2018a). *Code of professional conduct.* https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Teachers-as-Professionals/IM-4E%20Code%20of%20Professional%20Conduct.pdf

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2018b). *Declaration of rights and responsibilities for teachers.* https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Teachers-as-Professionals/IM-5E%20Declaration%20of%20Rights.pdf

The Alberta Teachers' Association. (2019). *PRISM FAQ: More than comrades, purple unicorns and drag queens.* https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity-Equity-and-Human-Rights/Sexual%20Orientation/Pages/Frequently-Asked-Questions-about-PRISM-Secondary-Toolkit.aspx

Tremblay, M. (1991). *Hosanna.* (J. Van Burek & B. Glassco, Trans.). Talonbooks. (Original work published 1942)

Turner, V. & Bruner, E. (1986). *The Anthropology of experience*. University of Illinois Press.

Warwick, I., Chase, E., & Aggleton, P. (2004). *Homophobia, sexual orientation and schools: A review and implications for action*. Department for Education and Skills. https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402122254/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR594MIG1187.pdf

Wells, K. (2012). Generation queer: Sexual and gender minority youth and Canadian schools. *Education Canada, 48*(1), 18-23.

https://www.edcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/EdCan-2008-v48-n1-Wells.pdf

Whitted, K. S. & Dupper, D. R. (2005). Best practices for preventing or reducing bullying in schools. *Children and Schools, 27*(3), 167–175. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/27.3.167

Wilde, S. (2013). *Care in education: Teaching with understanding and compassion.* Routledge.

Willet, J. (1967). *The theatre of Bertolt Brecht: A study from eight aspects* (3rd ed., revised). Methuen.

Zins, J. E., Elias, M. J. & Maher, C. A. (2007) *Bullying, victimization, and peer harassment: A handbook of prevention and intervention*. Haworth Press.

Appendix 1

INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Queering High School: An Ethnodrama on Youth Experiences of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Harassment and Bullying

Research Investigator:
Patrick Tomczyk
551 Education South
1210 - 87 Avenue
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
tomczyk@ualberta.ca

Supervisor:
Dr. Diane Conrad
442 Education South
1210 - 87 Avenue
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
diane.conrad@ualberta.ca
(780) 492-5870

Background

The purposes of this letter and form are to provide you, as a possible participant, information that may affect your decision whether to participate in this research and play production project, and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the project.

I, Patrick Tomczyk, a PhD student from the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta, am inviting you, as one of 5-10 LGBTQ youth, to participate in a research project that includes creating a theatrical script and a performed stage production. The results of this research will be used in support of my PhD thesis.

The research questions are: *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta High Schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic (HBTP) harassment and bullying? How can Queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

Purpose

The purpose of my research is to create an understanding of LGBTQ youths' experience(s) in High School as they relate to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment and bullying, and to dramatize the findings as a theatre production for an audience. Additionally, I will like to see if putting on play using "arts based research" is effective in addressing some of the issues that you may have experienced in high school. The goal of the research is to help schools become safer and more inclusive.

Study Procedures

Part 1 – Interviews & Script

This research process will begin by having you participate in one 30-60 minute individual or small group interview, where you will be asked a series of questions about your experiences in High School related to homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic harassment and bullying. A follow up individual or small group meeting of 30-60 minutes will be scheduled to discuss the

themes that emerged from all the interviews where you will be a part of the validation process to ensure that the information gathered from the interviews is correct. A third meeting of 1-3 hours will then take place with all participants who choose to be involved so that we can workshop a script for a play. Thereafter, once a working draft script has been written you will be invited to comment on the script and once again be a part of the 30-60 minute validation process to ensure that the script remains true and authentic to the themes that have emerged in the prior meetings.

Part 2 – Play Rehearsal
Should you choose to also be an actor in the play, you will be invited to rehearse and workshop the play. The number of rehearsals and the time requirement will depend on the final draft of the script and this will be negotiated with everyone interested in participating at the end of part 1. I imagine it will involve 3-4 hour sessions, over a couple of weekends to rehearse the play.

Part 3 - Performance
Finally, you will be invited (if you so choose) to perform the play 3 times. The first time will be to a small audience of stake holders, like my Supervisory Committee; the second performance will be to an invited audience, like your friends and family, other education researchers and anyone with a vested interest in this research. Lastly, the third performance will be to a public audience, which can be invited through the GSA Network, Camp fYrefly, the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies & Services, etc.

Benefits
- You will not benefit directly from being in this study except that you will get to share your story and this may impact how we think about LGBTQ youth and their experiences in High School.
- I hope that the information I get from doing this study will help us better understand how LGBTQ are resilient in the face of adversity and how we can make schools safer and more inclusive.
- There are no costs involved in doing the research, and you will not be paid to participate in this research. On days where we rehearse for more than 3 hours snacks and or lunch will be provided at no cost to you.

Risk
There are no known major risks from taking part in this project, but in any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

You will be asked to share some difficult moments where you experienced homophobic, biphobic, and/or transphobic harassment and bullying. In some cases, it is possible that these memories may become upsetting and it may be difficult to discuss. Through a partnership with the University of Alberta's Counselling and Clinical Services, the Family Resilience Project offers free short-term counselling to sexual and gender minority (LGBTQ) children, youth, and families, participants and audience members that require counselling and clinical services will be asked to call 780-492-5205 and ask for the "Family Resilience Project" to make an appointment. The Family Resilience Project is supported by the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies, U of A Health and Wellness Services, City of Edmonton, United Way, and the Ministry of Human Services.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this project is completely voluntary. It is OK for you to say "no." Even if you say "yes" now, you are free to say "no" later, or withdraw from the project at any time. You may also choose which parts of the project to participate in, if you do not want to participate in all of them. If you choose to withdraw, all you have to do is let me know via email, telephone or in person. If you withdraw and wish that your data be withdrawn as well, your data may be withdrawn up to the point where the final ethnodrama script is written. Thereafter, every attempt will be made to remove or fictionalize their data, however to maintain the integrity of the work some elements may need to remain.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

- All of your personal information obtained in this project is strictly confidential, unless you approve of it being made public – this includes any photographs that are taken at the final public performance. The results of this research and its scripted performance may be used in reports, presentation, and publications, but the researcher/playwright will not identify you by your actual name and any identifying information will be removed to protect your identity. In order to maintain confidentiality of your records, I will use aliases to maintain the confidentiality of all participants. All the records will be saved on a password protected encrypted hard drive, that I am the only person that has access to. If you wish to receive a copy of the final script you may do so upon requesting it from me. A final copy of the thesis will be made available through the University of Alberta. I will ask for your permission before taking any photos and I will ask for your permission to include these photos in my final thesis.
- The only exception to this promise of confidentiality is that I am legally obligated to report evidence of child abuse or neglect.
- There is a possibility that I may use the data from this study, in future unspecified research projects. I may use the data I get from this study in future research, but if I do this it will have to be approved by a Research Ethics Board at that time.
- Should you choose to be recognized for your contributions you may opt to have your name (partial, full, or alias) listed in the script for credit.
- Members participating in a group interview, the rehearsals and performance, will be made aware that they have a responsibility to respect the confidentiality of other participants and vice versa. We will come up with a working contract together as a group to establish norms and rules in order to create a safe and respectful space. Please see the attached draft of this working contract.

Further Information

- If you have any further questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.
  Patrick Tomczyk
  tomczyk@ualberta.ca

- The plan for this study has been reviewed by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the researchers.

Consent Statement

I have read this form and the research study, Queering High School: An Ethnodrama on Youth Experiences of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Harassment and Bullying by graduate student researcher, Patrick Tomczyk, has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

You may choose to use your name (full or partial) or an alias if you would like to be recognized as contributing to this ethnodrama. You may be credited as participant-actor and/or a participant-co-author. You may change your mind whether you want to be recognized and how you want to be credited right up until the final script is written. Please indicate if you would like to recognized and the name you would like to use.

☐ Yes I would like to recognized for my contribution.
Please use the following name: _____

☐ No I do not wish to be recognized for my contribution, and wish to remain anonymous.

☐ I give permission for Patrick Tomczyk to take my photograph during the final public performance and use it in his thesis.

☐ I do not give permission for Patrick Tomczyk to take my photograph during the final public performance and use it in his thesis.

_____ _____
Participant's Name (printed) and Signature Date

_____ _____
Name (printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix 2

Post-Performance Consent & Questionnaire

Study Title: Queering High School: An Ethnodrama on Youth Experiences of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Harassment and Bullying

Purpose

The purpose of my research is to create an understanding of LGBTQ youths' experience(s) in High School as they relate to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment and bullying, and to dramatize the findings as a theatre production for an audience. Additionally, I will like to see if putting on play using "arts based research" is effective in addressing some of the issues youth may have experienced in high school. The goal of the research is to help schools become safer and more inclusive. The purpose of this post-performance questionnaire is to gather data to be able to answer the research questions for this study.

The research questions are: *What are the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth in Alberta High Schools related to homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic (HBTP) harassment and bullying? How can Queer ethnodrama serve as an effective tool to create more inclusive schools?*

Research Investigator:
Patrick Tomczyk
551 Education South
1210 - 87 Avenue
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
tomczyk@ualberta.ca

Supervisor:
Dr. Diane Conrad
442 Education South
1210 - 87 Avenue
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
diane.conrad@ualberta.ca
(780) 492-5870

Further Information

- If you have any further questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please be aware that by completing and submitting this questionnaire you are giving overt consent that your anonymous responses can be included as part of the doctoral research project: Queering High School: An Ethnodrama on Youth Experiences of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Harassment and Bullying, by researcher Patrick Tomczyk, University of Alberta, of which the play you have seen is an outcome.

1) Did you enjoy the play?

2) What did you like best about it?

3) What did you not like about it?

4) In what ways was it accurate?

5) In what ways was it inaccurate?

6) How do you think plays like this can make a meaningful change in schools and/or the community? How?

7) The director is greatly interested in your feelings and thoughts about this project? What would you like to say to him?

8) Did you learn something new form this play? If so, what did you learn?

9) Did your thoughts, attitudes, or beliefs change after seeing this play? How so?