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Just Yell Fire : A Collaborative Creation

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to document the research and process of the director of the collaborative creation Just Yell Fire. This production was written and workshopped at the University of Calgary. The workshop productions were presented at the Reeve Theatre from April 9 to April 12, 1997. Furthermore, this thesis attempts to record the experience of the collaborative creation from its conception through to its recommendations for future productions. Chapters One through Three were written prior to the rehearsal process, and Chapters Four through Six were written retroactively. Consequently, they are written in different verb tenses. The thesis continues with a brief historical overview of performance creation in Chapter One, an interpretive response to research conducted on domestic violence in Chapter Two, a project design in Chapter Three, and a personal response to the project in Chapters Four, Five, and Six.

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DEDICATION

For Mike Kirwin, who gave me confidence;
for Alan Filewod, who gave me direction;
for Douglas McCullough, who gave me inspiration;
and for David, Nova Lea, Roger, Carrie, Jennifer, Dave, Adam, Ryan, and
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CHAPTER ONE:
A REVIEW OF PERTINENT MATERIAL REGARDING PERFORMANCE
CREATION

“Working with the *don't knows* is perhaps
more important than
teaching the
knows”

Joseph Chaikin

New methods of performance creation¹ and the reinstatement of a political agenda to the stage have been major foci for Canadian theatres over the past decade. The development of performance creation is of particular concern regarding this thesis. It is necessary to limit this study to some specific cases which concern this project design, specifically performance creation. Augusto Boal and Joseph Chaikin² have developed varying methods which will be considered. Chapter One will briefly review major Canadian influences such as: Paul Thompson, George Luscombe, David Diamond, Catalyst Theatre, and Theatre Parminou.

An attempt to define collective performance creation is perhaps antithetical, in that the nature of collective creation redefines itself with each new production. What is important about the nature of collective creation is that it involves a collaborative effort in the creation of the *mis-en-scene*. It can be considered an, "autonomous method of theatre creation . . . a single process wherein the same artist(s) develop the work from initial conception to finished performance" (Shank 3). Particular agendas, methodologies, strategies, and structures relating to the collective are defined differently by all groups or persons

¹Performance creation is the exploration of new material in a workshop surrounding. It often involves collective collaboration, but is not limited to that. Its purpose is the creation of a new theatrical production.

²Augusto Boal is the creator of 'Forum Theatre'. His major works include The Theatre of the Oppressed, and Games for Actors and Non-Actors. Joseph Chaikin was the artistic director of the Open Theatre based in New York.

practicing this theatre style. The purpose of this chapter is to outline varying practices, to deconstruct them, and to extract information which aids in decisions made regarding the initial project design.

Augusto Boal's The Theatre of the Oppressed is an impressive work which has impacted performance creation greatly. Influenced by Brechtian and Marxist thought, this theatre manifesto outlines his agenda. According to Boal, theatre is the sum of all language. It is not only imperative that we (humanity) learn to speak this language, but that we view it as a tool for communication as well. He feels that the only thing separating man from animal is theatre, and that it was the first art form. What Boal is referring to is the *essence of theatre*. This can be understood in terms of observation and observational qualities - - how we look at things rather than what we look at. Boal's *essence of theatre* refers to our learned ability to observe. Man being conscious of his ability to observe shows his ability to distinguish between self and other. This duality or polarity is what Boal calls the *essence of theatre*. Out of this ideology, he concludes that theatre is mankind. He then distinguishes theatre from the stage, and in such a distinction, the stage represents a higher level of consciousness. This provides a plasticity of observation to the stage allowing freedom of movement and language. For Boal, the body is the most important theatrical tool. With the body, images can be created which allow for a new language, a higher understanding of human nature.

Schutzman suggests that, "the material life of the body is expressive of oppression because the body itself, its actions and gestures are determined by ideological relations" (Schutzman 129). A new level of consciousness is developed. Consciousness and learned observation create a language which Boal feels is more capable than that which is spoken. The Theatre of the Oppressed is Boal's attempt to create a system capable of reaching all people. It considers forms of external and internal oppression. This encompasses a social psychology of oppression; it originates from internal sources and manifests in the external. Boal posits that an oppressed group is incapable of determining some conditions of its existence. He rejects an Aristotelian system of purgatory by which:

the objective [is] to eliminate all that is not commonly accepted, including the revolution before it takes place . . . [it] is designed to bridle the individual, to adjust him to what preexists.

Boal 47

Boal hoped that the Theatre of the Oppressed would "stimulate the spectator to transform his society" and seek out a new Poetics.

From his ideological positions came Boal's notion of Forum Theatre, the purpose being that the spectator, "delegates no power to the character either to act or to think in his place; on the contrary, he himself assumes the protagonists' role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions, discusses plans for change - in short, trains himself for real action" (Boal 122). Boal's Forum Theatre is a

precise methodology whereby the following occurs: a target audience creates a scenario, the forum show is played once in its entirety, it is repeated and the spectators are invited to step into any action that seems unrealistic and suggest solutions facilitated by the Joker figure, the spectator interrupts the scenario by yelling “magic” at the unreal moments, and group discussion follows. The spectator becomes the primary focus of Forum Theatre which functions to discover dualistic thinking juxtaposed with the *self* and with the *other*. Philip Auslander suggests that:

The Boalian body never comes to rest
in a neutral state; rather the point
is for the [spectator] to be able to move
from one mask to another while retaining
a critical distance from all masks. The
[spectator] cannot exist outside ideology
and doesn't even attempt to, but can only
try on different ideological positioning
as they are inscribed on the body.

Schutzman 131

Therefore, while the *other* and or *self* is experimented upon, the spectator is exposed to various ideological structures as they exist within a subject. The spectator becomes the post-modern subject of the divided self. Boal's Forum Theatre creates an understanding of power structures within a protagonist-antagonist structure. This process treats the audience as a collective, which investigates and then defines collective solutions. The purpose of Forum Theatre is then to actively seek communities or persons in oppressive situations and to

investigate correctional methods for that target audience. It encourages revolutionary action.

Boal's Forum Theatre, while politically charged, posits some interesting theatre techniques regarding performance creation. He saw the theatre and the body as a tool to create powerful images. Boal's exercises and method of discovering images are key to the creation of theatre. His exercises target image creation. His book entitled Games for Actors and Non-Actors outlines exercises for image creation. Therefore, one can extrapolate various methods of creation simply by referring to Boal's idea of body as tool. Boal's emphasis on the essence of theatre (the first art form) raises a level of consciousness to the power of the image and the binary nature of his subject-object relationship. Boal integrated these ideas within a very specific political agenda. At this point, his work branches to a different theatrical style than the project design outlined in Chapter Three of this thesis. Boal creates a theatre which places the spectators in a dramatic role encouraging revolutionary action. This seems optimistic and rather presumptuous to assume the influential power that theatre has on its spectators. Just Yell Fire does not propose to change the social status of its audience and its participants. Rather, it proposes to create a performance which merits an observational quality while posing serious questions. Boal's work serves as a building block to create imagery for the project, not as a model of performance

style or of political agenda. His work is a springboard from which to jump, not the water in which to land.

Conversely, Joseph Chaikin of the Open Theatre dealt with performance creation from an experimental aesthetic approach. It is his belief that it ". . . was through improvisation that the performer shared with the playwright and the director the responsibility for the artistic conception" (Shank 49). His attempt to incorporate a writer into the collective creation was never fully satisfied. His company gives future directors some insightful methods of dealing with performance creation. It is important when attempting to describe Chaikin's work to avoid categorization. While most of his theatrical career was spent exploring the collective creation, he adamantly resisted any perceived set models or theatrical approaches. It was his intention to ". . . make images into theatre events, beginning simply with those which have meaning for myself and my collaborators" (Chaikin 3).

Contemporaries such as Nola Chilton, Mira Rostiva, Judith Malina, and Julian Beck provided a wide range of ideas which Chaikin could incorporate in the Open Theatre. Mira Rostiva introduced the idea of *invisible intentions* commingling to become visible, allowing Chaikin to develop thematic ideals. Malina's and Beck's freedoms from the assumptions of established theatres further stimulated Chaikin's notions of performance creation. Chilton's influence

gave him an alternative psychological perspective to that of the popular Stanislavskian theories at the time. Chaikin had trained extensively in method acting techniques only to reject them as his professional development continued. He felt that many actors became inarticulate if the vocabulary of the Stanislavskian technique was not completely mastered; he further argued that focusing on sensory attention, emotional recall, (and other highly concentrated method acting techniques) found the actor preparing to play alone, making the ensemble experience impossible. Moreover, the scoring of the text as suggested by Stanislavski encourages a logical analysis of the script. It was feared that a Stanislavskian analysis would create a fixed approach to the text due to such rigid analysis. Chaikin's interest in the ensemble originates from the failures of verbal communication. He focused on a physical expression of ideas. Once this was established, words would follow. Like many theatres in the late 1960's, the Open Theatre sought a new method of communication, a means of creating imagery without vocabulary.

Chaikin's process dealt primarily in theatrical training. The product was not as important as the process. He limited public viewing of the company's work, and often refused to take credit for his role within the company. In 1972 when the Open Theatre disbanded, it is speculated that this was primarily because Chaikin no longer wanted the responsibility or credit of leading the

company. He felt that there are two main values in working collaboratively: "[one] is the affirming discovery of finding deep common references . . . the second value is the discovery of the astonishing power there is in the performance of an actor who is actively playing out an image which he himself introduced" (Chaikin 64). Chaikin believes that ensemble work also has two principles: the first being empathy by which one actor fuses with the other creating a synthesized performance where the focus of attention becomes unclear, the second being rhythm when the attention of the ensemble is paid to the rhythms created within its structure. According to C.D. Innes:

He [Chaikin] has always focused on theatre's *liveness*, the special power of the present actor. He has viewed the stage as a *forum* for investigating *life* questions rather than abstract, aesthetic concepts, a place to find new languages to speak the nameless dimensions of experience.

Innes 38

Through employing several playwrights on his projects, Chaikin managed to remain faithful to his collaborative techniques by viewing the playwright as a polishing tool for the actor's words. In rehearsals, Chaikin often relied heavily on various exercises and their development. He refused to record any of these exercises for fear that they would become theory. His intuitive abilities allowed the exercises to take on new structures and pathways. Chaikin's feeling that these were exclusive to the project at hand, and that a repetition of a process from

project to project was inefficient and even inadequate, concurs with the intentions of this thesis. In his *Notes on Forming Exercises*, Chaikin states that the "... exercise will surely be different from what I first thought it might be, because what happens is always different from what's planned. Between me and the actors [*sic*] that which has been transformed from idea into action becomes the meeting place" (Chaikin 133). Exercises lead to the creation of material. The editing occurred outside the workshops. Chaikin provided consistency through the process; Open Theatre projects were not merely the amalgamation of the actors' workshop experiences. His objective in ensemble creation was to generate theatre, not communal Utopia.

Like Augusto Boal, Joseph Chaikin's exploration of performance creation merits some consideration in regard to the project at hand. His rejection of a singular process applying to all performance creation is admirable. Chaikin's suggestion that an individual, intuitive approach fosters collaborative creation rejects a defined process which stimulates (not stunts) the growth required for performance creation. For Chaikin, the common denominator for his projects is image creation, based upon a renewed vocabulary and rejuvenated workshops. His process therefore has organic qualities by which consistency is found in inconsistency. Supporting this thesis approach, his process of questioning is imperative to his collaborative creation. Various exercises workshopped to

exhaustion conjure powerful images, creating an organic quality of performance. Chaikin further supports this method as an art form rather than a psychological purging of the self. Again this concurs with the interest of this thesis. Emphasis should not be placed solely upon the creation of a new theatre, but upon the creation of a coherent piece. The Open Theatre found difficulties with this process as it seemed to foster a democratic process, yet was seemingly dictatorial in reality.

Much of Joseph Chaikin's work had a bias - - a behavioral one. His focus was not necessarily the idea explored, but the responses of the company to that idea. Collaborative creation lends itself to that particular bias. This project will attempt to avoid such biases by focusing on the topic, not the method of creation. It will artistically, rather than communally, explore domestic violence focusing on creation, not theoretical ideals. Joseph Chaikin's commitment to the intimacy of theatre and his pursuit of artistic exploration exemplifies many objectives of this project. After being exposed to a Chinese theatre group, Chaikin commented that "what [he] loved about it was the spareness, was the way in which a single image would resonate with ten thoughts and other images rather than playing out nine" (Innes 93). His pursuit of selective (and often loaded) imagery is commendable, and a shared pursuit of this project.

Chaikin and Boal's quest for visual images focuses on the primary form of

theatre: the use of images. By rejecting the traditional use of language, they stumbled upon performance creation. Boal's rigid, instructive approach combined with Chaikin's equally rigid, explorative techniques, gives this thesis some particularly useful insights. Both directors are concerned with exploring improvisational skills of performance creation, in that the actor and director fill the role of writer. They have enjoyed world recognition in their field, and have become international 'father figures' of the collaborative efforts of theatre practitioners.

Considering the collective creation as defined in Canada is also important. The exposure that Canadians have had to this process will aid in understanding and anticipating an audience response to this piece.

Jim Garrard and Paul Thompson have been credited with Theatre Passe Muraille's development of the English-Canadian collective. According to Robert Wallace, "the Passe Muraille collective creation, rather than becoming predictably stylized, changes according to the interests and energies of its various creators. As a result, the shows continue to attract both old and new patrons" (Wallace 79). Thompson's collective creation solves two problems: it creates a cultural identity which encompasses regionalism, and it allows actor participation in the creation of theatre. He felt that the collective drew the most creativity from the actor while decentralizing textual importance. Thompson stated that "the

meaning of the play is a result rather than the cause of the arrangement of material" (Filewod 28). This philosophy is best exemplified in Passe Muraille's production of The Farm Show. Here, a group of actors lived in a farm community, and drew on their experiences to create a theatrical production. Improvisation was the text source which led to a performance centered piece. The Farm Show was created to bring a popularist perspective to Canadian drama where regionalism was important. A collective ideology was established whereby theatre was created for the community, and reflective of that community, in an attempt to stimulate social change. The creation of a community statement became a primary motivation in the development of Thompson's artistic vision.

Thompson's work with collective creation captures the idealism of the grass roots theatre in Canada during the 1970's. His other works continued to expose Canadian culture to his audiences, and the collective creation proved to be a wonderful method of creating historical, community oriented pieces. His use of actors as writers and performers within a circular structure (as opposed to a hierarchical one) exemplifies the intent of the structure of this thesis. Thompson successfully managed to act as an eye for the productions while stimulating the creative process. His process of creation varied with each production and was eventually streamlined to the creation of a political and national agenda - - our cultural identity. Again theatre became the means of political expression which

they explored through collective imagery, as opposed to a textually based style, something which is secondary to the nature of this project. Thompson's actor-based philosophy is one which has some validity to the project at hand.

In the past two decades several Canadian companies have formed who deal solely with collective creation. All have particular agendas and target audiences which make performance creation idealistic, opposing a traditional textually based approach. David Diamond's Power Plays, in association with Headlines Theatre in Vancouver, exemplifies the vast number of new genres of theatres across the country in direct response to Augusto Boal's work. Edmonton's Catalyst Theatre developed a process coined "interventionalist theatre" where, by definition, "it can only be accounted a success if it contributes to a change in the situation it analyses" (Filewod 144). The summer 1988 edition of Canadian Theatre Review provides another new form of theatre called "the theatre of involvement" which is defined as:

theatre that has political aims is in the widest sense,
a theatre of involvement that has formal purposes
which are its own [The theatre of involvement's role is]
neither to serve politics nor any political line but instead
to enrich political thought by making it abandon its binary
logic and letting it catch a glimpse of other alternatives from
which it can spring the taking on of responsibility.

Spry 29

This pedagogy of the theatre of involvement has obvious Boalian influences as well. While Theatre Parminou rejects the binary nature of Boalian thought, it

seeks revolutionary action from its spectators in its objective to seek alternative methods of political thinking.

Popular theatre is another form of political theatre in Canada, and while crossing the border between English Canada and French Canada fluently, the works of Boal have also influenced it. According to the Women's Circle theatre group, ". . . popular theatre methods can enable groups to find new ways of voicing and analyzing issues and identifying and testing action" (Women's Circle 7). Here, the common denominator between these groups is a link between political action and performance creation. As stated earlier, the process of performance creation is implied rather than defined. These companies stated a particular focus and used performance creation as a means to explore that focus. The role of writer is plural instead of singular, encompassing a wider range of ideas and expression. A post-modern agenda dominates this theatre form. Diversity and a shifting identity are its only definable attributes. It suggests more questions than answers; it is exploratory in nature.

A theatre entrenched in a political ideology appears to be a prerequisite to artistic success in the present decade. Social consciousness and political awareness have given birth to our language and ideological structures. The needs to correct, rectify, revolt, stimulate, and other artistic mandates within the theatre industry have become commonplace. This project does not seek concrete methods ,

of exploration, nor does it seek to conform to any one process. The ideas of the individuals mentioned in this Chapter contribute to the project's development. Their work embodies particular philosophies and ideologies inherent to this venture, but not wholly mandatory. It is my hope that the production will explore contrasting perspectives, challenge the participants to think openly and creatively, and stimulate the validity of questioning all.

CHAPTER 2:

RESEARCHING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE RIPPLE EFFECT

“The problem of interpersonal violence
is a pervasive thread
in the tapestry of
our culture.”

E. Jane Ursel

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how domestic violence is classified and defined by selected published scholars. The reference material in Chapter Two consists of a selection of books written on the subject. Purposefully, it does not study other formats of research. Interviews, articles, and other mediums have been excluded because they will be considered during script development. Material covered is recommended reading suggested by several sociologists and psychologists who deal with this topic. The author's reflections do not presume to be unbiased. This is an interpretive response to the information covered. It provides a starting point for the rehearsal process, and summarizes issues requiring additional research.

Defining terms concerning domestic violence is a difficult task. This topic has an eclectic nature which results in no clear, concise, and well-defined terms. Jane Kelly states that, "What counts as violence that a society notices and condemns varies according to the period of history, and the size, scale, and structure of a society" (Kelley 3). The conditional existence of the problem is part of the problem itself.

In all cases of domestic violence, abuse occurs. How that abuse is defined can vary. Dr. Mic Hunter offers that:

When a person uses tricks, power, threats, or violence to have sexual contact with another adult, it is called rape or sexual assault. When the victimized person is a child, people often use the phrase child molesting.

When a child is molested by a relative, it is called incest.
Hunter 3

What is interesting about his approach is his attempt to define and categorize abuse. In this struggle for accuracy, the scope of abuse becomes narrow and fixed. Many problems regarding research on domestic violence can be found in semiotic constructions. This can be attributed to classification and an acceptance or rejection of the circumstances of that research.

In choosing to study domestic violence, I have narrowed my study to abuse between persons who are intimately familiar with each other. Incest, sexual assault, physical abuse, and psychological abuse are all traumas³ to which will be referred in Chapter Two. Although each traumatic incident has individual characteristics, the similarity of traumatic experiences is alarming. Human nature responds to all forms of trauma in a similar manner despite the details of that trauma. One can trace similar reactions between persons involved in a car accident and persons involved in domestic violence. How that person is treated following a trauma, regardless of type, is indicative of their response.

Domestic violence has been widely studied and publicized since the late 1960's. The feminist revolution prompted interest where "wife battering" became a primary concern. Since then, North American culture has become increasingly

³Trauma will be defined as "an injury (physical or emotional) which has an emotional impact with lasting psychological effects."

interested in cases of domestic violence, seeking their identification and conclusion. The past three decades have seen explanatory terms created and accepted. Considering them before exploring the nature of domestic violence is important. The terms identified will primarily concern the conventionally defined *victim*. Disassociation, lack of recognition, pseudoforgiveness, minimization, the accommodation syndrome, and learned helplessness are expressions that will be given consideration.

“Disassociation” defines one type of defense mechanism commonly linked with cases of domestic violence. It is a response which involves the separation of the *victim* from current reality. Often a person will disassociate themselves from an experience entirely, placing themselves in a mentally idyllic state. Disassociation also involves the denial of trauma. Here, the *victim* denies that the abuse is happening. Disassociation perpetuates the belief that the trauma is not occurring during the abuse. Hunter suggests that, “in order to cope while the abuse is taking place, many victimized persons will disassociate” (Hunter 66). Disassociation, therefore, is a coping technique commonly found in instances of abuse. Continual reference in a variety of sources to this term shows the acceptance of the term as a recognizable trait of domestic violence. The Everstines suggest that disassociation within the *victim* occurs when “. . . the trauma victim has blocked an original thought because the psyche could not have

tolerated the memory" (Everstine 78). The Everstines' suggestion that disassociation is not necessarily a deliberate, but a natural defense, is consistent with ideologies outlined in their book, The Trauma Response, which postulates that 'traumatic response' is a natural occurrence in humans; it is not a psychological disease but a healing process. They further suggest that defense mechanisms exist to heal the *victim*. When the defense mechanism is in continual use, it amalgamates with the *victim*, causing psychological problems. The identification of the term disassociation de-mystifies this attribute of persons involved in domestic violence. This then provides a platform for further discussion. If we understand our defenses, we can begin to understand ourselves and others.

"In many cases of trauma, the victim may not define the event as traumatic. This is most likely to occur when the event was one of intra familial violence" (Everstine 44). The Everstines, like Hunter, spend some time discussing the term "lack of recognition". This phenomenon is not restricted to the *victim*. It is part of the conspiracy of silence⁴ surrounding domestic violence. The difference between disassociation and lack of recognition is that one is a response, and the other is a cultural belief. Lack of recognition is often merely

⁴The "conspiracy of silence" refers to the phenomenon where participants in domestic violence remain silent about the abuse for fear that speaking out encourages its continuation.

lack of education. How can a person identify something as a problem when that problem has never been recognized or taught? Commonly, many persons involved in sexual abuse had ". . . very little knowledge of normal sexual behavior They typically grew up in families where discussion of sex was forbidden" (Walker 118). Here, Walker is referring to only female victims of sexual abuse. It is my feeling that this not only applies to the *victim*, but to the perpetrator and the potential observer heretofore defined as the *other*, in cases of abuse. Lack of recognition is not an excuse for domestic violence; it is an identification of a problem deeply rooted in cases of domestic violence. Because the *victim* is continually exposed to traumatic events making them seem normal, the problem is the inability to recognize types of abuse.

In most cases of domestic violence, forms of bargaining occur to maintain silence and the protection of privacy. This involves extreme cases of denial and abnormal desires for normalcy within the family structure. "Pseudoforgiveness" is a common survival technique used in such cases. Here, a person ". . . attempts to move from denial straight into forgiveness without experiencing any of the emotions associated with abuse" (Hunter 103). Again, there is a tendency to correlate this characteristic solely with the *victim* of the abuse. I resist that temptation, and believe that pseudoforgiveness is common of all persons involved in domestic violence. I will further posit that it is a part of the cycle of abuse;

pseudoforgiveness encourages denial of emotion. It creates a false resolution that can be only temporary, thereby increasing tension rather than diffusing it.

An extension of pseudoforgiveness is “minimization”. Minimization involves the sharing of the abuse verbally while simultaneously denying aspects of that abuse. Albert Roberts suggests that the minimization effect happen when “. . . the abused report less occurrences than real” (Roberts 9). This means that the *victim* dismisses the significance of the trauma. Again, several scholars have commonly referred to this term dealing with various forms of domestic violence. It is a victim-centred term and is considered a common denominator. Examples of the frequency that the term is used are: “Some survivors minimize the abuse” (Maltz 44) and “. . . battered women tend to minimize [abuse] with the knowledge that the batterer is capable of doing much more” (Walker 57). Again, it is disconcerting that minimization is restricted solely to the *victim* and when found within the *other* is ignored or caused to seem insignificant. Minimization is a frightening reality of domestic violence and can only be successful when left unquestioned by all parties.

Many commonly defined terms discussed thus far have suggested the cyclical nature of abuse. Each typifies a response to abuse which may cultivate its continuation. “Accommodation syndrome” is perhaps the most poignant of those terms. It is a title which acknowledges and attempts to explain the abusive

cycle. Instances of accommodation syndrome occur when the *victim* becomes accustomed to the abuse and no longer acknowledges that it is taking place. It is when the *victim* assumes that abuse is normal.

Closely related to accommodation syndrome is the theory of "learned helplessness". Roberts suggests that:

The idea that violence is learned behavior has become a truism in the family Children who observe domestic violence may learn . . . that violence is the only means of conflict resolution: this may be the most pernicious effect.

Roberts 156

Learned helplessness is essentially dependent on belief systems. The degree to which a person believes they have control is correlated with the degree in which learned helplessness affects them. Promotion of beliefs concerning outcome control determines if learned helplessness is an appropriate response. For example, "if the person does have control over response outcome variables but believes he or she doesn't, the person responds with learned helplessness" (Walker 47). Control is irrelevant; belief in the power to control is what determines this behavior. It is a learned behavior because it is a chosen response not an instinctual one. This attribute is relative; the degree to which it is present depends on the individual development of the personality involved. The common factor of learned helplessness is the belief in helplessness, not the actuality of it.

These traits of domestic violence have primarily been coined for the *victim*. However, each term is also significant in identifying characteristics of the *other* not readily acknowledged in the studied sources. Disassociation, pseudoforgiveness, minimization, lack of recognition, accommodation syndrome, and learned helplessness contribute to an understanding of other perspectives. This was not given significant attention in any of the source materials studied. In fact, very little precedence was given to the symbiotic nature of domestic violence. The predominant concern of the sources studied focuses on the *victim* and recovery from abuse. While this is a helpful starting point in addressing domestic violence, it fails to acknowledge all aspects of it. Domestic violence is not a strictly definable problem, and should not be treated as such.

A derogatory context is commonly employed on the rare occasion that the *other* is considered. "Victim reward is a common *ploy* used by *offenders*" (Maltz 4). The identification of this term by Maltz is important. The use of "offender" places the *other* in a guilty or a negative light. A method used by this "offender" is a "ploy". This sentence is accusatory. While the identification of this behavior is important, the semiotic structure of the sentence perpetuates what it is trying to stop. It shows a lack of recognition that the *other* (Maltz' "offender") is in equal danger of continuing the cycle of abuse. The "victim reward system" is a psychological process (not a ploy) used frequently by the *other* (not offender)

in some abuse situations. Essentially it refers to a period of remorse experienced by the *other*. This period is commonly identified as one of the stages following an abusive situation. This behavior is very difficult to control, as it positively reinforces the continuation of a cycle of abuse. Another closely related term is "intermittent reinforcement". A victim reward system has motivated this behavior. It describes a similar stage whereby it is ". . . most difficult to stop behavior that has been intermittently reinforced, especially on a random and variable schedule" (Walker 109). Both terms seem inadequate in describing this behavior. They are emotionally charged and accusatory. Proper identification of a problem may help to solve it. Accusation can only allow it to grow.

Attempting to break the lack of recognition patterns in both the *victim* and the *other*, there have been many efforts made to describe symptoms of an abusive situation. Roberts' identification of certain causal links to abuse are as follows:

- *high levels of stress
- *isolation from personal and social support systems
- *high levels of anger and rage
- *learned helplessness
- *loss of control
- *depression, guilt
- *financial pressures
- *unrealistic expectations of the marital partner and children
- *heavy reliance on corporeal [*sic*] punishment and physical forms of discipline
- *being reared in a violent family
- *having more than one child
- *one partner handling all major family decisions

Roberts 1-2

This list represents one of many. All are similar in content and purpose. The lists attempt to examine the “whats” of domestic violence. Much like the terms studied earlier, lists are a helpful tool in identification. However, the key to solving this problem do not lie in such quantitative methods. Hunter suggests that “. . . it is important to focus on the 'reason' for the behavior rather than on the behavior itself: on the 'why' rather than the 'what' " (Hunter 5). Efforts in Calgary have been made to do exactly that. The Calgary Institute for the Humanities recently held a seminar series which was concerned with violence against women. Jane H. Kelley suggests that "the topic . . . was chosen by the Advisory Council of the Institute as a visible problem now, and a problem that is likely to intensify in the near future" (Kelley v). She continues to outline the desired outcome of the seminar in her introduction:

Violence, at its core, is about power relationships and inequality. . . . Violence tends to be patterned in its occurrence. Certain kinds of risks can be increased or diminished through working conditions or lifestyle decisions. . . . It is not only the victims and survivors who need to be understood and helped. More attention should be paid to the reasons perpetrators exhibit violent behavior; they too need counseling and treatment. . . . A lack of public understanding about the need for such services for perpetrators, and a lack of resources for providing adequate treatment, are more central concerns than a lack of knowledge of strategies with a reasonable chance of working. . . . There is not just one problem not just one cause, and not just one solution.

Kelley 5

Kelley's identification of the *other* in her introduction begins to examine the core

of domestic violence. While there is certainly a need to help remove the *victim* and to initiate recovery from abusive situations, the *other* needs to be addressed. The *other* is a significant factor of the *why* perspective, as opposed to the *what* perspective, which are indicative of methods which persons attempt to explore domestic violence.

Violence is essentially about power. Every causal link identified by Roberts deals with a power struggle. Economic dependency, isolation, and physical punishment exemplify this. In cases of domestic violence, power is exchanged. Not only is the power of the *victim* and *other* corrupted, but it is learned from corruption on a social level. Jane Ursel suggests that ". . . the source of a victim's reluctance to leave an abusive relationship or testify against an assailant; the source of high recidivism rates; the source of the problem of family violence is embedded in our entire culture, from our concepts of sexuality to our computer games" (Kelley 16). The cause and maintenance of domestic violence seem to stem from a sense of powerlessness which is deeply rooted in our culture.

Most cases of domestic violence involve an abusive situation which is repeated and maintained over a long period, often for generations. What are the reasons for the continual cultivation of this oppression? Most research has focused on victim mentality to find answers. Mic Hunter feels that a victim mentality can only be developed when the *victim* is abused and left to cope with

that abuse independently (Hunter 69). An identification of the abusive cycle helps contribute to understanding the development of victim mentality. For example, immediately following a traumatic event, a person will go through four stages prior to generating a response system. The Everstines' outline these four steps as: denial, acceptance of reality of event, cognitive survival (identification with the aggressor), and shock. These steps describe a reaction to the first instance of abuse. If the cycle of abuse is continued from this point, the tendency for the *victim* to develop accommodation syndrome is high. As a result, the *victim* loses the ability to abstract insightful information as she or he is in a constant state of trauma. The healing process becomes increasingly difficult to begin. Once accommodation syndrome has developed within the domestic structure, cycles of abuse can be identified. Scholars have commonly accepted that this cycle can be identified in phases, such as ". . . the tension-building phase, the acute incident phase, and the respite phase" (Walker 55). These terms are not uniformly used, but their meaning remains similar in all descriptions of abusive cycles.

A common misconception regarding the cycle of abuse is that the *victim* is purposefully "setting up" the abuse in a masochistic fashion. Walker posits that ". . . although [the victim] appears to be masochistically setting up [his or her] own victimization[,] such behavior may well be a desperate attempt to exercise

some control over [his or her] life" (Walker 50). It is important to remember that in cases of domestic violence, the trauma is so severe that the psyche is unable to process information and responds to it irrationally. Issues of power and control (both internally and externally) have malfunctioned. Coping responses and defense mechanisms maintain the person's existence. This applies to all members involved. In fact, "both members of the couple suffer because of abuse: the survivor as a direct, primary victim, and the partner as an indirect secondary victim" (Maltz 209). The continual cycle of abuse stimulates an oppressive mentality which is quite difficult to break down and exceedingly damaging to those indirectly involved in that cycle.

Similarly, it is suggested that ". . . when required to bear witness to a traumatic event, a child may be more acutely traumatized than the actual victim" (Everstine 114). As studies reveal a high correlation between homicidal persons and their involvement in domestic violence, it becomes increasingly important to study all persons involved in such cases. It is generally thought that witnesses of domestic violence become involved in the conspiracy of silence. The silence perpetuated by this conspiracy becomes a preventive method of repeated abuse. In those cases, the witness' fulfillment of basic needs becomes a necessary condition promoting a silent struggle. Confrontational situations are only dealt with in extremes. Therefore, the behavior learned simply through witnessing

abusive behavior is as harmful as that learned by the recipient of it. There was very little quantitative research on this topic, and only recently has it even become a focus for research.

Consistently, each source studied seek formulaic solutions for domestic violence. All books conclusively suggest methods of coping with this problem that are preventative. Walker states that:

The violence will only cease when every person, man or woman, stops defensively rationalizing and begins to understand just how such acts come about in our culture and why they continue.

Walker 15

Roberts further supports this idea by stating that "equitable treatment for families involved in domestic violence can occur only through policies which involve the men as well as the women. Only through sharing the responsibility for the much needed changes can the goal of eliminating abuse and strengthening the family become a reality" (Roberts 113). Both authors attempt to eliminate gender biased conclusions, thereby admitting that this is not solely a women's issue. Hunter's conclusive statement is directed toward the *victim* and overcoming *victim* mentality. He suggests that "becoming angry is the beginning of acceptance and of moving from the view of self as victim to the view of self as survivor" (Hunter 106). He further supposes that the way to get "even" with the person who mistreated the *victim* is to continue to live and stop the cycle. Survival itself

empowers the victim, consequently destroying the abusive hold. The Calgary Community Seminar Series created the "Call to Action for All Men and Women", which lists preventative actions to stop the abuse cycle. One case study suggested that:

Recognizing, naming, and acknowledging various kinds of violence are important steps in validating the abusive experiences and making them visible and real to the rest of society.

Kelley 41

While these conclusions are honorable suggestions, the fact of domestic violence often remains unseen and unheard. Statistics show an increase in reports of domestic violence. Statistics Canada found that "one third of the males surveyed had experienced some type of sexual abuse as a child" while in Minnesota, "one of every 25 male high school students and one of every fourteen male college students reports that he is a victim of sexual abuse" (Hunter 26). Research also suggests that adolescents are at a greater risk of involvement in violent crimes than any other age group. Studies continue to indicate that "sexual abuse victims were twice as likely as non abuse victims to attempt suicide" (Hunter 84). The Everstines found that "forty percent of the murders are the result of domestic violence [in the United States]; a majority of the victims of these murders are in the primary child-rearing group of 20 - 39 years old" (Everstine 115). These statistics quantitatively suggest that domestic violence

continues to be a significant problem in our society despite efforts to diffuse it. It further suggests that a large percentage of violent acts are committed within a domestic structure. This indicates that more time needs to be spent studying the issue before any attempts can be made to solve it.

The definitions and concepts discussed in the material covered are wholly inadequate. Often they contain gender biases, negative and derogatory connotations, and constrict understanding of the broader issue. For this reason, the term *victim* is unacceptable. I assert that abuse occurs when the *self*⁵ is oppressed by the *other*. Interference with comprehension and execution of identity on any level is abusive. Therefore, use of the terms *self* and *other* eliminates qualities of gender and value judgements.

In gathering this research I found that many issues were clearly not considered by these sources. Most of the sources were concerned with gender, creating a biased study of domestic violence. Often the *other* was male and the *self* was female. Very little attention was paid to the silent observer of domestic violence despite several references to him or her. The sources studied provided vast amounts of victim-centred information - - a good start. However, from that data, conclusions were quickly drawn and solutions were provided for problems that society has yet to fully comprehend. Our human desire to bring closure to

⁵The *self* is a personal comprehension of identity. It is singular and encompasses the essence of the individual.

this disturbing issue is understandable and commendable, but it is premature. Domestic violence, like a pebble dropped in water, has a rippling effect. The infinite nature of those ripples cannot be ignored. In this case, the water must be understood in relation to the pebble before understanding how to control and change the nature of the ripple.

CHAPTER 3:
PROJECT DESIGN

“My intention is to make images
into theatre events, beginning
simply with those which
have meaning for
myself and my
collaborators”

Joseph Chaikin

The original intent of the project design will be discussed in Chapter Three. It will not be a retrospective description, but a hypothetical model which allows the following chapters to contradict and or confirm what the project becomes. Genre, Topic, Company, and Rehearsal Process will be studied. Their evolution through rehearsal, workshop, and performance will be examined in subsequent chapters. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to adequately describe the thesis project, and to record its beginnings for future reference.

Genre

Just Yell Fire's conception began in the summer of 1995 with the murders of Kimberly Cahoon, Janice Morrison, and Jeanne Kotvk. These three murders occurred within a four-day span in the city of Calgary. All three victims were murdered by their spouses. My interest in developing a script which would comment on these murders led to the consideration of working in collective creation.

This theatre genre encourages ensemble creation of text, exploration of imagery, and improvisation as a constructive method. In most collectives, the actors are involved in all areas of performance creation. Unlike traditional theatre practice, collective creation resists a hierarchal structure, decentralizing the importance of the director. This process often results in a fragmented production where the creation becomes more important than the product.

the importance of the director. This process often results in a fragmented production where the creation becomes more important than the product.

Just Yell Fire will commingle several styles of theatre. It will be “collectively influenced”, without joining the genre of collective creation. The director's role will remain hierarchical. She will lead rehearsals, producing an atmosphere under which ensemble creation can occur during initial rehearsals. Once a script has been developed, fine tuning of that script to its cohesion will be solely the director's responsibility. The director will shape the production, creating a viable and solid performance.

The methodology is difficult to define as it will not follow a predetermined set of rules. The purpose of the thesis project is to produce a new script while continuing to develop my directing skills in an organic process which will accommodate growth and change throughout. The project goal is to create a coherent production that educates, engages, and validates the questioning of all.

Topic

The topic of the production is domestic violence. As suggested in Chapter Two, my interests lie within the exploration of previously ignored aspects of abuse. For example, this subject is often depicted in a way that presents men as aggressors and women as victims. Just Yell Fire will question this perspective and examine the gender constraints associated with this topic. Focus on *self* and *other*,

as referred to in Chapter Two, will allow the piece to consider the human qualities of domestic violence, bringing the topic closer to the individual audience member.

The title, Just Yell Fire, comes from a popular instruction in self-defense classes. A person is told to yell “Fire!” rather than to yell, “Help!”, “Rape!” or any other specific outcry. It is thought that the public is more likely to respond to fire, than to a cry for help. The silent witness responsible for this mentality is also of topical concern. Why do we accept the unacceptable? What allows society to remain uninvolved? These are questions which I will consider during this process.

I am interested in presenting a piece which asks the audience to personalize this issue. By avoiding a strict story line, this can be achieved. As a result, the production will include images (verbal and nonverbal) intended to stimulate thought and interpretive response. Symbolic representation will encourage audience members to personalize the image. This allows domestic violence to become an issue about humans, and about the abuse of power.

The company will explore a variety of resources for background information. This will include reading resource books, following news stories (both on television and in newspapers), speaking to counselors, interviewing persons involved in cases of domestic violence, and looking through court

documents. Various organizations will be consulted such as: Calgary Family Service Bureau, YWCA, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, Family of Men Support Society, and the Women's Centre at the University.

The piece will hopefully educate and enlighten its audience members through the exploration of issues concerning domestic violence. Information regarding local services may be provided in the lobby of the performances. Therefore, when audience members leave, they will have a resource directly available to encourage further discussion.

I feel that theatre is an excellent medium for communication in that its voice is small compared to other mediums, but it is powerful . It can combine dance, music, written and visual art forms into one space. By choosing to look at domestic violence through theatre, that voice can stimulate much needed discussion.

The Company

Just Yell Fire will be a co-production with Spinstergirl Productions. This is a new professional theatre company based in Calgary. Negotiations with the company began upon the approval of the thesis proposal in May of 1996. Spinstergirl agreed to give the production a downtown venue (The Big Secret Theatre), with publicity for that venue, and with financial contributions. Spinstergirl would consider the possibility of touring the show, but that aspect is

not a component of the thesis.

The cast consists of six individuals, three male, and three female. During casting, consideration was given to individuals who could contribute in a group environment, and who freely offered constructive criticism during the audition process. The auditioners were asked to perform a Canadian monologue (preferably original material) for the first call. Actors who demonstrated a varied understanding of their monologue were invited to attend callbacks. Sixteen individuals participated in this process. During callbacks, the actors were asked to do several exercises dealing with image creation. The final casting choice was made according to how well each actor worked in a group situation, with some consideration to physical appearance. Diversity was sought.

Each actor will be expected to conduct research on the topic. They will be encouraged to formulate their own ideas and reactions to that research. They then will be asked to bring those discoveries to the rehearsal. In addition, they will be actively involved in character creation, transition, and construction of the text. Negotiation and development of imagery discovered through research will be paramount to the creation of the text. At a certain point in the process their creative input will draw on creation of the skeletal script. Upon the completion of this, the actors will be expected to assume a more traditional role in order for the piece to be properly prepared for public performance.

Douglas McCullough, a design professor in the Department of Drama, will be the primary designer for the production. This will involve his participation in the evolution of the piece and the design concept. Consideration will be given to the possibility of touring. The director-designer discourse will generally follow traditional practice. However, the actors will have input to some design decisions as the creative process dictates. Final decisions will remain that of the director-designer team.

As the collaborative creation of a script often uses improvisation and movement techniques to create images for the stage, I thought it necessary to include the expertise of a choreographer in the process. Having worked occasionally with David Barrus, who has excellent training in Dance and in Education, I asked him to fill this position. His contributions to choreography and the maintenance of a safe psychological atmosphere will be expected. In addition, he will also contribute to interpretation of research and its incorporation into movement.

The Rehearsal Process

The rehearsal process will be twelve weeks long, ending with a workshop production at the Reeve Theatre, University of Calgary. Prior to this rehearsal period, the actors will be asked to do some research to gain a personal understanding of the topic before entering rehearsals.

Week One of rehearsal will familiarize the group with each other, and with techniques of “survival”. This will encompass a wide range of exercises dealing with physical expression, vocal expression, and with self-healing techniques. Essentially the week should build a “survival kit” for the actors to use throughout the process. The following three weeks will be for image creation, where the members of the company will use accumulated background research as a basis for improvisation. This will be followed by Week Five, when a rough outline will be established. Weeks Six and Seven will focus specifically on scene creation prompted by the outline. Following this will be two weeks of transition, where the company will assemble scenes, and the script will be completed. Week Ten will involve some fine tuning of the script which will be completed at the conclusion of this period. There will be a two week period left to work the script in a more traditional manner.

The Workshop & Performance

April 9 - 12, 1997 will give the company the opportunity to workshop the production prior to its official premiere, the purpose of which will be to gain audience feedback from the piece. We will invite professionals from both Theatre and Sociology to respond to the piece, along with selected members of the public. Whether the feedback will be given in post performance discussion or in written format is yet to be decided.

The production will be presented in whatever state is practical. The workshop productions should decipher what aspects of the performance need to be refined. It will also allow the group to test an audience's response to the piece, adjusting it accordingly.

Following the workshop, one week will be taken to make necessary adjustments prior to moving into the professional venue. The performance will run at the Big Secret Theatre for two weeks, and follow the same schedule as a regular professional performance.

CHAPTER 4:
THE CREATIVE PROCESS

“This is what we might say
if we really talked
to each other”

Alberta Family Violence Prevention

In twelve short weeks, Just Yell Fire was collaboratively created by David Barrus, Ryan Gladstone, Carrie Innes, Jennifer Kelly, Nicole King, C. Adam Leigh, Douglas McCullough, Dave Trimble, Donna Tunney, and Nova Lea Thorne. The rehearsal process consisted of five different phases: Introduction, Image Creation, Skeletal Development, Scripting, and Performance Preparation. Chapter Four will study this process.

The Introduction phase focused on the *self* and *other* over a one week period from January 13 to January 16. The actors (Ryan, Carrie, Jennifer, Adam, Dave, and Donna) were asked to spend the first two rehearsals concentrating on themselves. It was important to get in touch with the *self* on a mental and physical plane before exploring domestic violence. The actors needed to create “comfort tools” for future reference during the process. One comfort tool created was the establishment of a home base called the nest within the rehearsal space. The actors spent ten minutes at the beginning and at the end of rehearsals in that spot for reflection. A second tool involved maintaining a personal journal throughout the process, where emotions, research, and personal discoveries could be recorded and referred to throughout the twelve weeks. In addition, the actors were involved in image creation, improvisation, and story telling from an individual perspective during this time. These exercises focused on the *self*, and were aimed at increasing awareness of personal boundaries, personal tastes, and

physical limitations. The actors were asked to rediscover their strengths and weaknesses to understand how they would fit into the current company.

The second half of the Introduction Phase considered group dynamics. Many exercises were done which combined the *self* with the *other*. Developing an awareness of physical and emotional surroundings was paramount. Several “safety nets” were established for the company. For example, they identified a word that could be said at any point when an actor felt uncomfortable (with a no questions asked policy) in order to stop the action. Concluding the Introduction Phase members of the company gained an increased understanding of their own individuality and how that would in turn shape group dynamics in the future. The company discovered methods of communicating as a group while maintaining a sense of *self*. I attribute much of the script's success to this discovery.

Collaborating with Douglas McCullough, the designer, during the Introduction Phase generated the design concept. This included a circular floor cloth that was approximately sixteen feet in diameter. The research done thus far on domestic violence had emphasized the identification of abusive cycles. With its shape, the floor cloth helped to physically reinforce the cyclical nature of abuse while creating boundaries for the actors to use in a number of ways. The floor cloth could suggest a wall-less space where the characters could find comfort

or torment. A translucent plexiglass box, located upstage centre of the space was also discussed. This box allowed violence to be portrayed on stage in a hidden form, similar to many abusive situations, and it would also serve as hiding places for the actors, where only shadows could be depicted. The final set piece discussed was a metal cage, similar to a child's playground, to be set on casters. The cage would fit behind the screen, and could be moved around the space as needed. Actors' use of this set piece would achieve different levels, and constrict space as needed. The cage would be painted a bright red, matching the metal frame of the box. The rest of the set would be in black and white.

Phase Two of the rehearsal process dealt with Image Creation. Appendix A records some exercises which resulted from this phase. From approximately January 20 to February 7, the company attempted to integrate ongoing research with physical exploration. A four week period (contrasting with the projected three weeks from Chapter Three) was necessary to create the required images for the production. The process involved actors working within certain parameters to create an image. The director defined these parameters, which included word restrictions, topical suggestions, and methods of exploration. Once the actors successfully improvised an image, they were allowed time to develop the scenario further. The results were recorded for future reference.

Throughout the Image Creation Phase, several patterns emerged in the

company: all cast members had a tendency to speak an image, not show it; when given the opportunity to use text, they sacrificed originality of thought for clichéd imagery; words became a tool for clarification rather than for creation; and restriction of word use during the initial creation became imperative to the success of an improvised scenario. The group also had difficulty editing themselves from a piece. During the first week of Image Creation, it was rare when an actor would choose to remove himself or herself from a scene. However, by the end of Image Creation, actors were attempting to self-edit.

The introduction of choreographic movement occurred at this point in the rehearsals. David Barrus (choreographer) trained the actors in some basic dance movement through both improvisation and developed exercises. Movement was reduced to a point on the body, then David expanded movement by connecting points. Exemplifying this was the Three Point Movement Exercise, where the actors were asked to pick three points on their body, and to continually touch those points in a specified order and rhythm. Once this motor skill was perfected, they were asked to create an alternative path to each point. This produced a flowing movement, much like a dance sequence. Various rhythms, pacing, and vocabulary were then added to the movement. This exercise opened several new perceptions of performance and image creation, and eliminated personal insecurities regarding movement. It was extremely important in the development

of the performance style used in Just Yell Fire.

The company met weekly to discuss research, which included reading newspapers on a daily basis, contacting and interviewing different community service programs, reading several articles and books provided by the director, finding music which commented on the topic, locating physical visual images which depicted domestic violence, and watching related films. The actors interpreted information, and were expected to integrate research during image creation. In addition, they were asked to write a found text monologue, expressing their understanding of abuse. A “found text”, is a monologue created by the juxtaposition of various randomly selected texts. The words are then placed in a chosen order, creating a singular perspective. The company's monologues eventually dictated part of the final outline.

The actors continued looking at domestic violence via introspection of their own lives, thereby discovering how this topic affects them personally. Actors discovered when they were abusive, when they were abused, and when they were observing abuse. The focus was not on sensationalized examples of domestic violence, but on everyday ones. This perspective gave the company clear intentions, defining the parameters of Just Yell Fire. The play was not to report incidents of domestic violence, but to ask the audience to actively involve themselves on a personal level. The actors concurred that the script should not

follow a linear structure. Because the topic was too large to define within those demarcations, the company relied on Image Creation to dictate the shape of the production. Scenarios created in rehearsals became sparse, minimalistic, and open to multiple interpretation.

By four weeks into the project, the actors began to focus on image dichotomies. They responded to smooth and fluid movement with staccato text to further develop this concept. An image dichotomy was a staging of the marriage of *self* and *other* in domestic violence. The cast began questioning if it were possible for both to exist simultaneously in one person, resulting in a Yin and Yang philosophy which the actors adopted for the production. Increased awareness of the symbiotic relationship of an abuser being abused and *vice versa* became the central focus of Just Yell Fire. The actors perceived violence as instinctual rather than learned, and discovered that abuse needs not to be solved, but to be fully identified. Just Yell Fire became an expression of that collective idea.

Four weeks of image creation gave the company a solid base on which to begin creating the metaphorical skeleton of Just Yell Fire. During the week following this phase, an outline for the script emerged based on the outlines on the personal research, found text monologues, free association writings from their journals, and successful images scenarios discovered in rehearsals to that point.

The Skeletal Development Phase began on February 10 and continued for four weeks, concluding on March 7. This concurs with the time line suggested in the project description. The first week of this phase was devoted to the creation of a collective outline, including reworking some scenarios and creating new ones. Appendix B is a record of the original outline in the first three drafts. A final outline was worked for three weeks until the beginnings of a script could be derived from rehearsals.

The creation of the final outline occurred via discussion. Over three consecutive nights, the company discussed and arranged the order of scenarios, deconstructing them until a thematic approach emerged. This process began with a long list of scenes and monologues which were compacted into a few apt concepts. The outline divided the play into three acts, each dealing with a juxtaposition of terms: society and nature, abused and abuser, and everyone and everyday. The entire outline was blanketed with the question "Why do I care?"

The company relied on visual imagery such as faces, circles, and spirals used in the place of words for their interpretation of the outline. Attempting to script a show whose purpose was to avoid linear qualities made clarification extremely difficult. However, the minimalistic choice for the final outline helped clarify and direct scenes during the subsequent weeks of creation.

The development of Act One was the most demanding aspect of the

rehearsal process, and continues to be the most challenging part of the script. The act was intended to examine society's role in domestic violence, and to contemplate the nature of abuse. To do this, the company divided into two groups to create Act One, which was completed in two rehearsal periods. Each group then presented their version of Act One, and the performances were discussed. The actors were invited to rework the act to clarify intentions. Once this was accomplished, discussion of how to blend the two versions began. Merging these two entities left the act in confusion, consequently, I constructed the first version of Act One myself by attempting to weave both versions together while maintaining a unified perspective. This was based on the group discussions, and included the help of David Barrus.

The revised Act One, while clearer, remained convoluted as it commented on society, rather than depicting it. The use of stereotypical characters combined with sincere human qualities remained unclear and quite biased, requiring more societal influences to be added to the act. After discussion, the company agreed that further clarification was the director's responsibility. We had spent two weeks developing Act One, and needed to begin work on the second act. Therefore Act One was left in a skeletal form with the understanding that the director would add meat and skin at a later date.

Act Two began with revisions to the previous process. The company

wanted to try dividing into uneven groups, resulting in a group of four and a group of two. The decision was also made to share information between groups daily, so integration of the act could happen more fluidly. Act Two focused on the *self* the *other*, requiring an individual approach. Each actor developed different monologues interspersed throughout the act. They titled each on a slip of paper, then the papers were placed on the floor in different order, until we had come to an agreement for the act. Consequently, Act Three was unanimously eliminated, as its intentions had become part of Act One and Act Two. The overriding theme of everyday and everyone became the focus of Just Yell Fire.

The conclusion of the Skeletal Development Phase marked the beginning of the first draft of Just Yell Fire. It had become clear during the Skeletal Development Phase that the actors would have difficulty creating a coherent piece without the use of a singular playwright. It had been my hope that this would not be necessary, as I had projected my role to be dramaturgical in nature. As a result, my role as director merged with that of playwright. This discovery led to a new development of the four-week plan projected in Chapter Three, the Scripting Phase. I hosted a small party to celebrate the end of the collective writing element. From this point forward, the actors were to focus on character creation based on scripts brought into the rehearsal. I began scripting what had been created thus far, and gave it back to the actors for further development.

The Skeletal Development phase of the rehearsal process required the design concept to be revamped. The use of the floor cloth could be substituted with water or chalk. Just Yell Fire was examining psychological boundaries, not physical ones, so the physical boundaries of the set needed to be eliminated. This decision was also applied to the deletion of the cage. At this point, the set design consisted only of the plexiglass box.

Just Yell Fire went through a total of seven drafts prior to the workshop performance. The Scripting Phase began on March 8 and continued until the workshop performance on April 9, overlapping with the Performance Preparation Phase. The actors were given the first copy of Act One on March 10. Two weeks were spent with the actors developing the performance of the act in rehearsals, while scripting the Act occurred between rehearsals. Act One's first draft consisted of eight scenes with an ending yet to be developed. The characters of Radical Feminist and Isobel, combined with certain blocking decisions made during rehearsals were added in the following two drafts of Act One. With contributions to the rewriting of the script solely through character development in rehearsals, the actors maintained a traditional role. This helped preserve clarity and style throughout the play.

Suggested blocking was given to the actors upon the receipt of Act One. The piece needed movement, not discussion. Once it was temporarily blocked,

the actors were invited to suggest changes as necessary. Final script decisions remained with the director to help maintain a singular perspective to the Act. In addition, David Barrus began work on choreographing Scene Ten. The actors had wanted to insert a piece which had been suggested during the Image Creation Phase so David re-choreographed the piece, and I inserted text for clarification. An hour of each rehearsal was spent working this scene for three weeks.

On March 15, the actors were given the first draft of Act Two for their perusal. This was the first time Just Yell Fire in its entirety (see Appendix C) was available to the company. Scripting rehearsals of Act Two began on March 23. This act was simpler to work, as it was entirely composed of monologues thereby requiring only one actor per scene. Changes to the act included Douglas McCullough and David Trimble rewriting a monologue in exchange for an inadequate one, and the insertion of a new monologue focusing on abuse of the elderly. The actors were cast in different roles than those they had written, except for Carrie and Donna, thus allowing the actors to disassociate with their writing contributions. This decision also added balance to the genders represented on stage. As a result, some interesting generational influences occurred during the act, even though the monologues had originally been unrelated. Certain casting choices allowed character development and familial relationships to be established in the Act. Joe's relationship to Janice was an

example of this. The casting choices created a fluidity to the Act which had not previously been existent.

Act Two was in good form after three drafts, and just three days of intense rehearsal. The entire play was then performed in sequence to establish and confirm rhythms within the piece. This process involved textual editing, re-blocking, and prop additions. The script went through two more drafts and was thought to be complete on March 28.

Prop and costume designs were initiated during the scripting process. The use of toys in Act One was introduced to help establish Media and Psychologist as ridiculous stereotypes. The toy weapons provided irony, contrasted to the real gun in Act Two. The actors made decisions about prop usage entirely while in character, facilitated by having toys present in the rehearsal for actors to discover and integrate, which proved to be a successful method of introduction. Similarly, the decision to use the net as a veil occurred spontaneously in rehearsals.

Costume choices for Just Yell Fire were made quite late in the rehearsal process. This was imperative, as character choices defined these designs. Douglas' choice to clothe the actors in black helped maintain anonymity within the cast. Conversely, the Smith's red socks heightened the effect of their wet feet by drawing attention to them, and separated these two actors from the ensemble. Costumes that were individual to the actors were inspired by the

clothing worn to rehearsals. Fitting the actors in uniform had briefly been considered to maintain the ensemble, but a unanimous decision could not be reached.

Less time, one and a half weeks, remained for the Performance Preparation Phase than anticipated in Chapter Three, due to an extended period of script development. Revisions continued through to the conclusion of the workshop, ending with the seventh draft (Appendix D). Most of the revisions were minor, including shifting of scenes and blocking changes. The actors performed several run-throughs prior to the workshop performances, working on different images as needed. The shadow work (scenes occurring behind the screen) was rehearsed over a two-day span during Tech Week, as it required specific lighting and set pieces. In addition, David Barrus choreographed a male duet with Adam and Dave during the week prior to performance. This piece was intended to offer some hope and love in an otherwise desolate piece.

The Performance Preparation Phase was similar to most rehearsal processes, with the traditional roles of actor, designer, and director observed. At this point, the Artistic Director of Spinstergirl Productions attended a rehearsal. Actors were ready to perform this piece publicly. The workshop production of Just Yell Fire opened on April 9 to a long anticipated and generous audience.

CHAPTER 5:
THE WORKSHOP PERFORMANCE

“I thought that the issues - - violence in all forms and degrees
and our society's confusion about love, sex,
gender control - - were illustrated
with compassion, depth,
and passion.”

Audience Member, Just Yell Fire

The four workshop performances of Just Yell Fire occurred from April 9 to April 12, in the Reeve Theatre at the University of Calgary. The purpose of the workshop was to gain audience feedback prior to opening at the Big Secret Theatre, in co-production with Spinstergirl Productions which was, in retrospect, a successful venture. Chapter Five will give a brief overview of the format for the workshop, and of the audience response to the production.

The workshop consisted of a full technical performance of Just Yell Fire to an audience containing subscription holders, students, professionals from the theatre, and guests who worked directly with persons involved in domestic violence. The audience was given two methods of responding to the production: they could opt to participate in a discussion following the production, or they could fill out a form which was included in the program. As the director I facilitated the discussion following the performance, where questions were posed to audience members and discussion among the group was encouraged. The actors were given an option not to attend the workshop discussion; none of them chose to exercise it.

The workshop performances changed nightly according to the feedback given on the prior evening. During the second workshop, text was added to Act One, scene ten for clarification. This text was to be improvised throughout the scene by the actors. Carrie was instructed to put the gun in her mouth for her

final monologue to emphasize a suicide theme. In addition, six more seconds were added to the Intermission lighting cue, in response to the audience needing more time to process imagery. The actors were asked to increase their characters' physicalization so as to clarify each. Blackouts were reduced to five seconds maximum, which in retrospect was still too long; the elimination of blackouts would be reworked in a future performance. These changes contributed to the strongest performance given during the workshop, on the night of April 10.

The third workshop performance was also altered. Carrie's attempt to put the gun in her mouth was eliminated, as it was too strong an image. Jen was instructed to have Psychologist address a help group as opposed to addressing a lecture hall, which would help her character achieve a definitive stereotype, avoiding similarities between the Psychologist and the Radical Feminist. The conclusion of the play was reworked so that the actors stepped into the chalked circle created by Isobel at the end of the production, thereby including themselves with the audience. This diffused some confrontational aspects of the piece, and was less offensive to the audience. Isobel's final line was reduced to, "I know you." The discussion which occurred the previous night with the audience and the company inspired these changes.

The final workshop had the most radical changes partly because it was the last chance to test some ideas, and because the actors' confidence in the

show allowed them to take bold new directions with their characters. Carrie was given a pom-pom for her Radical Feminist in a final attempt to have the character read as a stereotype. The pom-pom was also intended to include Radical Feminist with Psychologist and Media, as the later two had toys throughout Act One. Until this point in the workshop, Radical Feminist's dialogue was taken too seriously which consequently misled the audience's perception of the piece. Because of her character's strong text, the piece was seemingly biased in addressing only women's issues. This needed to be changed. The intention of the piece was to portray all ages and genders in domestic violence, not to concentrate on women. Carrie's use of this prop took her character in an entirely new and brave direction. In future performances, this would need to be harnessed and balanced with the other actors on stage. For the workshop, it was entirely successful in its intentions. Another revision was Dave Trimble's child character in the final scene with Newspaper Man, added because the audience had expressed some concern for the lack of hope that the piece showed. While this was intentional in the creation of Just Yell Fire, the company conceded that this issue should be addressed. Dave's child character was asked to accompany Newspaper Man off stage to solve this audience concern.

Seventy-eight written responses were collected during the workshop period; sixty-four of those responses were positive. The audience members generally

enjoyed the production and realized its contributions to the topic. Just Yell Fire's confrontational nature clarified the intention of the production, which was to actively involve the audience and to encourage them to take responsibility for their own contributions to domestic violence. This was successful. The use of water and of chalk in the show was unanimously admired for its subtle defining of boundaries. In addition, diverse interpretation of the piece was common, which again showed that the company's intentions were realized.

Fourteen audience members responded with alarming distaste for the production. They found it either completely offensive or too chaotic in structure. Approximately ninety per cent of these persons demanded that a story line be inserted in the production for any possibility of success; one audience member wrote to "come off the soapbox, put in a story line, and move it from a beginning to an end." This was never the intention of the script, and such commentary was appreciated but not acted upon. The overwhelming emotional response of the audience members who did not like the production was indicative of success to the company, because people became angry and were subsequently driven to discuss the performance. By our standards, that measured a success.

Much of the critical feedback was concerned with lengthy blackouts, with integration of movement in the piece, and with definition of multiple characters. Transitions between scenes were either too choppy, or elongated. We would

clarify these for a future performance of Just Yell Fire by eliminating blackouts and adding movement to the transitions to justify the dance sequences. This transitional movement would reflect the movement used in both dance pieces. Additionally, I would find the appropriate balance between the Radical Feminist, the Psychologist, and Media. Development of the shadow moments would also be instigated. Finally, some efforts would be made to textually explore cycles, which was successfully done with the movement in Just Yell Fire, often sacrificing textual importance. These suggested improvements summarize the result of the workshop experience.

The workshop productions allowed the company to critically assess the script thus far. All members used the audience's feedback through discussion and presentation of new material. In response, the audience willingly shared their opinions with the company, bringing the process full circle. By the final workshop performance, the group had discovered methods of stimulating conversation and extracting exact detail from audience members. It was an informative and exciting phase of our process.

CHAPTER 6:

REFLECTIONS

“Stop pretending it won't happen again. Stop
pretending it's never touched your life.

Stop pretending it's not
a part of you”

Ryan Gladstone, Just Yell Fire

On April 7, the Department of Drama met with Spinstergirl Productions. This meeting concluded with the dissolving of the agreement to co-produce the production of Just Yell Fire. To date, there have been no formal efforts to mount the production at an alternative venue. For that reason, the Performance component of this thesis has also been dissolved.

The project has been a personal success. In Chapter Three, the project outline describes the process as one which would "... create a coherent production which educates, engages, and validates the questioning of all." I feel that we met this mandate. Furthermore, Just Yell Fire was an educational experience for all members of the company. The student actors were given new tools and new methods of performance creation as a direct result of this project. Personal boundaries were redefined. All members were continually challenged to exceed their limits. The company has emerged with strength, love, and pride for the work accomplished. Success is measured internally; that is what has made this thesis project inarguably triumphant.

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APPENDIX A

Examples of Scenarios From the Image Creation Phase of Rehearsal

The following are some examples of scenarios created during the Image creation phase of rehearsal. Many of the ones cited here were used to create moments in Just Yell Fire.

Jimmy's Family Scenario (January 16)

CHARACTER'S:

Ryan: Jimmy, Jimmy's friend.

Adam: Alcoholic father.

David: Older son

Carrie: Mother

Jennifer: Sister

SCENARIO:

The actors first used words to take them through this family's situation. This was then reduced to 'gibberish', where words were not allowed. This created some verbal sounds which were then isolated and conducted like a symphony.

Oppressed Scenario (January 20)

CHARACTERS

Carrie's: A passive character who experienced issues of learned helplessness. She did not want the support of people around her. The word she used was 'no'.

Ryan's: An aggressive character who quietly hovered as a form of oppression. His word was 'yes'.

Adam's: A passive character with a maternal instinct. He wanted to control how abuse occurred. His word was 'what'.

Dave's: The aggressor who found comfort in groups. His word was a laughing grumble.

Jennifer's: A passive who was either extremely aggressive or extremely passive. Her word was 'why'. She was a child like witness, unable to stop but wanting to.

SCENARIO

Dave's put Jennifer's on a leash. Ryan's started to exert control over Carrie's. Adam's observed. Carrie's broke free of Ryan's and found space alone. Ryan's joined Dave's and they focused their oppression on Jen's and Adam's. Adam's became a trio of the passive. Carrie's broke away while Adam's and Jen's were oppressed by Dave's and Ryan's. Ryan's broke away and leaned near Carrie's without touching her. Dave's tried to comfort Adam's, when this was accomplished continued to oppress. Jen's built anger and attacked Dave's trying to kill. Adam's left on the ground, visibly shaken. Carrie's left in corner hugging Ryan's. Scene stopped here.

IMPORTANT IMAGERY

1. Clumps of threes and twos working in opposition, magnet movement
2. Circle movement
3. Stuck in a corner
4. Non physical oppression

Fear Scenario (January 22)

SCENARIO

The back part of the space was in darkness, the middle section was shadowy, and the front section was dimly lit. There was a door frame centre to that space. Ryan stood to the SR in the doorway. Five actors were in a semi-circle opening US. The group moved together through a variety of positions each time Ryan spoke. They were limited to 15 words. One by one, they got permission from Ryan to go through the door. Once through they moved quickly focusing on a variation of breathing patterns to create a 'sound' environment. When all actors were in blackness (except Ryan) they began to say different words. They all banded together and chanted one word, then came rushing through the door. At that point, five of them cuddled in a group on the floor, saying 'safe'. End of scene.

IMPORTANT IMAGERY

1. Sound versus seeing
2. One word, different movement
3. Physical obstacle
4. Negative space, playing to empty space and shaping it

Three Point Exercise (January 23)

CARRIE'S

Carrie used the sentence, 'Everyday that you choose to live, you destroy the power of abuse to you' (Hunter Text). David was on a block repeating a gesture and saying the word, 'power'. Donna was directly in front of him repeating a gesture and saying the word, 'everyday'. Carrie moved in a full circle around David and Carrie repeating 'abuse' and 'live' as punctuation to the movement.

ADAM'S

Adam used the sentence, 'It is not the touch itself that is harmful, but the meaning behind the touch that hurts' (Hunter text). Adam used Dave, David, and Ryan to accompany him. The movement advanced toward the audience, and the sentence was repeated twice.

JEN'S

Jen's sentence was, 'Sadly, it's a story that no longer shocks: Woman leaves man; Man kills woman; then in a final act of violence, the man kills himself' (Calgary Sun). She used Dave and Donna in her performance. She positioned Donna SR and Dave SL and she remained centre stage. Dave and Donna performed the three point choreography while moving towards the centre. The piece ended with the three actors in a line at the conclusion of the sentence.

Neglect Scenario (January 27)

DESCRIPTION

Donna/Ryan: Ryan placed himself in a desk flipped upside down. He played a

young child. Donna held a baby and hummed 'rock a bye baby'. She circled around him, then left the room (slamming the door). Ryan then said, "mommy?"

Dave: Dave placed himself in a wooden box. He was clearly an infant alone. He progressed and got out of his crate, taking off his gloves. He began to leave the room, then went back for his gloves. He continued to leave the room, then came back and flipped the box over himself, much like enclosing himself in a coffin.

Abuse/Neglect Combo Scenario (January 27)

DESCRIPTION

Dave started as an infant in the cradle. Jen and Donna were DSL and USR respectively, while Adam and Ryan were USL and DSR. They were making 'abuse' sounds (ie screams, breathing, hitting). Dave left his cradle and began to approach the others. The others turned around, took the phone miming position, and began to say typical lines about abuse. Dave exchanged using 'you hurt' and 'you left' as a response to this. He eventually lay down on the floor beside the cradle in the fetal position. The others then surrounded him and covered him with the box, while humming 'rock a bye baby'. They left the room in single file, all humming. The coffin was left alone on stage.

IMPORTANT IMAGERY

Sound is becoming as important as words in this process. Movement and sound is dictating the words, creating minimal selection of them.

Morrison Case Scenario (January 28)

DESCRIPTION

Dave/Jen: No words were used. Dave wanted to change Jen's hair. She responded timidly. When he pushed it, she walked away. Jen returned to Dave and let him touch her hair. When it became unbearable, she left for good. He followed her, punched her, and pushed her on the ground. He then played with her hair, slapped the ground (gunshot) and promptly kissed her on the lips. Their purpose was to understand why.

Adam/Ryan: Ryan was the friend of Scott Morrison (Adam). They went through several meetings building up to the final scene, where Morrison said, "I showed her" with a new and more frightening meaning.

Music Scenario #1 (January 30)

Carrie's Music

CARRIE/DAVID: Carrie developed an improv which created movement dealing with spousal rape. It presented a dichotomy of the abuser and the abused. There was no specific gender, and each character explored both aforementioned roles.

OTHER FIVE: The group began loving each other, then turned into a group of animals who eventually preyed upon and killed one of their members. It had a very sacrificial ritual to it, whereby the dead body was lifted into the air prior to the group devouring it.

COMBINATION: This was done without the music. Carrie and David

performed their piece centre stage. They used noises and breathing to accompany this. Meanwhile, the other actors were silently surrounding them, watching, and creating an orgasmic frenzy. As soon as David and Carrie raised themselves vocally, the group transformed into the animal type. They proceeded to grab David and devour him as Carrie watched. Some successful things in this was the juxtaposition of speech versus silence, and of movement versus stillness.

Music Scenario #2 (February 3)

Donna's Music

MEN'S: There were no words used during this scenario. 'Over the Rainbow' was played. Dave was the counterpoint to Ryan and Adam. They were on a couch watching a sporting event. Ryan and Adam became increasingly violent, as Dave sat in the middle rather still. At one point, Adam and Ryan moved off the couch and simulated slow motion violence while Dave responded to this violence by hiding in the couch. Ryan was left on the floor while Adam went back on the couch putting his arm around Dave.

Anxiety Scenario (February 4)

IMPORTANT IMAGES

1. Taking someone's sound for your own, an exchange of sound.
2. Dave's level exploration - 'hey' to those surrounding him going unheard.
3. Ryan/Carrie/Donna - tug of war over Donna with her arms.
4. Jen's meticulous blanket treatment - folding, arranging.

5. Carrie/Ryan - running to get away, but in a circle so she comes back to the object which she was running away from.

Music Scenario #3 (February 4)

Dave's Music

DONNA/RYAN/JEN: Jen was placed DSC on the floor with paper and some crayons. Donna and Ryan were directly behind her to start the scene. Ryan and Donna burst out SL and SR respectively, while Jen began to colour. Ryan and Donna fought over control of Jen (via energy space between the hands). When Donna was able to get control, she remained behind Jen and hummed a soothing lullaby. Ryan, when in control, made some frightening animal sounds. When Donna was in control Jen drew curvy lines, when Ryan was in control Jen drew harsh lines. The scene ended with Donna and Ryan struggling and eventually touching hands. Jen said, "mine." They stepped back in line and said, "All mine". This exploration of head space was nice. When Jen didn't look at her paper Donna and Ryan's function was clear. When she looked at her paper, Donna and Ryan became family members. It was interesting.

ADAM: Adam's piece used the Metallica song as well. He sat in a desk perfectly still for most of the song. He then tried to light a cigarette (unsuccessfully). Near the end of the song, he got up and left the room, slamming the door behind him. This was nice use of stillness. His facial expression was the scene. The build up of rage was the focus.

Three Character Scenario (February 5)

JEN: **Joanne** (24, strong) **Sandy** (gr.5, hyper) **Nicky** (teens, responsibility)
Jen's monologue began with her reaching up towards the sky (Joanne), she then tried to get something from the sky (Sandy). This was followed by an attempt to bring the thing down from the sky (Nicky). The thing became a baby which Sandy played with followed by Joanne plugging it's mouth. There were no words.

RYAN: **Richard** (30, angry) **Billy** (7, wide eyed) **Cliff** (45, normal)
Ryan's monologue began with an adjustment of his face into an exaggerated Billy. He said 'PUDDLES!' then played in them. He adjusted his face again and Richard said, "I'm looking". He repeated this then adjusted his face. Cliff looked at his watch and said, "I quit looking but I've got a lovely wife and two kids". He then adjusted his face and Richard said, "I'm still looking". Another face adjustment and Billy said, "Puddles" rather solemnly.

CARRIE: **Isobel** (gr.2, curious) **Jack** (24, weighed down) **James** (gr.11, cool)
Carrie used a ladder and triangle box from the room. Isobel started by looking at us from behind the triangle. She said, "yellow". James then carried the triangle up to the top of the ladder and set it there saying, "orange". Jack took the triangle down the other side of the ladder and set it on the ground saying, "red". Carrie then said quickly, "Yellow, orange, red" and pushed the triangle over (creating a bang) and fell to the ground - dead?

DAVE: **Ngggh** (infant, wordless) **Roy** (old, in a home) **Ron** (27, still young)
Dave's piece began with his infant in the box. The infant disappeared, then reappeared saying, "Around the corner I have a friend". Ron got up and moved to a box set USC. He stood on the box and said, "Tomorrow comes and tomorrow goes; and the distance between us, it grows and grows". He

then moved towards the chair which was in between the box and the box in a straight line. Roy looked into the box, then sat down and said: "That's what we get and deserve in the end, around the corner a vanished friend".

Abuse Three Point Exercise (February 19)

ADAM: Adam used three movements and increased their speed and intensity until they exploded. He touched his cheek, moved his hand up, then turned away and brought his hand out.

JEN: Jen used Sandy in this performance. She crouched on the ground, then jumped in the air saying, "I'm small, I'm stupid, and I'm trapped". Then she ran out of the room.

APPENDIX B

Outlines for Just Yell Fire

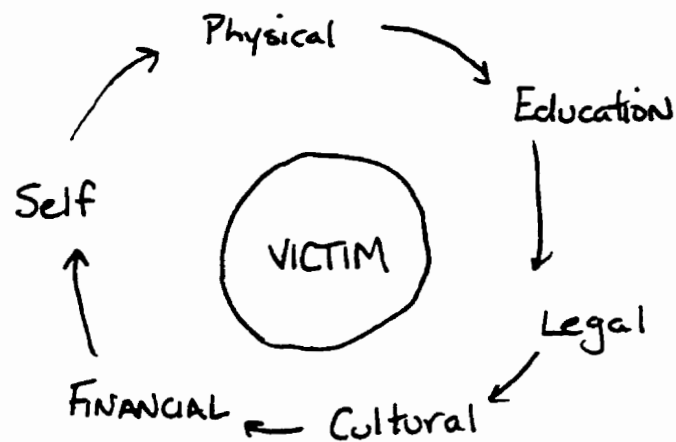
This appendix contains the different outlines created during the Skeletal Development Phase of rehearsal.

Outlines Round 1 (February 10)

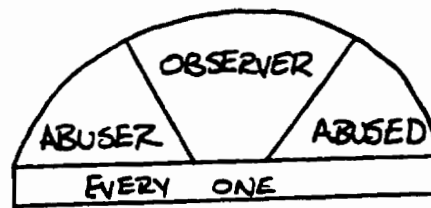
- DAVE:
1. Media (satire)
 2. Other half (Realistic)
 3. Options/Potentials

These three categories were to be explored using the media, particularly the Morrison case as an example. Dave was concerned with the sensationalization of domestic violence, and breaking that down.

CARRIE: Carrie was concerned with why people stay in relationships where domestic violence is prevalent. She felt that her outline should be circular as opposed to linear. The following terms were considered to be 'barriers' for the victim (who was in the middle of the circle): Physical, Education, Legal, Cultural, Financial, Self. These barriers are linked together by a lack of education which continues the cycle. Carrie further suggested that education = non-victim. We came up with a diagram to better explain her outline.



ADAM: Adam wasn't here to defend his ideas, so David presented them. His premise dealt with domestic violence being all around us, an every man issue. He wanted to look at the three archetypes of abuse: abuser, abused, and observer. He further wanted to explore society's attitudes towards this topic. Again, we found that a diagram was helpful in communicating his ideas.



DONNA: Donna wanted to look at the cycle as a spiral rather than a circle. It was important that this cycle dealt with love which then considered core beliefs. This led to the explosion which has to do with power and control. Followed by self-esteem evaluation and a new level of love. She suggested that this be the shape of the production. The cycle should not necessarily come full circle, but suggest that possibility. She further suggested that perhaps the actors reflect this during the show - a stage within a stage idea. "Violence does not bound but creeps into our lives".

RYAN: Ryan divided the show into six different sections, each beginning with one of the found texts. He further suggested some exercises which would lead to an exploration of each issue. They are as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Nature of Abuse
 Carrie's found text
 Evolution Violence
 Energy Ball Exercise</p> | <p>2. Two Sides of Abuse
 Dave's found text
 Donna/Ryan Abuse Scene#1 (Jan 27)
 Carrie's Music Combo (Jan 30)</p> |
| <p>3. Victim Situation
 Donna's found text
 Self-esteem/shame explore
 Writing exercise - explore</p> | <p>4. Everyday
 Ryan's found text
 Secrecy - explore
 Learned Helplessness - explore
 Neglect Scene #1 (Jan 27)</p> |
| <p>5. Fear
 Jen's found text
 Fear Scene #1 (Jan 22)</p> | <p>6. The end
 Adam's found text
 Donna Music - Men's (Feb 3)</p> |

JEN'S: Jen had some points that she wanted to override the production as a whole.

1. People are hurting people that they LOVE.
2. No one changes you, you change no one (Note negative connotation)
3. Everyone must take responsibility (accountability - Dave)
4. Abusers push away because they aren't deserving, not keep them there.
5. Random Acts of Violence - no such thing.

Round 2 - Outlines (February 11)

- RYAN:
1. Nature of Abuse (Carrie mono)
 2. Media (Dave mono)
 3. Victim (Donna mono)
 4. Everyday/Everyone (Ryan mono)
 5. Fear (Jen mono)
 6. 3 Faces of Abuse (Adam mono)

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| DAVE: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature
Carrie mono
Jen's section (Round 1)
Fear 3. Victim Situation
Donna mono
Jen's section (Round 1) 5. Fear
Carrie's section (Round 1) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Media
media vs. fact
Dave's section (Round 1)
Adam mono 4. Everybody
Ryan mono
Bro's on couch scene
forms of abuse 6. End
Carrie's poem
scene
Carrie mono |
|-------|---|---|

- CARRIE: Added the following colours to Dave's:
- Black - begin
 - Red - section 1
 - Orange - section 2

Yellow - section 3

Green - section 4

Blue - section 5

Purple - section 6

Black - end

JEN: Unanswerable questions...

What is abuse?

Why do I abuse?

Why do I take it?

DONNA: *Preshow* - tranquillity, space, freedom, love, self esteem

Impulse - starting point, small scenes

growing to

Everyday/Everyman - core beliefs, media

violence growing

Victim P.O.V - Donna mono, fear increasing, why do we stay?,

observer, neglect

growing tension

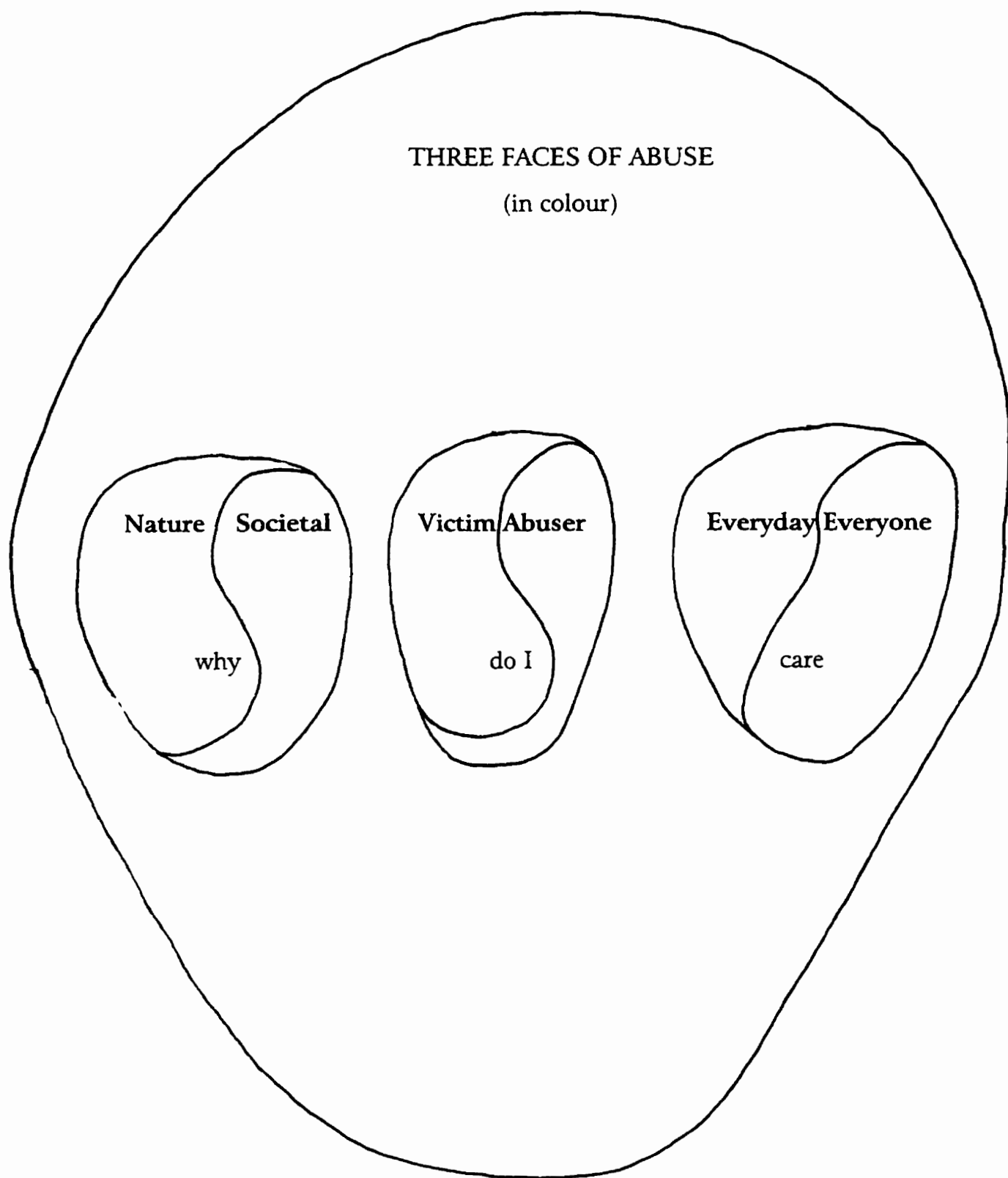
Abuser P.O.V - need to strike out, random acts of violence

all of a sudden

Violence! - power, control, self esteem gone, quick pace, exploding

Return to - Jen's , restricted, closed in, impulse.

Round 3 - Final Outline (February 11)



APPENDIX C

First Draft of Just Yell Fire Written Between March 10 and March 15, 1997

Introduction

In the dark, a woman says the following monologue while beating a drum. The beats should follow a heart beat.

IMPULSE MONOLOGUE

Lights up on Isobel. All other actors are not visible on stage.

Lights down on Isobel. Beat. Act I begins.

Act 1: Nature and Society

*Note: during this act circles will be created and re-created with water.

Perhaps the Smith's have wet feet, which creates their own circle as they run around during their scene. This should be kept in mind during the next few development stages. Society should consist of four different perspective characters. Psychologist, Radical Feminist, Media, Law as a starting point. Their dialogue needs to be developed.

SCENE 1 - (Intro)

Black out. One breath comes from the CS. Several actors slowly join the breathing. The breaths increase in tension/fear until they build into a climax where the entire cast is participating. As the breathing increases in tension, the actors move rapidly around the space. At the climax, the actors should be scurrying outward from the centre and come to an abrupt halt. They are spread out around the room.

SCENE 2 - (Headline)

Newspaper articles are projected on the screen. They are all local clippings which deal with domestic violence. Headlines are important. This is overlapped with the sound of several newscasts overlapping each other, again dealing with domestic violence. This sound should end with the following:

VOICE: Sadly it's a story that no longer shocks: man hits woman, woman leaves man, and man kills woman...Maybe love isn't that different from mouthwash after all.

During this segment, the silhouette of Ryan slams Carrie against the screen. Blood drips down the screen. Black out.

SCENE 3 - (Society then Smith - building of trust)

Carrie lies in the centre of the circle throughout this scene.

Mr. Smith walks very slowly from USL to DSL creating a half circle pattern. He is wearing wet socks, so they leave this pattern on the floor. Mrs. Smith does likewise from USR to DSL. Her feet are dry. They should arrive DSC just before the line, ' The Smiths were married....'.

Psychologist: If we are going to help those in violent relationships we must understand their situations. Part A; they met. They fell in love. For whatever reason, they created a safe and trusting environment. They loved each other. Their being together fills a need for each of them. Humans have basic needs. They must satisfy their needs. Love, trust. Those are their basic needs. Their needs are the beginning.

Part A.

Media: At three pm on Tuesday March 2, 1997 those of us in the newsroom heard the tragic police call come over the emergency scanner. "Shot fired. A woman has been shot". Without skipping a beat assistant news editor Joe Taylor made this prediction. "She probably left her husband, so he killed her. " Joe was bang on. One woman dead, two daughters orphaned. They are forever left with the question we all want to ask at times like this: Why? Why does a broken relationship lead to man to kill his former lover? To quote John Smith as he exited the courthouse....

Law: Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families 555-6114. Action Committee Against Violence 555-6295. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence-related). Names you can trust.

Psychologist: Courtship. She may be attracted to him because he seems so

strong. They have a strong sexual attraction. It is likely that inside they are unsure of themselves. Commitment. At some point they take on the traditional roles...

Media: The Smiths were married on August 1, 1991. (*Smith's kiss*)

Law: Alberta Mental Health 555-4520. Civil Court - Restraining Orders 555-5936. Dial - a - Law 555-9022. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence - related) Names you can trust.

Media: They were separated in 1994. (*Mr. Smith walks quickly back in the direction he came from. He completes 3/4 of the circle. Mrs. Smith does the same. This time her feet are wet. They do not look at one another as they pass the halfway point.*)

Psychologist: As the cycle continues.

SCENE 4 - (real trust)

Four actors are standing at four different points outside of a circle, facing out. Carrie is in the centre of the circle. Ryan joins her. They do a series of trust falls during the following lines:

Ryan: Confidence in a person or thing because of the qualities one perceives or seems

Carrie: Confidence.

Ryan: to perceive in him. The person in whom one has confidence.

Carrie: Conviction.

Ryan: Acceptance of something as true or reliable without being able

Carrie: Faith.

Ryan: to verify it. Faith in the future.

Carrie: Custody.

Ryan: An equitable right or interest in a property held by one person on behalf

Carrie: Liability, guardianship.

Ryan: of another. To permit to use something in the proper way.

Carrie: Assume, expect, pressure.

Ryan plays with not fully catching her. Carrie acknowledges this, then she continues the trust exercise with Actor 1 who is just on the line of the circle. Actor 1 catches Carrie, but won't release her. She goes back and trust falls into Ryan.

Actor 1: Love hurts.

Ryan: A powerful emotion felt for another

Carrie: Person manifesting itself in deep affection, devotion, or sexual desire

Ryan drops Carrie. She backs away and turns to face Actor 2. Actor 2 hugs her and pats her hair. This develops into too much patting. Carrie goes back and trust falls into Ryan.

Actor 2: You must have done something to deserve it.

Ryan: Suddenly and unexpectedly

Carrie: to be taken with a possessive liking.

Ryan pushes Carrie towards Actor 3. She turns and trust falls into Actor 3. Actor 3 catches her unwillingly.

Actor 3: What will people think?

Stands Carrie up and faces her toward Ryan. She runs past him to Actor 4 who folds her arms in front of her like a straight jacket and holds her as she struggles.

Actor 4: It hurts me more than it hurts you.

Carrie struggles free and runs to Ryan. He holds her gently.

Ryan: Love, honour, and obey.

Carrie: Trust?

Actors 1 through 4 slowly move in on Ryan and Carrie. Ryan laughs while Carrie closes her eyes and repeats 'Trust' over and over.

Actor 1: You made your bed, now lie in it.

Actor 2: I find it hard to believe.

Actor 3: It's nothing to cry about.

Actor 4: Why don't you put it behind you?

Ryan and Actors 1 through 4 repeat their final lines while encircling Carrie. They begin to move in a circle around her. This builds to a crescendo until Carrie screams. All actors scurry out of the circle. Carrie is left staring at the audience blankly. Black out.

SCENE 5 - (Social then Smith self esteem)

The Smiths begin US of the circle and move towards each other around the edges of the circle during this scene. They meet DS of the circle and respond to what the Media is saying.

*develop social text prior to Smith

Media 3: This is normal however as most woman are not with their first

husbands; yet one in three still use the same mouthwash they used as a teenager.

Social 2: They are reunited a year later.

Social 1: She wants to be a good wife.

Social 2: His jealousy is just a sign that he really loves her.

SCENE 6 - (Real self-esteem)

Julie stands inside the circle. She is creating movement which expresses herself and her identity. Scott walks by and Julie tries to share her movement with him. He tries briefly.

Scott: Stupid.

Julie stops her movement as Scott exits. She picks up her movement again, trying to 'fix' it. Scott enters again. She awaits his judgement.

Scott: Really fucking stupid.

Julie's movement is visibly affected. She almost cannot move, but flickers in moments of what her movement was. Scott returns.

Scott: (silence)

Options: Julie is left absolutely still. Julie drops dead.

SCENE 7 (Social then Smith Oppression)

*add text to develop oppression

The Smiths are DS outer ring of circle. They respond to what the media says. They run around the outer edge of the circle, meeting at the top and at the bottom of the circle.

Media 3: John Smith was deeply depressed at the end of his 18 year marriage.

Social 1: He hits her.

Social 2: It happens again and again and again.

Social 1: She leaves again.

All : The pattern is set.

SCENE 8 - (Real oppression)

The following is a sequence dealing with oppression. The only words used are Yes, No, Oh. There is an observer who is being held back by three cast members. Joan is standing above Peter. Joan says, "NO". Peter says, "OH". Joan puts Peter in a cage?

Peter begins to say, "Yes" while Joan says "Oh. Peter wants out. Joan eventually moves across the room from Peter. Observer breaks free and tries to help Peter. He rejects this offer joins Joan. Joan puts her arm around Peter and says, "No".

SCENE 9 - (Society then Smith Addiction)

*add text to develop Society addiction

The scene begins with the Smiths running from US circle to SL and SR sides of circle. They stop and begin the three point movement with the three sounds. This leads them to the DS water part.

Social 1: Tension.

Social 2: Build up.

Social 1: Violent Explosion. *(Mr. Smith falls to the ground and smashes his hand into some water)*

Social 2: HONEY MOON!

Social 1: Each time she leaves him...and returns. *(Mrs. Smith does small version of running around the circle.)*

Social 2: There is more danger. *(The Smiths get up and run around the circle, meeting at the US end).*

SCENE 10 - (Real addiction)

This scene should resemble the 'monster scene' but will be reworked to incorporate the following ideas. The two figures dancing remain the same. The monsters represent the 'have to love' and 'have to leave' sides of the dancers. This grows in tension, text should be developed here as well. Eventually, the couple chooses to leave the monsters and depend on their own ability to trust each other. They move behind the screen. Once behind, their shadows suggest the beginning of a romantic interlude when blood splats across the scene like a slash wound. The monsters have moved to the perimeter of the circle and Boy steps forward with a teddy bear in hand. He moves very close to the screen and stares at his parents. He turns around and sits ready for scene 11.

SCENE 11 - (Merge of Social and Real)

Punch and Judy emerge from the cage (their show wagon). Text is developed for them in the Punch and Judy style. The child watches the scene unfold. He slowly picks apart his teddy bear through out (ripping off the arms, head, etc.)

MEDIA 3 also supervises the production from his media spot. His commentary should be worked into the Punch and Judy dialogue to be developed. It is as follows:

MEDIA 3: Now remember, there are woman who assault men. This is not to disparage men however, but does tend to prove what common sense has been saying for some time. That is; that long before a woman is ready to settle down with the right man, she is ready to settle down with the right product.

Perhaps Media becomes the 'victim' of Punch and Judy rather than the boy? In this case, the show ends when Media has been successfully killed.

SCENE 12 - (Merge into Smith)

*this may be the whole group developing the text, then Mr Smith being left with the text.

Mr. Smith will develop a monologue inspired by the 'seed planting scene' from Nature's first developments. It should include the following dialogue:

MR. SMITH: Flick, bite, punch, kick, kill. *(in progressive sequence with movement)*

This will be inside of a circle.

Mrs. Smith is DS possibly in the circle, playing with the water during this scene. She may be outside too.

SCENE 13 - (Smith real image)

Mr. Smith makes his way around the circle and sneaks up behind her. This could be another instance of is he in or out of the circle.

Social 1: She leaves him for good.

Social 2: Like a lion, creeping through the cattails, then freezing in camouflage...waiting.

Social 1: For unsuspecting prey.

Social 2: He pursued her, racked the shotgun close to her body. This was the shot that went into the back of her neck.

Mr. Smith slaps his hand on the floor. Mrs. Smith falls dead. All of the actors in the perimeter do so as well.

SCENE 14 - (Conclusion)

Black out.

Breathing similar to the end of Scene 1. The breathing tapers out so that there is one single person breathing. A light highlights the last person breathing.

Black out.

Some Additional Notes

- *the act should clearly suggest society, then Smith as connection, then real.
- *progression into chaos
- *develop more text for social
- *all real is inside circle
- *all Smith is on edge of circle or a creation of their own circle
- *social surrounds circle

Prelude to Act 2

Lights up. The actors are lying where they fell at Mrs. Smith's death. Isobel chalks the bodies of four actors. These will be their resting places all through Act 2. Mr. Smith is not given an outline. When she is done, the lights shift into Act 2.

Act 2: Abuser and Abused

*Note: Throughout the act there might be a hand which is slowly closing into a fist behind the screen. This may be scattered or constant. The actors who are not in a scene (except Newspaper Guy and Non-existing Man) may also be in different positions, lying in chalk outlines.

SCENE 1

Lights up on two areas of the stage where NEWSPAPER GUY and NON-EXISTENT MAN.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. Don't

Non-existent Man: Have you ever been used?

Newspaper Guy: get ideas. I'm in control.

Non-existing Man: Nothing to hope for? Fields of pain?

Newspaper Guy: Nobody will ever love you the way that I love you, 'cause nobody's that

Non-Existent Man: Humanity is a lie? You drive yourself insane

Newspaper Guy: strong. If you're gonna go running scared.

Non-existent Man: Life. L-I-F-E. Live in fear everyday.

Newspaper Guy: I'm right behind you. You belong to me.

SCENE 2

Enter Janice with a flower. During the monologue she picks the petals off the flower and places them in a circle around her.

Janice: I shave my veins. With the same blade you shave your face. With the same blades I gouged your neck. With the same blades you scratched our baby's heart. With the same blades I cut your throat. With the same blades. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bite. I stitch. I scar. I bite. I stitch. I scar. With the same blades.

SCENE 3

The buto hand closing into a fist is predominant during this scene. There may be other actors punctuating the following monologue.

Actor: I don't see myself as a violent person. My father...now there was a man with a temper. My worst fear was that someday I would end up like my Dad. I may have a short fuse -- but that's normal. Sure, sometimes my wife pisses me off. She can be real stupid, you know? Once she picked a fight with me over money. Can you believe it? I had to show her, show her who was boss. I'm nothing without that. She'd starve with out me, and there she is complaining about money. She knows just how to push my buttons. Sometimes I think she's afraid of me. Doesn't she know that I love her? But I'm not violent. Ask anyone. Ask my co-workers...my former co-workers. She knows I have a lot of pressures...I'm on edge and she should just know better. I guess I showed her.

SCENE 4

Lights up on Non-Existent Man.

Non-existent Man: I am the abused. I am the product of domestic strife. I am you pain, your fear, your hate; I am you. Society is my mirror. Society is my creator. Yet you deny me. You say I don't exist. That will never happen to me, you say. I would never do that, you say. I see you eyes. I know what's on your mind. "I'm not like you" -- Are you sure?

SCENE 5

Enter Brad with a chair. He sits in the centre of the rose circle.

Brad: I think I know who I am. I know who I am. I want to be strong but

strength brings on a wrath more powerful than anything physical. It's difficult when somebody you love so much feels that way about you. I'm slowly dissembled piece by piece. She is the most loving person that I know. When she is happy she is a glowing connection to my heart. Occupying a large portion of what is me...what used to be me. I love her. I could never leave her. But I live in daily fear that she will leave me and the children. The stakes are high. Because the roller coaster of life can drop in a death plunge long before you're ready. It is my fault that it exists this way, so tenuously. I try to walk an even keel and hold it all together but I fail. And she'll let me know how much I matter. As a person I feel like an empty shell. I have given my heart, my soul, my confidence, my dreams, and myself. There are times I want to strike out and fight to regain that which I've misplaced. Perhaps some day I will. You have nothing. You contribute nothing. You are full of shit. Lazy. Using. Self-centred. Abusive. You are worthless. Fat. And just as bad as your mother. You are me, what I've become. My identity. And life goes on. I love you, and I will never leave you.

SCENE 6

Lights up on Newspaper Guy

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I'm like a broken toy, forgotten on the shelf. I was never young -- never just a little boy. Every time I turn around, there you are again, lying with your eyes while your hands are busy working overtime. I'd give you everything I've got for a little peace of mind.

SCENE 7

An actor (child from Act 1) sits down on the floor. Another female actor draws a box around him on the floor while humming rock a bye baby. She leaves. She comes back miming a baby in her arms. She continues to hum to the baby, ignoring the child in the box. She leaves. The child is visibly upset. The child might say, "Mommy?" at the end of the scene.

SCENE 8

This is a piece to be choreographed. It will include 2 to 4 actors. The child will remain in the box throughout the piece as observer of what is happening. It is based on the tying hair idea, and the bonding wrist idea from earlier rehearsals. Excerpts from Adam's free association writings might be used as text over the piece. That will be decided after the choreography has been established.

SCENE 9

Lights up on Newspaper Guy.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I was the only five year old I knew who didn't want his bedroom door left open a crack. Did you forget I was there? I could hear you yell -- and her scream. I could hear the thud against the wall. Why didn't you do it to me? What did I do wrong? How can I make it better?

SCENE 10

Laura enters and lies down on her back with her head US. Newspaper Guy and Non-existent Man draw the outline of a coffin around her. She gives her monologue lying down.

Laura: Bless me father, for I have sinned. There must be something wrong with me. I want to be good wife, to please him I feel like I've failed him in some way. It was an accident. He didn't mean it. Not really. He only shoved me -- the first time. I must provoke him. He's had an unhappy childhood. It's only when he's drinking. He really is a good man. He really does love me.

Ten Hail Mary's? I'll try harder.

SCENE 11

Lights up on Non-existent Man.

Non-existent Man: Remember the night in the black room full of fear. Cutting your teeth. Learning a new and harsh language. One day you will realize that I am a part of you. Seeking out help, reaching for me.

SCENE 12

It is very dark. There might be some kind of light which glows behind the screen. There also might be a door shutting effect during this scene as well. Melissa comes in and is in the circle of flowers.

Melissa: Maybe if I lie really still. Maybe if I look really ugly. Maybe if I seem really sick. Just let me sleep. Please I want to sleep. No...no...no. Oh no. Maybe if I lie really still. Maybe if I look really ugly. Maybe if I seem really sick. But I can handle this. Just remember that it feels...good. Just remember that he loves me. Because he loves me. He loves. Me. (pain) He loves me not. He loves me (pain) He loves me not. He loves me (pain) He loves me not. (Vomit)

Child can be seen through the door? Child says, "mommy?". Melissa continues.

Maybe if I lie really still...

SCENE 13

During the next scene, Melissa slowly eats the rose petals which are surrounding her. Newspaper Guy and Non-existent Man are lit.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I know you. Stop pretending -- you've never raised your voice, you've never put someone down, you've never hurt someone you love. Stop

pretending -- it won't happen again. You've never let someone you love hurt you. Stop pretending it's never touched your life. Stop pretending it's not a part of you.

Non-existent Man: I'm here for you, here to serve you. But I don't exist, remember?

Conclusion

Isobel draws a partial circle which encompasses the stage, starting at one end of the audience, and concluding at the other side. The circle should suggest that the audience is now inside of it.

APPENDIX D

Final Copy of the Script - April 12

Just Yell Fire

A Collectively Written Piece

This script was researched and created during a twelve week period from January 13 to April 4, 1997. It was then work shopped in the Reeve Theatre at the University of Calgary from April 9 to April 12, 1997.

Director: Nicole King
 Designer: Douglas McCullough
 Choreographer: David Barrus
 Lighting Designer: Roger Dewald
 Production Stage Manager: Nova lea Thorne
 Rehearsal Stage Manager: Jeff Nelson
 Producer, University of Calgary Department of Drama: Brian Smith

Cast & Co-Creators

Ryan Gladstone
 Carrie Innes
 Jennifer Kelly
 C. Adam Leigh
 David Trimble
 Donna Tunney

*Actors play multiple characters throughout the show. The suggested casting breakdown is as follows:

Media, Ryan, Newspaper Guy, Peter
 Radical Feminist, Carrie, Love - Female, Isobel, Janice
 Crisis, Dave, Leave - Male, Brad, Scott, Father
 Mr. Smith, Leave - Male, Joe, Punch, Friend
 Mrs. Smith, Leave - Female, Judy, Laura, Sister
 Psychologist, Jen, Non-Existent, Mother

Prologue

In the dark, Carrie says the following monologue. A drum is beating in the back ground.

Carrie: *Two beats.* Impulse. Impulse. Situation, violation, isolation, perpetuation. On average the incident was too minor to become further involved in acts of a soldier's. Invasion. Lack of freedom. Lack of medical evidence to prove. Truth. Trust. Testimony often dangerous to accept the uncorroborated. Peace bond. Projection of blame. Minimizing 40% 50% 74% one in four thirty four times before creating another place. For the mind. To. Go. And this made. Unpleasant experience. Lie still. Make yourself the smallest target possible. Deny or Justify. *Drum stops.* Impulse.

One breath comes from the CS. Several actors slowly join the breathing. The breaths increase in tension/fear until they build into a climax where the entire cast is participating. As the breathing increases in tension, the actors move rapidly around the space. At the climax, the actors should be scurrying outward from the centre and come to an abrupt halt.

Act 1: Nature and Society

SCENE 1

Lights up on Isobel. All other actors are not visible on stage. She is drawing a spiral DSC with chalk. As the spiral gets bigger, she draws faster. The chalk breaks in two. She looks at the audience.

Isobel: I know them. I've seen what they've done.

Isobel puts her hand in the water. She rubs out part of the picture, leaving some traces of it behind. Beat. Blackout.

SCENE 2

Headlines from local newspaper articles are projected on the screen. This is overlapped with the sound of several newscasts. This sound should end with the following recording:

Media: Sadly it's a story that no longer shocks: man hits woman, woman leaves man, and man kills woman...Maybe love isn't that different from mouthwash after all.

During this segment, the silhouette of Media slams Radical Feminist against the screen. Blood drips down the screen. Black out.

SCENE 3

Carrie lies in the centre of the circle throughout this scene.

Mr. Smith walks very slowly from USL to DSL creating a half circle pattern. Mrs. Smith does likewise from USR to DSL. She wears a net as a veil. They should arrive DSC just before the line, ' Alberta Association....'. They create a ritual of dipping their feet in water for a marriage ceremony.

Crisis's lines are delivered from US of the screen. He highlights words from the Psychologist's speech by drawing them with his finger in the blood.

Enter Psychologist with a nerf dart gun. Media holds a nerf bat as a microphone. They use these throughout the act.

Psychologist: If we are going to help those in violent relationships we must understand their situations. *Shoots the dart at the screen.* Part A; they met. They fell in love. For whatever reason, they created a safe and trusting environment. They loved each other. Their being together fills a need for each of them. Humans have basic needs. They must satisfy their needs. Love, trust. Those are their basic needs. Their needs are the beginning.
Part A.

Media: At three pm on Tuesday March 3, 1997 those of us in the newsroom heard the tragic police call come over the emergency scanner. "Shot fired. A woman has been shot". Without skipping a beat assistant news editor Joe Taylor made this prediction. "She probably left her husband, so he killed her." Joe was bang on. One woman dead, two daughters orphaned. They are forever left with the question we all want to ask at times like this: Why? Why does a broken relationship lead a man to kill his former lover?

Crisis: Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families 555-6114. Action Committee Against Violence 555-6295. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence-related). Names you can trust.

Psychologist: Courtship. She may be attracted to him because he seems so

strong. They have a strong sexual attraction. It is likely that inside they are unsure of themselves. Commitment. At some point they take on the traditional roles.

Media: The Smiths were married on August 1, 1991.

Crisis: Alberta Mental Health 555-4520. Civil Court - Restraining Orders 555-5936. Dial - a - Law 555-9022. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence - related) Names you can trust.

Media: They were separated in 1994.

Mrs. Smith drops the veil. Mr. Smith walks quickly back in the direction he came from. He completes 3/4 of the circle. Mrs. Smith does the same. This time her feet are wet.

Media enters the circle and looks down at Carrie. He drags the net into the circle with his foot. Her body contracts into a fetal position.

Psychologist: As the cycle continues.

SCENE 4

Friend, Mother, Father, and Sister are standing at different points outside of a circle, facing in.

Carrie is in the centre of the circle. Media extends his hand to her. He lifts Carrie up into a trust fall.

Media: Confidence in a person or thing because of the qualities one perceives or seems to perceive in him. The person in whom one has confidence.

Carrie: Confidence.

Media: Conviction.

A second trust fall is done, this time gently allowing Carrie to roll onto the ground. She picks up the net and holds it until she is dropped.

Media: Acceptance of something as true or reliable without being able to verify it.

Carrie: Faith.

Media: Faith in the future.

Carrie: Custody.

A third trust fall is done where Carrie jumps backwards and is caught by Media. He holds her.

Media: An equitable right or interest in a property held by one person on behalf of another.

Media drops Carrie to the floor.

Carrie: Permit.

Media: To permit to use something in the proper way.

Carrie: Assume, expect, pressure.

She runs to Friend and trust falls into him. He holds her tightly.

Friend: Love hurts.

Carrie runs back to Media. Leaps high into his arms, so her legs are above his shoulders.

Media: A powerful emotion felt for another..

Carrie: ..person manifesting itself in deep affection, devotion, or sexual desire.

Carrie runs and leaps into Mother. She slides down her body. Mother does nothing to catch her.

Mother: You must have done something to deserve it.

Carrie goes back and trust falls into Media.

Media: Suddenly and unexpectedly...

Carrie: ...to be taken with a possessive liking.

Media shrugs Carrie towards Father. She rolls on the ground towards Father. He kicks her away.

Father: What will people think?

Carrie faces Media. She tries to communicate to him without touch. He rejects her. She runs past him to Sister who folds Carrie's arms in front of her like a straight jacket and holds her as she struggles.

Sister: It hurts me more than it hurts you.

Carrie struggles free and runs to Media. He calms her, then places the net on her head.

Media: Trust.

Carrie: Love, honour, and obey.

Friend, Mother, Father, and Sister move in and grab a piece of the net during their lines. Media moves away after placing the net on Carrie. He should be DS of the circle.

Friend: You made your bed, now lie in it.

Mother: I find it hard to believe.

Father: It's nothing to cry about.

Sister: Why don't you put it behind you?

Friend, Mother, Father, and Sister repeat their final lines while wrapping Carrie with the net. It traps her. She screams. The actors scurry away. She is left standing motionless. She slowly picks the netting away from her.

SCENE 5

Carrie brings the net to Media's feet. She drops it. Radical Feminist takes over.

Media: The Smiths were re-united one year later

Smith's enter with wet feet. They are arm in arm and walk briskly in a full circle from SR to SL. Media joins them and continues slightly beyond where the Smith's stop. They should all be in place by the end of Radical Feminist's line.

Radical Feminist steps on the net.

Radical Feminist: Violence against women is systematic and socially structured. It is perpetuated on women because of the inherent hierarchal structure of our society. It is about women. It is about their self-esteem. Patriarchy breeds batterers and victimizes women. This hierarchy must end if violence is expected to end.

Crisis uses blood to emphasize Psychologist's lecture. Psychologists shoots a dart at the Smith's feet.

Psychologist: Part B: the hierarchy of needs produces self-esteem. Once the

level of trust is established then bonding can occur. This bonding creates a positive self-esteem provided both partners are trusting equally. If this is not the case, tension increases. Part B.

Smiths walk in another circle. This time they are both trying to control how the other walks.

Crisis: Canadian Research Institute for Law and Family 555-6653. Women in Need 555-0807. Calgary Resource Inventory (violence - related). Helping you improve your self-esteem.

Crisis writes 'self-esteem' in blood on the screen as he says it.

Radical Feminist: In 2,500 B.C., if a wife talked back to her husband, he could engrave her name on a brick and use the brick to hit her. In the middle ages, church and state accepted that a wife was the property of her husband. Wives could be bought and sold, and they could be burned at the stake for scolding, nagging, or talking back to their husbands. In the eighteenth century, a British court ruled that a husband could beat his wife, so long as the stick he used was no thicker than his thumb. In the nineteenth century, a judge stated, "If no permanent injury has been inflicted..by the husband, it is better to draw the curtain, shut out the public gaze, and leave the parties to forget and forgive.

Media: Key witness John Armstrong said the accused reached into his pocket for another shell and, fearing for his own life, said that he took a large step away from the door to where the accused couldn't see him. Armstrong further

testified to chief Crown prosecutor Gordon McPhee that he had studied the accused's face because he thought he might be the only witness.

Media crosses down stage and touches the net. Crisis' shadow attacks Psychologist throughout the next lines.

Psychologist: We need to define. Abuse, no, physical abuse: pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking, breaking bones, knifing, shooting, or use of other weapons, locking out of one's home, abandoning in an unsafe place, murder. There. Them and it.

Crisis: Discovery House 555-0718. Independent Living Resource Centre 555-2721. Calgary Resource Inventory (violence-related). Helping you improve your self-esteem.

Radical Feminist: Look at the institution of marriage - and it is an institution. The patriarchal structure of that institution cultivates submissiveness in women. It wasn't until 1968 that a woman could be granted a divorce because of cruelty.

Media wraps himself in the net as Radical Feminist approaches him.

Psychologist: Tension.

Crisis' shadow slams against the screen, releasing more blood. Mrs. Smith makes a small circle break away from Mr. Smith.

Psychologist: They want a good marriage. They started with a high level of self-confidence. They began to doubt their worth. The abuse is something that they believe they deserve due to a low self-esteem. They leave. They come back.

Radical Feminist: And the cycle continues.

SCENE 6

Scott stands inside the circle. He is repeating a section of movement. With each repetition he is growing in self-esteem.

Scott: Me. Really me. Me.

Psychologist: Stupid.

Scott stops his movement. He begins his movement again, this time changing it slightly. He repeats this three times.

Scott: Me. Definitely me. Me?

Psychologist: Really fucking stupid.

He almost cannot move. He looks at her. She says nothing. He is crouched on the floor. Psychologist touches him, then leaves.

Psychologist: Emotional abuse; put downs, constant criticism, threats to hurt or kill your partner, children or pets, jealousy, denying your partner friends, controlling with fear, ignoring.

Scott stands and reinforces Carrie's final position from Scene 4. He exits.

SCENE 7

Media: John Smith was deeply depressed at the end of his previous 18 year marriage.

Mr. Smith walks slowly around half of the circle. Radical Feminist addresses Psychologist's screen.

Radical Feminist: We must accept that domestic violence is primarily a women's issue. Regardless of how you define abuse, the majority of the victims are women. Men are naturally capable of physical domination and they are culturally defined as superior. Women need more protection, they need a place to turn to. We must call on our governments to support programs which help the victim overcome the abuse. Only by focusing on the woman, can we put an end to this senseless violence.

Crisis: Men's Crisis Centre 555-9680, Women Looking Forward 555-9144. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence Related). Stop the Oppression.

Mr. Smith makes a violent gesture with a sound. Mrs. Smith makes a receiving gesture

with a sound. This continues three times during Psychologist's lines. Then they both recover and breathe at the same time. Crisis creates a shadow recovering from abuse.

Psychologist: He hits her./ It happens again/ and again.

Media: The neighbour recalled that Mrs. Smith's fear was felt throughout the quiet residential streets where they had lived together with their son for two years. "I was afraid he would hurt my children too", said their neighbour, remembering the feeling he had after watching the six o'clock news. The Smith's had split up approximately two months prior to the tragedy after months of loud, protracted quarrelling.

Radical Feminist: The sensationalization of certain dramatic cases dealing in domestic violence often lead to the woman being the 'journalistic flavour of the day'. This kind of vulturistic exploitation can only digress all that women have done so far to address this issue.

*Crisis writes, " T.V, Psych, W.S, and Hypocrazy"with blood on the screen.
Psychologist shoots the dart at Radical Feminist.*

Psychologist: Part C: The destruction of the hierarchy of needs due to increased tension leads to a new plateau for them. Control becomes of central importance. Oppression as a tool to maintain control is commonly used between them. A new hierarchy is created it follows a set pattern. The steps which one can expect to see occurring during the relationship which results from the introduction of physical violence are as follows:

The Smith's take small steps towards the DS water area. When they meet, Mr. Smith makes her dip her feet in the water.

Media: He calls you a fat cow. His moods are so unpredictable that you find yourself doing things that you know will instigate trouble just so that you can control it. You both punch the redial button on the phone to find out the last number called. Domestic abuse starts with anger and ends with violence. This is what happened to the Smiths and experts say that is not uncommon.

Radical Feminist: Each time he hits her, she comes back. It is learned. It is repressed and it is oppressed.

Psychologist : She leaves him.

Mrs Smith runs quickly around the circle and ends up back facing Mr. Smith. She stops, dips her feet, and continues running. Mr. Smith runs the opposite way after her. They both exit behind the screen.

Crisis: YW Support Men that Batter 555-4111, Lawyer Referral 555-1722.
Calgary Resource Inventory (violence related). Stop the oppression.

Media: So the cycle continues.

Psychologist sits in front of the water, touching it.

SCENE 8

Crisis comes from behind the screen. He has a wet rag in his hand which drips. Throughout the scene, he draws a circle around himself. It should cross over the Smith's circle. Once the circle is finished, he tries to leave the circle and can't.

Radical Feminist and Peter begin their scene. The only words used are Yes, No, Oh. Radical Feminist draws Peter towards her with her eyes. He tries to hug her. She says no. She hugs him, turns away. He tries to hug her. He falls to the ground. Peter takes a crouch position similar to Carrie's from Scene 4. Radical Feminist is standing above Peter. She says, "NO". Peter says, "OH". This happens one more time. Radical Feminist then draws a circle around Peter with a wet cloth. Radical Feminist crosses to the other side of the stage. Law says, "hey" in Peter's direction. Peter says, "oh" to Radical Feminist To get her attention. Law says, "oh" to get Peter's attention. He reaches out and pulls Peter from his circle to join Law's circle. Once Peter is in Law's circle he becomes overbearingly protective. Peter breaks free and runs to Radical Feminist He crouches in his earlier position. Radical Feminist says, "No". Peter stands and she looks at him. He falls to the ground and slowly returns to his original crouched position. Black out.

SCENE 9

Crisis: Anger Management Court Reference 555-9610. Alternatives to Violence Project 555-9605. Calgary Resource Inventory (violence-related).

Blood splats across the screen.

All: Tension.

Light flashes to reveal a large shadow of a person. Media, Radical Feminist, and Psychologist walk DS along the line and into a circle moving counter clockwise. The Smith's are walking separately on each side of the circle from US to DS.

Psychologist: Part D: With increasing tension, a pattern of abuse has evolved. The steps leading up to the inevitable acute incidence of abuse has been followed, now the pattern is set. It consists of three

Psychologist stops.

Radical Feminist: Three archetypes are involved in cases of domestic violence. The abused, the abuser and the witness. In an effort to address the issues of domestic violence, attention is being directed at the later two of those three.

Radical Feminist stops.

Media: Three women in three days. Dead. All allegedly due to spousal abuse. And in other news today, it has been proven that mouthwash can be addictive. Our chief medical consultant will have more on that matter in three minutes.

Media stops. The Smith's meet in the centre and watch each other. Tension between them should build until violent explosion. Mr. Smith - anger, Mrs. Smith - fear.

Crisis: Survivors Anonymous 555-2083. Calgary Resource Inventory (violence related).

Another splat of blood cross the screen.

All: Build-up.

Flash on person behind the screen, shadow is smaller.

Psychologist: This pattern of abuse builds up for years. Sometimes it is intermittent, while other times it can be quite rigid. It is the intermittency of the cycle which causes and addiction to that lifestyle. The woman stays in the relationship due to an inexplicable bond which the couple has created right from the moment they chose to be a couple. This is where the problem of domestic violence lies. Part D.

Radical Feminist: One in eight Canadian Women living with a male partner experiences some kind of abuse. There are potentially more than 72,000 abused women in Alberta.

Media: Reports say, the woman turned, screamed, and ran.

Crisis: Calgary Police Services - Crisis Unit 555-8998. Canadian Red Cross Society 555-4423. Calgary Resource Inventory (Violence Related).

Slamming of person against the screen.

All: Violent Explosion.

Mr. Smith falls to the ground and smashes his hand into the water. Mrs. Smith tries to

wash off his face. He smiles, they stand up and kiss. They dip their feet and begin to run in opposite directions around the circle. Psychologist, Radical Feminist, and Media run DS at the same time that the Smith's begin to run. They stop and look at the water. They repeat the kiss. Flash small shadow person on the screen. Black out.

SCENE 10

Actors are frozen mid step. Ryan enters . Once he is almost at CS all other actors begin to walk around the stage. Ryan performs a gesture and then blends in with the crowd. Jen appears in the same spot shortly after this and does her own gesture. She too then blends into the crowd. Ryan and Jen notice each other as the actors spiral around them, bringing them together. The other actors then disburse to four corners and slowly melt towards the ground. Each actor repeats one of the following words randomly throughout the melting process, after Jen and Ryan have said their first lines.

Love - Fem: Forever.

Love - Masc: Do us.

Leave - Fem: Until.

Leave - Masc: Death.

Ryan and Jen are moving to a piece which explores falling in love. They each find movement to express themselves, and try to add the other person's movement in an effort to become part of each other. The leaves repeat , "I'll never leave" and the loves repeat,

"I'll always love" to punctuate the scene.

Ryan: Forever.

Jen: Until Death do us.

The choreography is such that when Ryan and Jen go to repeat the movement after this point, they are unable to capture what was previous. When this is established, Jen and Ryan turn to their Leave persons.

Love - both: I'll never.

Ryan & Jen: Leave.

Ryan and Jen go to their Leaves. They begin two duets which build to Leave taking possession of each of them. Ryan and Jen leave and go back to each other. They try to rebuild what they had. It is awkward. During this the following is said:

Leave - both: I'll always.

Love joins Jen and Ryan's movement.

Jen & Ryan: Love.

Leaves join the movement. They each break off into sections of movement which suggests both Ryan and Jen's original statements about them selves. At a point this becomes frenzied, and the Leaves and Loves begin to run in a circle around the room. They are moving into two gender based trios.

Love - Fem: Forever

Leave - Fem: Until

Leave - Masc: Death

Love - Masc: Do us.

The two trios explore both sides of Love and Leave with Jen and Ryan. It is a split consciousness. Each side eventually has a tug of war with Ryan and Jen.

Love - Both: I'll always (*repeat*)

Leave - Both: I'll never (*repeat*)

They are pushed into a group.

Jen: Love.

Ryan: Leave.

The group pushes Jen and Ryan down.

Others: Addiction.

Jen and Ryan crawl out from underneath and run DS centre.

Ryan & Jen: Forever until death do us.

The group melts down to the floor. Jen and Ryan make their way behind the screen. Their shadows suggest a loving moment. Crisis emerges from the group holding a Teddy bear. He walks toward this image.

Crisis: I'll never.

He turns and huddles in the corner of the screen.

Crisis: I'll always.

SCENE 11

Crisis is watching the following scene. During the next scene, he picks apart his teddy bear.

Punch: Where's the child? Fetch me the child, Judy my dear. There's a wife for you! What a precious darling creature. She's gone to fetch our child.

Judy grabs the net.

Judy: Here's the child. Pretty dear! It knows its papa.

Punch: Give it to me - the pretty thing! How like its sweet mamma.

Judy: How awkward you are!

Punch: Give it to me! I know how to nurse it just as well as you do. Now, get away. *Judy Exits* What a pretty baby it is. *Sings the following to rock a bye baby.*

Oh rest thee my baby
Thy daddy is here.
Thy mamma's quite gabby
Yes that's very clear.

Oh rest thee my baby
Thy mother will come
with a voice like a starling
I wish she were dumb!

Baby begins to cry.

What's the matter with it? Poor thing! Hush a bye, hush a bye. Noisy thing! Hush a bye, hush a bye. Nasty thing! Judy! Oh Judy! Keep quiet, can't you? HUSH A BYE, HUSH A BYE! Quiet! Quiet, I say. *Hits the child.* Oh, you filthy nasty child. What have you done? I won't keep such a nasty child. Hold your tongue! *Strikes the child several times on the stage.* There - there! There! How do you like that? I thought I could stop your squalling. Get along with you, your nasty, naughty, crying child. *Throws the child away.* He, he, he. That's better.

Judy enters with a toy bat.

Judy: Where's the child?

Punch: The child? Ah-h-h. Gone to sleep!

Judy: What have you done with the child, I say?

Punch: Gone to sleep I say.

Judy: What have you done with it?

Punch: How should I know?

Judy: I heard you make the pretty darling cry!

Punch: I dropped it out of the window.

Judy: Oh you cruel horrid wretch. To drop the pretty baby out of the window!
OH! You barbarous man! Oh!

Punch: You shall have another soon, Judy my dear. There's plenty more where that came from.

Judy: I'll make you pay for this. You can depend on it!

They fight. Judy rolls from the fight to the DS water. She transforms into Mrs. Smith,

Punch into Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith remains US. He stares at Mrs. Smith during the next scene. Crisis stands during the fight and moves to DS of the screen.

SCENE 12

Crisis: Children's Cottage. 555-2273.

Enter Radical Feminist, Media, and Psychologist.

Psychologist, Radical Feminist, & Media: ...555-2273. Hull Child and Family Services 555-8000. Calgary Resource Inventory (violence related). For our society.

Mr. Smith: Flick. *All three turn away from him. They look back.*

Radical Feminist: Being predominantly a women's issue, it should follow that the solution must come from a woman's point of view. Women's increasing aggression is society is learned in the home. From the men.

Media: Now remember, there are woman who assault men. This is not to disparage men however, but does tend to prove what common sense has been saying for some time.

Psychologist: A text book case. She left him for good. He pursued her.

Mr. Smith: Bite. *All three turn away from him. They look back.*

Radical Feminist: Predominantly a woman's issue. SHE LEFT HIM FOR GOOD. Predominantly a woman's issue.

Media: That is; women assaulting men. HE PURSUED HER.

Psychologist: A text book case. He racked the shotgun close to her body.

Mr. Smith: Purch. *All three turn away from him. They look back.*

Radical Feminist: Predominantly a woman's issue. RACKED THE SHOTGUN. Predominantly..

Media: ..women assaulting men. CLOSE TO HER BODY. That is:

Psychologist: A text book case. This was..

Mr. Smith: Kick

Radical Feminist: THIS WAS

Media: THIS WAS

Psychologist: THIS WAS

Radical Feminist: THIS WAS

Media: THIS WAS

Mr. Smith lets the silence build tension. He lunges to the ground and slaps his hand on the floor. Mrs. Smith and all other actors drop to the ground dead.

Mr. Smith: The shot that went into the back of her neck.

Black out. Sound of Mr. Smith breathing.

SCENE 13

Lights up. The actors are lying where they fell at Mrs. Smith's death. Isobel comes from behind the screen with a flower. She is humming 'Ring around the Rosie' as she outlines Mrs. Smith's body with chalk. She stops just before

Isobel: We all fall down.

She turns and hopscotches to Media.

Isobel: Step on a crack and you break your mother's back.

She looks between the two bodies left and picks one by the following method.

Isobel: Eenie, meanie, miney, mo!

She runs over to Crisis and chalks him. Half way through she begins.

Isobel: Momma called the doctor and the doctor said...

She chalks Psychologist. When she is done she stands.

Isobel: No more monkeys jumping on the bed. *Blackout.*

SCENE 14

Lights rise on an empty stage. This serves as intermission, and should last no longer than 20 seconds.

Blackout.

Act 2: Abuser and Abused

SCENE 1

Lights up. Janice, Brad, Mike, and Laura quickly stand in the chalked bodies.

Enter NEWSPAPER GUY and NON-EXISTENT. Non Existent addresses each actor.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. Don't

Non-existent: Have you ever been used?

Newspaper Guy: get ideas. I'm in control.

Non-existent: Nothing to hope for? Fields of pain?

Newspaper Guy: Nobody will ever love you the way that I love you because

Non-Existent: Humanity is a lie? You drive yourself insane.

Newspaper Guy: nobody's that strong. If you're gonna go running scared.

Non-existent: Life. L-I-F-E. Live in fear everyday.

Newspaper Guy: I'm right behind you. You belong to me.

SCENE 2

Janice walks to the water dish and picks a flower from it as Newspaper Guy and Non-Existent exit. After the monologue she picks the petals off the flower and places them in a circle around her. Mike watches her during her monologue.

Janice: I shave my veins. With the same blade you shave your face. With the same blades I gouged your neck. With the same blades you scratched our baby's heart. With the same blades I cut your mouth. With the same blades. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bleed. I stitch. I scar. I bite. I stitch. I scar. I bite. I stitch. I scar. He loves me. He loves me not. With the same blades.

SCENE 3

Mike crosses into the circle of flowers.

Mike: I don't see myself as a violent person. My father...now there was a man with a temper.

Brad drops from standing to lying in the chalked circle.

Mike: My worst fear was that someday I would end up like my Dad. I may have a short fuse -- but that's normal. Sure, sometimes my wife pisses me off. She can be really stupid, you know? Once she picked a fight with me over money. Can you believe it. I had to show her what's what.

Janice drops from standing to lying in the chalked circle.

Mike: She'd starve with out me, and there she is complaining about money. She knows just how to push my buttons. Sometimes I think she's afraid of me. Doesn't she know that I love her? But I'm not violent. Ask anyone. Ask my co-workers. She knows I have a lot of pressures. I'm on edge and she should just know better. I guess I showed her. *Picks up a petal.* Yesterday she brought me a Peanut Buster Parfait. I am nothing without her.

He walks to his own chalked space. Laura watches him.

SCENE 4

Non-Existent carries a chair on her back and places it US of the circle. Brad rises during this scene.

Non-existent: I am the abused. I am the product of domestic strife. I am your pain, your fear, your hate; I am you. You are society and I am you. Yet you deny me. You say I don't exist. That will never happen to me, you say. I would never do that, you say. I see you eyes. I know what's on your mind.

Kicks over the chair. "I'm not like you" -- Are you sure?

She exits.

SCENE 5

Brad: FUCK YOU. I KNOW WHO I AM. I know who I am. I gotta stand up for myself. But she won't fuckin' quit. I bust my ass for her and what do I get? I mean, I've never even touched her and what does she do? She scratches "fuck you" in the side of my new truck with her fuckin keys! She actually spits in my face. I feels like nothin's good enough for her. I wanna leave. I could live with my folks for awhile. Seriously. And then what would she do? She'd be lost without me. Forget it. Couldn't leave. Just bought him a new bicycle for his birthday. I'll get her somethin nice. I know what she likes. She likes that fancy stuff for the bath. Flowers. Those little chocolate peanut butter things. I'll rub her back until she falls asleep.

Again.

I'm coming apart, man. There's nothin left. I'm runnin on empty. Tapped.
And she wants more. No matter what I do, it's not fuckin good enough.
"You're no fucking good. You're whole family is a bunch of losers. You come home and just sit around and drink beer. You never think of anybody but yourself. You're just like your gaddamn mother". *Picks up the petals, and straightens the chair.*

I love you honey.

I love you Mikey, buddy.

I won't leave you alone.

Hi honey. *He drops the petals in front of him.* I'm home.

SCENE 6

Enter Newspaper Guy. During monologue, Brad grabs his Teddy bear and sits in the chair.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I'm like a broken toy, forgotten on the shelf. I was never young -- never just a little boy. Every time I turn around, there it is again. Holding me a little too tightly. I'd give you everything I've got for a little peace of mind.

Exit Newspaper Guy.

SCENE 7

Mike: I left when I was of age. It was either that or go into construction like my father. I had to make it on my own. That's what my father said anyway. I'm fine with that. I moved. No big deal. Got a job at an oil company, and moved up. Now's he's at that age when he may need to go to a home. So I thought I'd bring it up with him. He's still self sufficient. He does all right. When I mentioned it to him we had an argument. He said, "Just because I can't lift 200 pounds anymore doesn't mean I can't cook my own goddamn meals. What do you think I am? Some goddamned retard who can't even wipe his own ass?" He won't live with me. He's too stubborn. He has to be his own man. He doesn't like the way I live. He hates the fact that I made my way with my mind, not my muscles. I have more than he did. He'd call me soft. Like he's always done. If he wants to live on his own fine. If he doesn't want me to help pay for his heating bill, then let him freeze. Let him get a job at 7-11. He can make it on his own. He's self-sufficient right? You can't blame a kid for trying. Thank god I'll never be like him.

SCENE 8

Brad begins to hit his teddy bear on the chair. He then chews the chair. Enter Laura. She forcefully removes him and places him on the ground. She exits behind the screen with the chair. Brad hits his cap on the floor and moves from where Laura placed him. She enters and forcefully puts him back where he was. She draws a chalk circle around him, kicking his leg in to finish it. She grabs his teddy, hits him with it, and throws it outside of the circle. She exits behind the screen. Brad reaches for his teddy, but can't

exit the circle. Laura hums 'rock a bye baby' from behind the screen. Janice slowly sits cross legged outside of the chalked body. Brad stops trying to reach for the teddy. Laura then enters miming a baby. She continues to hum. She steps on the teddy, then gives it back to Brad. She rubs him on the head and goes to her chalked body. She places the baby in the body and sits just outside of this. Brad watches where she left for several seconds, then stands, kicks the teddy into the screen, and exits. Black out.

SCENE 9

Lights up. Newspaper Guy chalks the outline of a coffin around Laura. Non-Existent watches from behind.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I was the only five year old I knew who didn't want his bedroom door left open a crack. Did you forget I was there? I could hear you yell -- and her scream. I could hear the thud against the wall. Why didn't you do it to me? What did I do wrong? How can I make it better? *He exits.*

SCENE 10

Laura: Bless me father, for I have sinned. There must be something wrong with me. I want to be good wife, to please him I feel like I've failed him in some way. It was an accident. He didn't mean it. Not really. He only shoved me. The first time. The others... well I must provoke him. He's had an unhappy childhood. I should be more sensitive to that. It's only when he's drinking. He just needs someone to talk to, someone to help him let it out.

He really is a good man. He really does love me.

Ten Hail Mary's?

Laura gets up. She begins a Hail Mary.

Laura: I'll try harder.

She washes her hands and exits with the bucket to begin to wash the screen.

SCENE 11

Non-Existent walks into the coffin.

Non-existent: Remember the night in the black room full of fear. Cutting your teeth. Learning a new and harsh language. We were there, I am a part of you. Don't go back. Live. Seek out help, reach.

Non-existent exits.

SCENE 12

This piece is between Mike and Brad. It is about ideal love. That which they search for. It is movement orientated and accompanied by music. During the piece the flower petals are picked up and set in a pile near centre stage. The piece ends with both of them staring at one point in the theatre as the lights fade to black.

SCENE 13

It is very dark. The light suggests a door open a crack. Janice is lying down. As she begins, a shadow passes through the door briefly.

Janice: Maybe if I lie really still. Maybe if I look really ugly. Maybe if I seem really sick. Just let me sleep. Please I want to sleep. No...no...no. Oh no. Maybe if I lie really still. Maybe if I look really ugly. Maybe if I seem really sick. But I can handle this. Just remember that it feels...good. Just remember that he loves me. Because he loves me. He loves. Me. He loves me not. He loves me. He loves me not. He loves me. *Sound of a slam.* He loves me not.

She vomits. Lights rise on her as she places a real gun on the stage. She looks at it, then reaches past it for a petal. She eats one. She reaches for the gun. Before she touches it there is a black out. Janice exits.

SCENE 13

Non-existent is US, Newspaper Guy is DS. Lights up as Newspaper Guy points a real gun at the audience. The house lights slowly rise so that they are up full by the end of the play.

Newspaper Guy: Hello. I'm the guy who reads the newspaper over your shoulder. I know you. Stop pretending -- you've never raised your voice, you've never put someone down, you've never hurt someone you love. Stop pretending -- it won't happen again. You've never let someone you love hurt

you. Stop pretending it's never touched your life. *Brad enters as the child. He grabs Newspaper Guy's hand. He drops the gun.* Stop pretending its' not a part of you.

Non-existent: I'm here for you, here to serve you. But I don't exist, remember?

Stage lights out.

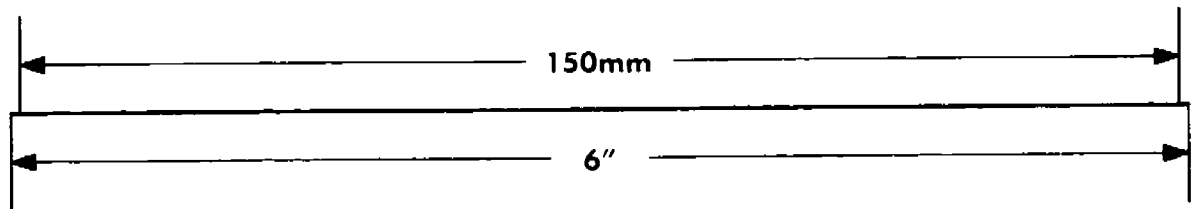
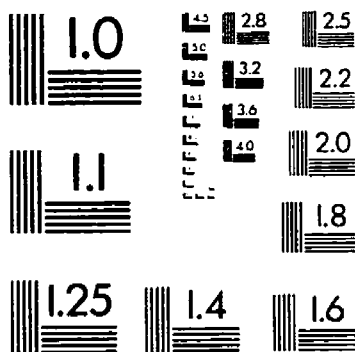
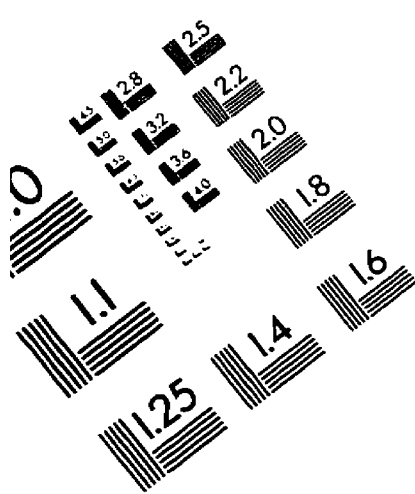
Epilogue

Lights up on Isobel. She draws a partial circle which encompasses the stage, starting at one end of the audience, and concluding at the other side. She leaves the chalk with on both sides of the circle. The other actors enter and take a spot on the chalked circle.

Isobel: I know you.

She joins the actors. They all step inside of the circle and nod their heads at the audience. They exit. Lights should never go out once they are up fully.

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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