

Appendix B Team Skit Event Study Guide

Background – Inspiration for Theatre of Leadership owes much to Augusto Boal (1979); first in his book *Theater of the Oppressed*, translated from the Spanish *Teatro de Oprimido* (1974a); a more recent collection of his talks and training approaches, in *Games for actors and non-actors* (1992); and his latest take, *Rainbow of Desire, The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy* (1996). Boal's theory is we are part spectator and part actor, and when we cross the divide between audience and stage, to join with the actors, this makes us *spect-actors*. Boal designs three kinds of theatre that we can apply to leadership: Image, Invisible, and Forum). Note there are more choices for designing your skits; see Boje (2001a)

Introduction – Leadership is theatre. We begin with a brief overview of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and then turn quickly to Boal's (1992) three kinds of theatre (Image, Invisibility, & Forum) we can apply to leadership training.

Next is an overview of three types of theatre (Boal, 1992). Incorporate just one type per skit.

I. Image Theater (Silent Theatre in Animated Body Sculpture).

Image Theater sets up a stage, in which we can see the body motions and interactions, in what is known as a body sculpture. Image Theater is a silent theater, a great stage to begin leadership training. No talking.

With Image Theater we could act out the qualities Ritzer (2000) describes in McDonaldization; the efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control that comes from combining Max Weber's bureaucratic-authority with Henry Ford's assembly line, and Frederick Taylor's principles of scientific management. It is this process of rationalization, repetitiveness, and routine that we may overlook as a quite terrifying theater.

In Image Theater, once we have worked out the aspects of Fordism, Taylorism, and Weberism on stage, and we can visualize in Visual Theater some of the oppressions on stage, we can rescript the poses, interactions, and get some discussion of what a more ideal visual image would look like.

McDonald's Example: A presenting team might stage an Image Theater of McDonald's that would be collective, animated, body sculpture. Script writers could research the McSpotlight web site and enact a scene from the famous McLibel trial <http://www.mcspotlight.org/>. There are other alternatives, such as taking a conflict-event from a team member's experience of bad leadership; or, how about two famous leaders caught in an everyday situation of oppression, such as sexual harassment, dealing with a character who is aggressive, a boss who is drunk or some kind of pain in the butt workaholic? Possibilities for skits are infinite, but usually involve a situation of conflict

between characters, some kind of oppression is present. The McDonald's situation is just an example; choose your own scene (Read up on the McDonald's example).

Actor's Roles – The skit begins with characters taking their **STATIC IMAGE** on stage. Each actor claims a space on the stage. The scene is frozen, waiting for the Director to clap and bring it to animated, dynamic life. Someone could depict the statue of a young teenager, smiling and about to say a scripted greeting from behind a counter (mouthing the words, but not actually speaking). Another person would be flipping burgers, another stuff bags with fries. A few would be pretending to wear headsets so they can multi-task (produce and take orders from the drive-up window). Other bodies would form statuesque poses of customers waiting in lines acting bored, or seated at tables pretending to eat. Kneeling actors could pose as children engaged in play.

Director's Role – Director gives the signal (clap) to animate the model of McDonald's on stage. Director can also freeze the actors (e.g. Simon Says "Freeze your pose" but again no words are uttered; it's all body language). The director coordinates the sequence of episodes in the skits with some **GRAND CLAPS** (Loud and directed at the entire group of players). The claps can be in rehearsal, but de-emphasized in the performance in class. Secondly, there are a series of softer claps done in rapid or slow succession to control the rhythm of a specific episode. It will take practice to get characters and director into coordination.

Scene 1: Strike a Pose – Cast members could, for example, assume statue poses of various worker, manager, owner, and customer roles (and processes) that make up McDonald's fast-food factory. Enact the various scenes, scripts, and poses of McDonald's Theater of Leadership Robots.

Scene 2: Director Claps for 1st Dynamization (RHYTHM) – With a clap of your director, the static pose, animates and becomes dynamic. The **Rhythm** of the dynamization is fast, repetitive, and mechanistic; be the machine. McDonald's Theater could be scripted as a bureaucratic and Tayloristic assembly line tragedy. This production theater is a highly bureaucratic and scientific management script, a fast food assembly line. In 1st Dynamization, the spectators see a collection of individuals on stage, each doing their own rhythm, but not interacting. Throughout the skit, the Director can clap fast to speed up the rhythm, or clap in slower pace to slow it down to a stall, to a freeze frame; then clap more rapidly to speed it up.

Scene 3: Director Claps for 2nd Dynamization (CHARACTER) – With this grand clap, the interaction begins. The individual **Character** begin to interact with each other. It is all non-verbal (no speaking roles; no narrator). Good skits have a conflict; interaction brings this out.

Scene 4: Director Claps for 3rd Dynamization (THEME)- The theme of oppression starts to be dramatized by the players, as they interact. The point is to make the oppressive image become as real as possible.

Scene 5: Director Claps for 4th Dynamization (PLOT). Here is where the pity and fear emotions get evoked in the spectator. Its time to call forth the enactment of the tragic flaw, the one spectators seek to avoid in their own life, so they do not have the same fate. Rehearse the skit – try out a oppressive scene, then ask, “what is the consequence” of this leader (or other characters oppression) on each other character? And how will each character react? Show acts of submission and resistance in the characters being oppressed and dominated. More variations – the Director could clap with more vigor and the actors who are oppressors could oppress more, intensifying their oppression; and the oppressed could be more resistant to the oppression with each rapid series of claps. Use succession of claps to keep the rhythm in the pace you are seeking. Bring it down to a standstill, to accentuate the shift in audience attention to the next step.

Scene 6: Director Claps for 5th Dynamization (RESOLUTION). How will the oppression being staged be eliminated? You could fire the leader (not usually). You could train the characters to be more organic and less robotic (but that would change the theme of McDonaldization). You could add some new characters that change the chemistry of the performance. You could picket, boycott, or revolt (maybe there would be change). The point is to try out a resolution and see what reaction it gets from the spectators.

II. Invisibility Theater

Invisibility Theater is not realism; it is reality (Boal, 1992: 15).

Invisibility can add some verbal dialogue, but the scenes should carry themselves with mostly the body language. Invisibility Theater brings the absent reality (most oppressed character) on stage; it becomes visible, no longer hidden or taken for granted reality. Note, you may want to start with a short scene of Image Theatre, to give the audience a good sense of the situation.

Purpose: To act out real life, live situations of leadership, where the Theatre of Leadership is on center stage, where carnivalesque protest leadership resist status quo leadership. To get people in the real life theatre to debate their roles and plots in their day to day drama; to see the scripts they live and take for granted. Why? To subvert taken-for-granted normal behavior in a public space into reflected and debated roles and scripts. Its dramatic, its real, its alive, its passionate, and these are situations that require lots of leadership skill to address. Most of all, we can use Theatres of Leadership, on live stage, to try out solutions. Its about solutions, its not about ragging on corporate greed (always fun, but not the point).

There are two types of Invisibility Theatre:

Type 1: Inviting Invisible Characters on Stage - Invisibility Theater brings the absent characters, those with roles in global capitalism onto the stage, so they become visible to the spectators. Here we continue the McDonald's example (you might want to try Taco

Bell; demonstrators are now on tour protesting Taco Bell in cities across the land ([Click here](#) for Taco Bell info) ; why? - over their oppression of farm workers. You don't have to do McDonald's or Taco Bell. These are mere examples (you could choose to do something on Disney, Nike, USAS at NMSU, or some other corporation, whose leadership is always in the spotlight). Choose whatever situation suits your fancy. Note: the example that follows is for illustration. You choose your own plot, theme, and subplot. You can rehearse Type 1 theatre scripts, then take them on the road, into the "real" in Type 2 invisibility Theatre.

Type 2: Making the Invisible Theatre Visible - Life is theatre. But, when Invisible Theatre is ready, it is not performed in a traditional theatre (Boal, 1992: 6). So instead of staging your play in an artificial place called a theatre or a classroom, you take your show on the road, and enter the public theatre of 'real' life (of course classes are real life!). Augusto Boal, for example developed scripts with roles for actors, then did the shows in the Paris Metro, on ferryboats, in restaurants, and on the streets of cities such as Stockholm. This type of Invisible theatre "involves the public as participants in the action without their knowing it" (Jackson, 1992: xx). The public moves out of its sleep walking role to become active spectators, who act in a piece of theatre; they become spect-actors in their own life; through the play, they reflect on their roles and life scripts, and dirty little plots they take for granted. While Invisibility Theatre happens and even after the event, the spect-actors do not know it is "theatre time" rather than just more "real life." How? For example, Child Labor - Beneath the stage, girls in their early teens use fake ID's, their tender age ignored by bribed officials, are working 16 to 20-hour days, for about twenty pennies, in Third World sweatshops to produce McDonald's toys, sold to consumers who save a few cents.

Snoopy, Winnie the Pooh and Hello Kitty toys sold with McDonald's meals in Hong Kong are made at a mainland Chinese sweatshop that illegally employs children to package them... The children, as young as 14, work 16-hour days for the equivalent of about \$2.95 -- barely the cost of one McDonald's meal in Hong Kong, the Sunday Morning Post reported (The Associated Press Date: 08/27/00 22:15)

In Vietnam, there are similar allegations of child labor used to make Disney toys sold at McDonald's, but these children earn only 6 pennies an hour and work seven days a week. Corporate theater becomes a set of staged acts and performances scripted to mislead the spectators, when a scandal breaks. For example, the National Labor Committee also alleges Happy Meal toys produced at Keyhinge factories in China have mandatory 14 to 15 hour shifts, such as the Chi Wah Toy factory, where in 1992, 23 workers were hospitalized and three died after benzene exposure.

III. Forum Theater

Forum Theater is a sort of fight or game, and like all forms of game or fight, there are rules. We also had some fight or game in Invisibility Theatre. But, in Forum Theatre, the rules of the game are made much more explicit. The game rules can be modified, but they still exist, to ensure that the players are involved in the same

enterprise, and to facilitate the generation of serious and fruitful discussion (Boal, 1992: 18).

Another key difference between Invisibility Theatre and Forum or Image theatre, is that the audience gets much more directly involved, crossing the line to becoming actors on the stage, or making the whole room a stage blurring all the boundaries. Actor and spectator fuse, to become "*spect-actors*." In Forum Theatre, the spectator becomes the protagonist (crosses the proscenium arch to go on stage), trying to overcome the oppression presented by the antagonists (oppressors). The boundary between audience and actors is no more; they are now just spect-actors, all helping to stage the game: trading roles, suggesting rule changes, and script changes.

The point of Forum Theatre games is to get beyond the antagonist and protagonist, win versus lose, good guy versus bad guy rut. The point is also to do leadership on stage, to experiment and transform oppression on stage, and to take that resolution beyond the training ground, to change the world. The goal is to open up pathways of liberation that can result in less spectacle, and more festive organizations in a must less predatory capitalism.

Each character, as in Invisibility Theatre, is presented "visually," in such a way as to be recognizable, independent of any spoken script (Boal, 1992: 19). In Forum theatre, the starting script delineates the moral purpose of each character, so the spectators (not yet spect-actors) can easily recognize each ideology performed. The theme is a "social error: which is being analyzed and explored during the Forum skit.

Forum Theatre takes up where Image and Invisibility Theatres left off. To start the game, you may want to do a short Image Theatre scene to set the context, or a brief scene of the Invisibility of certain stakeholders to a situation. At a point where the audience gets the sense of the game they are about to play, the spectators, one by one are invited on stage to become spect-actors. You collectively turn to crafting solutions, on stage and live. Here is a sample sequence of staged events for Forum Theatre

Scene 1 - Start off with an image theatre, a certain image of the world is presented by the main actors to the spectators (here the audience is in their seats, and the actors are on stage, as in traditional theatre).

Scene 2 - Second Clap by the Director - The oppression in the scene is made obvious. A director signals the players to animate and if need to have some dialog and interaction to enact the theme of oppression. Good script writers are needed to make Forum Theatre workable. That is, the game much be set up so that catastrophe is not the only outcome possible for the protagonist. For example, if the theme is pure physical aggression, then there are not many options beyond karate, kung fu fighting, or running away. In short, these scenes do not set up

oppression that is of much use for Forum Theatre exploration, or to hone leadership skills. Rather, script more internal, psychological oppression scenes, where physical aggression is not the only option. If the only result of sexual harassment is rape, then it is not a great topic for Forum Theatre. However, if it could have been stopped along the way, then it has possibilities. If the situation is a strike by the workers, then how could it have been avoided becomes the theme, and various plots can be scripted.

Scene 3 - The director claps to signal the protagonist in the scene to act out a planned solution to the oppression in the scene.

Scene 4 - Clap again, to freeze the performers into a static pose. The director then asks the spectators if they agree with the solution advanced by the protagonist. Probably not. The director informs the spectators they are all spect-actors. All the spect-actor has to do is yell "**STOP**" and go onto the stage, assume the position of the protagonist (who heads to the sideline, and can coach the spect-actor as needed, or keep it real, i.e. "generally McDonald's owners are not great fans of animal activists, vegetarians, etc."). Then the Director claps, the scene continues, but the actors react to the new character now on stage.

Step 5 - The main actors replay/continue the same exact scene, but the spect-actors come onto the stage and intervene to change the vision of the world presented by these actors into a world as it could be. If no spect-actors change the world, then the actors keep playing the theme of oppression without any resolution. In other words, audience members, are invited to take the role of the protagonist and play out their idea of a resolution.

Scene 6 - The Director can clap rapidly, to indicate to the main characters to intensify their oppression. This is the game that is being played. The spect-actor tries to find a new solution, to change the world - by resisting the intensified strategies. Protagonists can be inventive, such as by bringing other spect-actors on stage to play the role of lawyer's police, judges, parents, customers, etc. This is the game, the spect-actor (protagonist) - trying to find a new solution to the oppression and aggression presented by the actors. For this to work effectively, the actors must be able to give and take, to respond to the various dialog and action presented to them by the protagonist.

Scene 7 - The spect-actor can give in, give-up, or drop out of the game, then a new spect-actor rapidly heads for the stage, by yelling "STOP." The Director then Claps loudly to get the scene rolling again.

Scene 8 - If a spect-actor wins the game, and breaks the game of the game of the oppressors, then that spect-actor gets to replace one of the actors, and act out their idea of a more intensified oppression.

The Joker (instructor) and Director of the skit, can also elect to add realism to the event. For example, asking a character or spect-actor to dare a little more, to who what they are capable of on stage. Joker and Director provoke people on stage to stretch a bit more in their acting, and dare to challenge leadership assumptions.

It could happen that in the Forum Theatre game, no solutions work. However, it is still awesome Forum event if a good debate happens in the discussion.

A McDonald's (just an example) Forum Theater takes the confrontation between antagonists and protagonists to a new level, and allows for stop-action script changes, and revisions to the plot, scripts, and games so that transformations can happen. This is done in the above steps by having the main character stay in their oppressor roles, and inviting spectators, now spect-actors to try out various resolutions, and win the game.

In Forum Theater, more than the other two, spect-actors can call **STOP** to the staged performances, make a change in the actors, develop a new script, or change directors. Any spect-actor can stop and restart the scene. Scenes are played again and again, with different lines, props, and characters, to fine-tune tactics and strategies to overcome felt and manifest oppression. Forum Theater is solution oriented, a place also to test the consequences of a script change.

Changing the rules of the Theatre game. The game of confrontation between protagonist (spect-actor) and antagonist in Forum Theatre has rules of engagement. This allows the game to be played with a change in the rules, new rules, and new tactics can be tested for limitations and consequences.

The point is to explore a model of action that might, in this example, improve McDonaldization, or replace it with a new more festive game.

Post-Forum, COMMENTARY - In the commentary portion, the script writers and director debrief. They explain the plot, the theme, etc.