

## Editorial: Into the Traumaverse

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### HOW ARE YOU DOING?

If we've learned anything this past year, we should now know that it is a necessity to greet one another with a check-in. I know well that some of you have been doing this as part of your practice for a long time, but it has caught fire of late. And why? Because many of us have been isolated in ways we hadn't been before and as a result, we have seized upon the all-too-infrequent moments of interpersonal connection as they have taken on a greater significance than they had before. And while we employed a number of new practices this past year, as the pandemic may begin to wane, we must ask which of these new practices will go by the wayside? To that question, I implore you to keep this check-in practice around. And don't just give it lip-service—ask with full sincerity—and to that, I ask again: *how are you doing?*

Close your eyes. Soak in this moment. Breathe.

From my vantage point, I sit at the precipice. What awaits us? I am excited. Terrified. Optimistic. Anxious. Ready. As I juggle all the feelings that envelope me in this moment in time, I make space to

acknowledge you and what you may be going through. I pause, I breathe, and I offer a warning: our work is challenging—as is the writing that follows. So if you're feeling overwhelmed in this moment, take a break. Rejoin us when you are ready—we'll be here to welcome you upon your return.

## THE PRIVILEGE

On a hot summer evening in the year 2000, I was having a deep dive with a good friend, as 21 year-olds are want to do. We spoke about life—the future—who we were—who we aspired to be. My white, cisgender, male, economically privileged, gay friend said to me, “You have no idea how lucky you are. When you walk into a room, everyone knows that you're gay. It's probably always been that way for you—you open your mouth and a purse drops out. But it's much harder for me. You have no idea what it's like for everyone to believe that you're straight which forces you to have to come out again and again and again.”

I gather some of you may be familiar with this episode of the oppression olympics. Generally, it is a losing game to engage in these conversations, but I stepped up to plate nonetheless. Me. Black, cisgender, male, economically disadvantaged, and gay.

“Do you have any idea how difficult it is to face harassment every time you walk into a public space?” I replied. “There were less frequent occurrences when I was younger, but from the start of eighth grade until I graduated high school, there it was—everyday—without cease. Five years. Every day. Inescapable. And yet, I wasn't out. So I couldn't talk about it. I couldn't acknowledge it. Not at home. Not at church youth group. Not anywhere—to no one—ever. And so I isolated myself in whatever way I could—because I was terrified that what they said might be true. And worse, that my family would find out. I'm sure your fear and shame were real, but do you have any idea what a privilege it is to pass for straight?”

This was not a winning tactic on my part—there really is nothing to be said when someone comes at you with these kinds of tactless missives except, perhaps, “You should think about what you just said before we continue.” But then, who has the presence of mind to say that in the moment? Well, I didn't. And instead, I engaged. I look back

now in wonder—why was I friends with this person? This person who used to call me, “Big and Black”—not to describe my appearance, but as his self-selected nickname for me. As I am prone to making faces from time to time, this person who used to seize upon those moments to say, “There’s that monkey face again.”

To be young. To tolerate the intolerable out of habit—out of self-loathing—out of desperation—out of internalized racism and homophobia—out of necessity. We learn to tolerate the intolerable in order to cope. To dissociate. To get by.

### ***Living in Role***

I suffered many indignities as a child. Many traumas. And popular culture in the 1980s and 90s burned into my subconscious that these indignities and traumas had marked me as broken and in desperate need of therapy in order to fix me. So I arrived at college as an undergraduate expecting to fall into the welcoming arms of therapy (offered through the student health center) that would unwind all that I had suffered and allow me to emerge anew—untouched—unscarred. But it didn’t pan out that way. As I unburdened myself in my first therapy session in 1997, I remember bringing an extended monologue to a close by saying, “And there it is.” And indeed, there it was. The therapist was silent for a moment—which seemed like an eternity—and then she said, “And what makes you think your experience has left you so damaged? Here you are—unemotional—unscathed—it seems to me you’ve managed to cope just fine.”

*Hmm.*

I’m not quite sure that’s not how an initial visit is supposed to unfold, but I had entered the space with the wrong frame of mind—verbalizing, “Fix me,” externalizes what needs to be an internal process. Process—that’s what I actually needed—to process what I had experienced. To process what I thought and felt about those experiences. To process the import they had in who I was and who I was becoming. But something in the way that this therapist closed off the experience and didn’t invite a process turned me off from that experience. And in failing to identify another outlet wherein I could process those experiences, I found myself a few years later recast as “Big and Black” and suffered a new series of indignities.

I had created a sense of self—a role, if you will, that had less to do with the totality of my authentic self than it did with finding a way to compartmentalize these traumas I'd experienced. In his writing about role theory, drama therapy pioneer Robert Landy conceived of role as, “persona rather than person, character rather than full-blown human being, part rather than whole” (1991, p. 29). I was ‘victim.’ I was ‘young and Black in America.’ I was ‘child of an alcoholic.’ I was ‘physically abused.’ I was ‘gay.’ Many roles. But rather than being subsumed by any one of these signifiers, I was most drawn to ‘damaged’ and ‘different.’ I had experienced trauma—and I thought that meant I should be in role as ‘traumatized.’ What was I to make of this?

### ***Giving Voice***

A few years later, I collaborated on a theatre in education workshop at the NYU LGBT Center. The workshop was called *Voices* and in it, my colleagues and I had prepared an ethnodrama about our experiences growing up gay in the U.S. in the 1980s and 90s. Following the presentation, the audience was invited to participate in some drama activities to share about their own experiences in so far as the sharing reflected upon aspects of their lived experience that would otherwise go unvoiced—be that out of self-loathing, desperation, internalized racism and homophobia, necessity, or other (perhaps, dear reader, you're sensing a theme?). We were inviting our participants to join us in what I would now describe as *self-liberation*. Here's an excerpt from the performance text:

JONATHAN

In ninth grade, I went to public school and the shit really hit the fan. I was lost in the 350 people in my grade, let alone the 1,400 students in the school. However, it didn't take long for me to be known pretty much school-wide as...

OTHERS

That Gay Kid with Green Hair

JONATHAN

...after a botched Halloween experiment involving food coloring. Having people call out...

OTHERS

...Fag!

JONATHAN

...was interesting. I ignored it. I mean, I thought that was the best thing.

*(enter MR. CORCOS at left)*

MR. CORCOS

Alright, students. The bell has rung. Let's find a seat.

JONATHAN

In Spanish class, though, it got personal. This kid (whose name I have thankfully no memory of) harassed me literally every day that he was there. I sat in the first row, first seat. He sat in the third row, first seat. He would rest his head on his hand facing me and for forty minutes every day he would question me...

THIS KID

Do you know that you're gay?

*(beat)*

What's it like to take it up the ass?

*(beat)*

Don't you know that being gay is wrong?

*(beat)*

You probably have AIDS. Why do I have to sit in class with someone with AIDS?

*(beat)*

What's wrong? Ain't you got nothing to say? Fucking faggot.

JONATHAN

...Every day. For the entire year. My teacher, Mr. Corcos, would at times say:

MR. CORCOS

You, third row, first seat, be quiet.

JONATHAN

Or

MR. CORCOS

You, third row, first seat, go to the office.

JONATHAN

But for the most part, it would just go on.

THIS KID

Fucking faggot.

JONATHAN

One of the kids from my elementary school was also in the class. He sat right behind me.

ONE OF THE KIDS

Why don't you defend yourself? Why do you let him talk to you that way?

JONATHAN

I don't need to stoop to his level, I replied.

That's pretty much how I always acted then: very tough skin and hard to get through to. It didn't affect me. I saw high school as a necessary evil (gym class too). Something that I had to suffer through, but no matter how awful, it was only four years. So who cares what they say? Who cares what they think? All that matters is what I think. (Jones, 2003)

A good friend (different friend; an actual good friend) attended the workshop. He participated in the activities and the sharing, as a good

friend ought to do. Afterwards, he said to me, “But I don’t understand why you’re all complaining. Bad things happen to people all the time. What’s the point of dwelling on it?”

I was incredibly surprised and frustrated by this response. In preparing the workshop, my colleagues and I spoke at length about how vital this work was going to be—what a *gift* we were giving our participants—this opportunity to speak, share, and commune.

Surprised—frustrated—these emotions can snowball if unchecked, so it wasn’t long before I was enraged. “Do you have any idea what a privilege it is to not be traumatized?” I shouted.

I didn’t shout.

I could have shouted.

At another time, maybe I *would* have shouted.

But in that moment, in spite of having all the feels, I kept that one to myself.

Because I learned something there—I was, in fact, *different*. I’d had a different experience in my life. And that wasn’t wrong. That wasn’t stigmatizing. That was just *different*. And unlike the oppression olympics episode I articulated earlier, the differentiation here was meaningful. The trauma I had experienced impacted me in a way that was neither unique nor universal—but working through it and processing it this way was meaningful to me and my colleagues. We shared our traumatic experiences, made a decision to process them together, and invited participants to do the same. But a participant who has read and understood the scope and purpose of an event has consented to a different experience than your well-meaning friend who showed up to support you. And assuming that though that friend may have had similar experiences in their life, it didn’t necessarily mean that they experienced that as trauma—and even if they did, it didn’t mean they were interested in processing it in the same way that you did. My friend may have already processed his trauma, wasn’t ready to process it, didn’t need to process it, or maybe he was still in it—and as survivor-activist Zerlina Maxwell points out regularly on her radio show, *Signal Boost*, you can’t process trauma while you’re in it.

Having had that experience is part of why I write today, at an extraordinary moment where I see a bright flashing light telling me: what if, in this extraordinary moment, everyone (like, really every one) has been traumatized? And if everyone has been traumatized, how will we facilitate meaningful drama work in spaces where folks may not

have consciously decided to process that trauma—which may be inescapably present for everyone to see?

## WHAT IS TRAUMA?

In order to identify a path forward, it may be helpful for me to back up a few paces. Trauma has come to the fore of popular consciousness, and as is often the case, identifying shared definitions of terms will help us proceed. According to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th Edition (DSM-5), trauma is defined as:

exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence -

- Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s).
- Witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others.
- Learning that the event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend. Note: In cases of actual or threatened death of a family member or friend, the event(s) must have been violent or accidental.
- Experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s) (e.g., first responders collecting human remains, police officers repeatedly exposed to details of child abuse).

Note: This does not apply to exposure through electronic media, television, movies, or pictures, unless this exposure is work related. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Collectively, life in the pandemic has been traumatic. For individuals, given this definition, we can see that some may have escaped this experience better than others in so far as they might feel that the pandemic was something on the news and social media—something real, but distant—or something manufactured and a hoax. But even in those circumstances—for those who may have felt an indirect experience of the pandemic, many have lived through some of the inescapable reminders at least some of the time—some experience of social distancing, mask mandates, school closures, cancelation of events, and/or travel bans. Who among us is unscathed?

This widespread phenomenon of trauma is not unprecedented—at least not for many in the U.S. According to a 2013 infographic on how to manage stress, the National Council for Behavioral Health indicated, “70% of adults in the U.S. have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. That’s 223.4 million people.” Among the traumatic experiences they considered were:

- childhood abuse or neglect
- physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- accidents and natural disasters
- witnessing acts of violence
- cultural, intergenerational and historical trauma
- grief and loss
- medical interventions
  - war and other forms of violence (National Council for Behavioral Health, 2013)

Last year, in my editorial, [I Can’t Breathe](#), I pointed to the “pandemic within a pandemic” that Maya Wiley spoke about: the COVID-19 pandemic within the pandemic of intergenerational and structural racism in the U.S. (Jones, 2020, p. xii), and we know that hasn’t gone away. Compound that with the individual trauma folks experience just living their lives—and the indignity of social traumas—the bigotry, hatred, oppression—all the -isms that we unfortunately know too well, and as a society, we are subsumed in intersecting traumas. For those who might not have heard me the first time: *who among us is unscathed?*

So what does that look like? As I write, just this week they have lifted all COVID restrictions in New York—so as some of us come out of this hibernation, what is this world we are stepping into? What is this traumaverse? And how do we navigate our roles within what may be uncharted waters?

## **WHAT MIGHT WE ENCOUNTER IN THIS TRAUMVERSE?**

Returning to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th Edition (DSM-5), there are certain responses and behaviors we might anticipate in the traumaverse. According to the DSM-5:

Psychological distress following exposure to a traumatic or stressful event is quite variable. In some cases, symptoms can be well understood within an anxiety—or fear-based context. It is clear, however, that many individuals who have been exposed to a traumatic or stressful event exhibit a phenotype in which, rather than anxiety—or fear-based symptoms, the most prominent clinical characteristics are anhedonic and dysphoric symptoms, externalizing angry and aggressive symptoms, or dissociative symptoms. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Let's unpack some of the clinical characteristics in order to be perfectly clear about how these symptoms may manifest. From the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2021), here are some definitions:

anhedonia – a psychological condition characterized by inability to experience pleasure in normally pleasurable acts

dysphoric – very unhappy, uneasy, or dissatisfied

dissociation – the separation of whole segments of the personality (as in multiple personality disorder) or of discrete mental processes (as in the schizophrenias) from the mainstream of consciousness or of behavior

Few among us are clinical therapists, so for those of us who are not, we must avoid attempts to diagnose conditions, label, or attempt to 'treat' our participants or students. That's not why we're there, it's not what they've agreed to, and even if they were to agree to it—it's not our role. But it would be equally inappropriate to ignore the signs and symptoms if/when we encounter them given the regularity with which we might see our participants or students and also the reality that the very nature of educational drama work invites sharing of our experiences.

The clinical conditions mentioned in the DSM-5 capture only a few of the possible symptoms of trauma. As identified by the National Council for Behavioral Health, some additional symptoms of trauma include:

- headaches, backaches, stomachaches, etc.

- sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- changes in sleep patterns and appetite
- constipation or diarrhea
- easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- more susceptible to colds and illnesses
- increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating
- fear, depression, anxiety
- outbursts of anger or rage
- emotional swings
- tendency to isolate oneself or feelings of detachment
- difficulty trusting
- self-blame, survivor-guilt, or shame
- diminished interest in everyday activities (2013)

Given the likelihood that we will encounter these symptoms in our practice, we must anticipate them. In the traumaverse, we should expect these symptoms to manifest—and when they do, respond. Here are some practices for how to do so:

- Check-in, just as I did at the outset of this editorial.
- Provide an agenda upfront so everyone is clear and in agreement about how your workshop, lesson, rehearsal, or activity will proceed—and give folks the opportunity to opt out if they need it.
- Research local support services that you can refer folks to if the situation warrants—be they school-based services or community-based social services.
- Many practitioners have contributed critical analysis of their trauma-informed drama methods. Seek out their writing, learn from it, adapt for your population, and employ an ethic of care that is open, welcoming, and supportive.

Professor and activist Shawn Ginwright proposes that trauma-informed practice insufficiently addresses folks' needs because it centers their traumatic experiences (similar to what I conveyed earlier about my focusing on discrete roles rather than a more holistic view of my experiences) rather than their overall well-being. Ginwright proposes healing centered engagement instead, which:

is akin to the South African term ‘Ubuntu’ meaning that humanness is found through our interdependence, collective engagement and service to others. Additionally, healing centered engagement offers an asset driven approach aimed at the holistic restoration of young peoples’ well-being. The healing centered approach comes from the idea that people are not harmed in a vacuum, and well-being comes from participating in transforming the root causes of the harm within institutions. Healing centered engagement also advances the move to ‘strengths-based’ care and away from the deficit based mental health models that drives therapeutic interventions. (2018)

We can do this.

## **COPING IN THE TRAUMVERSE**

As we engage in this new normal, we must remember to tend to our own needs. Ask yourself, “How am I doing?” You can’t support others if you haven’t yet supported yourself—and how might you do that? According to the National Council for Behavioral Health, helpful coping strategies for managing trauma include:

- acknowledging that you have been through traumatic events
- connect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event or experience other trauma
- exercise
- relax
- take up music, art, or other diversions
- commit to something personally meaningful and important every day
- write about your experience for yourself or to share with others. (2013)

As I mentioned earlier, I’m still processing my trauma. And how do I process? I talk about it. All of it. I write. I sing. I dance. I run. I create. I keep going.

At the close of the spring semester, the Program in Educational Theatre at NYU Steinhardt hosted an end-of-year toast on Zoom. The

faculty gave awards to several of our outstanding soon-to-be-graduates, we reflected on our many collective accomplishments over the course of the year, and made announcements about projects and programs to come. We wanted the event to be forward-looking, festive, and fun, so we decided to end the event with a brief but enthusiastic dance party—and I would initiate that send-off.

Whenever an ending looms, I am reminded that as one thing ends, another begins. So I thought about what I might say that evening after what has been a truly extraordinary year—in both the worst and best possible ways. A year in which I lost so much (Jones, 2020)—we lost so much—and yet we gained so very much. This spring, I began each session of one of my courses with a sharing of some moment of joy that had occurred in the time since we’d last been together. Christina Greer, Associate Professor of Political Science at Fordham University, described this practice as providing an opportunity for instructors to connect with their students’ humanity (2021). The practice also aligns with Ginwright (2018), as this centering of joy in the midst of a traumatic experience reminds us that no matter the struggle, it is those moments of joy that carry us through. Joy is there—in spite of the loneliness—the isolation—the insurrection—the illness—the death—the grief—the depression—the trauma—the 2020/2021 of it all—somehow, there is joy.

And as we know, it is in these dichotomies where we often live and struggle and suffer great pains to survive—and thrive. I unmuted my microphone when the moment arrived and offered this, “When we look back on this time in our lives, we will tell a story of resilience.” Resilience is a story we rarely tell ourselves (though, perhaps we should). Resilience is a story we usually tell others—to inspire—that they too might liberate their hearts and minds—to persevere—to overcome. I turned the music on. And in my own space, I turned it up loud. And for the first time in more than a year of existing on Zoom, I dissociated from the camera—from the electronic gaze that had enraptured me for so very long. I didn’t hear the ping of the chat. I disregarded the screen altogether. Doing well by my students is a driving force behind my work—so, in some ways, the dance was for them. But really, I danced for me. And in the traumaverse, that’s not half bad.

## IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue, our contributors have reflected on their diverse practices, many of which fall under or draw upon trauma-informed and healing centered practices. In *Divided We Stand*, **Carmen Meyers** uses verbatim documentary theatre to investigate how women in the U.S. negotiated and maintained their identities and relationships in today's climate of political polarization. **Taiwo Afolabi** focuses on his performance in an applied theatre project with refugees, immigrants, and international students in Victoria, British Columbia to explore how his migratory and mobility experiences shape his identity and in turn reveal expression in his artistic practice.

In her narrative of practice, **Kaitlin O.K. Jaskolski** highlights the methods used to facilitate, assess and stratify learning outcomes in order to create a culture of inclusion as illustrated through case studies on devising and the performance of *Aesop's Idols* at Westside Inclusive Theatre Company in Houston, Texas. **Lea Ticozzi** reviews her staging of Neil Simon's *The Gingerbread Lady* with young people at a high school in Switzerland. The students embodied physical, intellectual and emotional experiences by staging characters who address sexist, LGBTQ, and racial issues as illuminated through their written reflections. **Amanda Claudia Wager** and **Sara Schroeter** explore their experiences as drama-in-education professors in Canada teaching educators how to create and facilitate process drama and call for artists and educators to be more thoughtful in approaching the creation and facilitation of process drama, especially when teaching people with different subjectivities and positionalities.

To illustrate active learning methods, U.S. based teacher-educator **Rosalind M. Flynn** presents a lesson sequence and resources for teaching theatre history. In Santiago, Chile, theatre practitioner **Maira Fortin** works through and into the intersections between illustration and theatre, as she explores her collaboration with visual artist and illustrator Carolina Schütte González as they created a graphic transposition of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. **Dawn Ingleson** probes her use of conflict resolution models at a Primary School Federation in London, UK. Ingleson implements nonviolent communication, systems theory, and philosophy for children to create a simultaneous community of inquiry and practice using versions of forum theatre and process drama via a journey of immersive practice.

Finally, drawing the threads explored in this issue together, **Mary-Rose McLaren** examines the ways in which play, image theatre, and improvisation are used to invite students to explore their individual and collective narratives in order to develop professional identity and personal agency by building an ethnodrama in a Higher Education classroom.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Our next issue (Volume 8, Issue 2) will focus on articles under our general headings (drama in education, applied theatre, and theatre for young audiences) looking to engage members of the Educational Theatre field who want to contribute to the ongoing dialogue. That issue will publish in early 2022. Thereafter, look to the Program in Educational Theatre at NYU for the 2022 Forum on Humanities and the Arts and the [Verbatim Performance Lab](#).

## SUGGESTED CITATION

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## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

[Jonathan P. Jones](#), PhD is a graduate from the Program in Educational Theatre at New York University, where he earned both an M.A. and a Ph.D. He conducted his doctoral field research in fall 2013 and in spring of 2014 he completed his dissertation, *Drama Integration: Training Teachers to Use Process Drama in English Language Arts, Social Studies, and World Languages*. He received an additional M.A. in English at National University and his B.A. in Liberal Arts from NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Jonathan is certified to teach English 6-12 in the state of California, where he taught Theatre and English for five years at North Hollywood High School and was honored with The Inspirational Educator Award by Universal Studios in 2006. Currently, Jonathan is an administrator, faculty member, coordinator of doctoral studies, and student-teaching supervisor at NYU Steinhardt. He serves on the board of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE).

Jonathan has conducted drama workshops in and around New York City, London, and Los Angeles in schools and prisons. As a performer, he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Town Hall, The Green Space, St. Patrick's Cathedral, The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, The Southbank Centre in London UK, and the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. He co-produced a staged-reading of a new musical, *The Throwbacks*, at the New York Musical Theatre Festival in 2013.

Jonathan's directing credits include *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *Elsewhere in Elsinore*, *Dorothy Rides the Rainbow*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Laramie Project*, *Grease*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *West Side Story*. Assistant directing includes *Woyzeck* and *The Crucible*. As a performer, he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Town Hall, The Green Space, St. Patrick's Cathedral, The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, The Southbank Centre in London UK, Bord Gáis Energy

Theatre in Dublin, and the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Production credits include co-producing a staged-reading of a new musical, *The Throwbacks*, at the New York Musical Theatre Festival and serving as assistant production manager and occasionally as stage director for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus since 2014, most recently directing *Quiet No More: A Celebration of Stonewall* at Carnegie Hall for World Pride, 2019.

At NYU, his courses have included Acting: Scene Study, American Musical Theatre: Background and Analysis, Assessment of Student Work in Drama, Development of Theatre and Drama I, Devising Educational Drama Programs and Curricula, Directing Youth Theatre, Drama across the Curriculum and Beyond, Drama in Education I, Drama in Education II, Dramatic Activities in the Secondary Drama Classroom, Methods of Conducting Creative Drama, Theory of Creative Drama, Seminar and Field Experience in Teaching Elementary Drama, Seminar and Field Experience in Teaching Secondary Drama, Shakespeare's Theatre, and World Drama. Early in his placement at NYU, Jonathan served as teaching assistant for American Musical Theatre: Background and Analysis, Seminar in Elementary Student Teaching, Theatre of Brecht and Beckett, and Theatre of Eugene O'Neill and worked as a course tutor and administrator for the study abroad program in London for three summers. He has supervised over 50 students in their student teaching placements in elementary and secondary schools in the New York City Area. Prior to becoming a teacher, Jonathan was an applicant services representative at NYU in the Graduate School of Arts and Science Enrollment Services Office for five years.

Recent publications include [\*Paradigms and Possibilities: A Festschrift in Honor of Philip Taylor\*](#) (2019) and Education at Roundabout: It's about Turning Classrooms into Theatres and the Theatre into a Classroom (with Jennifer DiBella and Mitch Mattson) in [\*Education and Theatres: Beyond the Four Walls\*](#) (edited by Michael Finneran and Michael Anderson; 2019).

Recent speaking engagements include a featured guest spot on Conversations in Social Justice Podcast, York St. John University, speaking about [\*Activism and Race within University Teaching and Research\*](#) (2021); an invited lecture on Performance as Activism at the Research-Based Theater Seminar, Washington, D.C. Citizen Diplomacy Fund Rapid Response COVID-19 Research-Based Theater

Project, The COVID Monologues, part of the Citizen Diplomacy Action Fund for US Alumni Rapid Response made possible by the US Department of State and Partners of the Americas (2020); a keynote lecture on Drama and Education: Why and How for the Drama and Education Conference, Shanghai, China (2020); and an invited lecture, On Creativity, for the University of Anbar, Iraq (2020).

In addition to his responsibilities at NYU, Jonathan teaches Fundamentals of Public Speaking, History of Theatre, and Introduction to Theatre at CUNY: Borough of Manhattan Community College.