

Editorial: Get Woke

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Content Warning: Language and subject matter that may challenge follows. Proceed with caution.

A couple of years ago, I was asked to facilitate a guest workshop using process drama with recently-matriculated graduate students. Given the general political tumult the world over from autocratic strongmen and those who emulate them and the inescapable proliferation of hatred, bigotry, and intolerance, I invited the students to investigate their positionality as political actors. Inspired by the activism of the Parkland students who launched March for Our Lives¹ after surviving the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, I wondered what these graduate students might think about their future

¹ March for Our Lives was launched as a protest march in Washington, D.C. with numerous global solidarity marches to protest the government's inaction on gun violence. That initial march shares a name with a political action fund aimed at ending gun violence.

role as educators of students who were no longer willing to sit by while the adults in power were mired in inaction. It was at that first March for Our Lives event where survivor Emma González said, “They say us kids don’t know what we’re talking about. That we’re too young to understand how the government works. We call B.S.” (CNN, 2018). What might this generation’s political motivations require of their teachers?

At the outset of the workshop. I asked the graduate students to stand in a circle. I explained that I was employing a convention called Cross the Circle which requires participants to listen to a prompt, and if it applies to them, they should cross the circle and move to a new place among their peers.

Cross the circle if you like theatre.

Cross the circle if you like music.

Cross the circle if you are having a good day.

Cross the circle if you are political.

The stillness that followed that last statement was palpable. For the graduate students, I don’t think they considered it remarkable by any means, but I was aghast. It is often said that all theatre is political, but it should be noted consistently that **all teaching is political**—both in terms of what you choose to incorporate into your curriculum and what you choose to leave out. I’ll grant you, the machinations of political parties, candidates, and representatives can be off-putting, but we play an integral role in that system too—whether through speaking out, calling in, voting, awakening and/or sustaining critical consciousness. *Or not.* And given the world as it is, choosing not to fully engage is not an option.

What happens when the majority keeps bending the knee to a violent, angry, radicalized minority? And what happens when corporations and organizations who have the power to step up, decide to “both-sides” it for the sake of profit and mollifying this minority that is always enraged? [...]. In some states that rhyme with ‘lorida,’ you apparently can’t say ‘gay’ [...]. Don’t say ‘gay’ because apparently saying ‘gay’ makes people uncomfortable [...]. The reality is: transgender kids are being harassed and bullied; Black people are being shot and killed; Asian-Americans are being targeted for COVID; women have lost a constitutionally-protected

right. (Trump & Ali, 2023, 22:00)

Wajahat Ali, multi-hyphenate commentator shared these observations last week, in response to a seemingly growing acquiesce among American corporations to the threat of (at best) boycott or (at worst) mob-violence from a vocal minority of right-wing extremists who insist on pushing their white-Christian nationalist views on the nation in a necessary effort to combat what some call the “woke-mind virus.” Be it boycotts of *Sports Illustrated* for featuring Kim Petras, a trans-woman musician on a cover of their swimsuit edition (Skinner, 2023), Bud Light after Dylan Mulvaney, a trans-woman influencer, promoted the brand (Moreno, 2023), or retailer Target for selling gay-pride themed merchandise which they subsequently pulled from their shelves (Lavietes, 2023)—this is the cultural backdrop that prompted Ali (among others) to push back against this seeming-societal regression to a time when demonizing the LGBTQ+ community was socially acceptable. Gay pride celebrations are being curtailed. Drag queen story hours are canceled under threat of protest. And teachers and students alike are silenced for being who they are. And that’s just scratching the surface given a decade of unimaginable slaughter—be that of Black Americans in bible study at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston or grocery shopping at a Topps supermarket in Buffalo, LGBTQ+ at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, LatinX shoppers at Walmart in El Paso, Jewish worshippers at the tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh—I could go on. What does this milieu portend for drama educators?

TO WOKE, OR NOT TO WOKE

As defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, being ‘woke’ is to be “aware of and actively attentive to important societal facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)” (2023). The etymology of the term, however, has a rich history in Black-American vernacular. After conversation with linguist deandre miles-hercules, Vox’s Aja Romano distilled,

The earliest known examples of wokeness as a concept revolve around the idea of Black consciousness “waking up” to a new reality or activist framework and dates back to the early 20th century. In 1923, a collection of aphorisms and ideas by the Jamaican

philosopher and social activist Marcus Garvey included the summons “Wake up Ethiopia! Wake up Africa!” as a call to global Black citizens to become more socially and politically conscious. A few years later, the phrase “stay woke” turned up as part of a spoken afterword in the 1938 song “Scottsboro Boys,” a protest song by Blues musician Huddie Ledbetter, a.k.a. Lead Belly. The song describes the 1931 saga of a group of nine Black teenagers in Scottsboro, Arkansas, who were accused of raping two white women. (Romano, 2020)

Of this phenomena, U.S. congresswoman Barbara Lee wrote, “We have a moral obligation to “stay woke,” take a stand and be active; challenging injustices and racism in our communities and fighting hatred and discrimination wherever it rises” (2017). And it is this progressive social justice that those who promote an anti-woke agenda are pushing to suppress.

Whether it be legislative actions like Florida’s “Don’t say gay” bill to supposedly protect youth from being groomed by gay teachers or the proliferation of anti-trans bills, masquerading as protecting girls in bathrooms from imagined predators in women’s clothing or trans-girl athletes besting their cis-female competitors, the anti-woke agenda is on the march. According to the American Psychological Association, “In 2022, anti-transgender student athletics bills were introduced in 29 states in the United States” (2023), which, when combined with “at least 18 states [that] have adopted laws or policies—including some blocked by courts—barring gender-affirming medical care” (Crary, 2023), irreparable harm is being inflicted on a vulnerable population.

Of course, it is not only the LGBTQ+ community that has been placed in the right-wing’s political crosshairs. According to a report by the advocacy group [PEN America](#) (Meehan & Friedman, 2023), reported in *The New York Times*,

From July to December 2022, PEN found 1,477 cases of books being removed, up from 1,149 during the previous six months. [...] The numbers don’t reflect the full scope of the efforts, since new mandates in some states requiring schools to vet all their reading material for potentially offensive content have led to mass removals of books, which PEN was unable to track, the report says. (Alter, 2023)

This so-called offensive content is sometimes as simple as an overt act of racism by a white character, though—of course—any appearance of an LGBTQ+ character or relationship is immediately suspect. Banned books have included Art Spiegelman’s graphic novel *Maus* (too brutally honest about the Holocaust), Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye* (sexually explicit and, well, Black), Maia Kababe’s *Gender Queer* (too queer), and the children’s book *The Life of Rosa Parks* (it’s just ‘too woke’).

In theatre, censoring performances follow suit (Paulson, 2023). In February, 2023, a production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at a Geauga County high school in Ohio “was canceled over concerns about *vulgarity*” (emphasis in the source; Stunson, 2023), though it had been the fourth-most-produced full-length musical in American high schools as recently as 2021 (EDTA, 2021). The school subsequently reversed its decision after considerable national media attention. In March 2023, school leaders at a high school in Fort Wayne, Indiana said, “the spring play *Marian: The True Tale of Robinhood* would not be moving forward [...] following a few calls from parents who were concerned about certain aspects of the play—such as a non-binary character and a same-sex couple” (Abbott, 2023). The student-performers subsequently raised funds to independently mount their production in a local theatre.

Whether it was Anita Bryant’s “Save Our Children” campaign in South Florida in the 1970s to overturn a prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Frank, 2013) or the stain of Jim Crow, none of this is new—neither here in the U.S., nor globally. Books have been banned for centuries—and discriminatory measures that demonize marginalized communities proliferate human history. But just because it has been so, does not mean it should continue and if we don’t ‘get woke’ or ‘stay woke’, those who promote this agenda will achieve their desired outcome. As noted above, this is happening across corporate America, but their success can be seen in other sectors as well. As reported in *The Washington Post*, “a study published by the Rand Corp. in January found that nearly one-quarter of a nationally representative sample of 8,000 English, math and science teachers reported revising their instructional materials to limit or eliminate discussions of race and gender” (Natanson, 2023). Facing administrative pushback, a Florida high school canceled their production of Paula Vogel’s *Indecent* and replaced it with a more palatable choice, Chekhov’s *The Seagull* (Masseron, 2023).

We must be steadfast in our resolve that this organized assault on our civil liberties will not stand—that we will not go quietly into the slumber that some might intend. And if that makes you uncomfortable—if that is too confrontational for you—Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has some words for you:

I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice [...]. Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection. [...]

More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. (1963)

While Rev. Dr. King was advocating for white moderates to join in the fight for true emancipation of Black Americans, I implore those of you who are called to moderation and temperance to wake up. The time is ripe indeed, so join me in this righteous action.

WOKE IN THE CLASSROOM

What does it look like to be woke in the classroom? It is not about espousing a political ideology. Rather, it tasks you with creating a learning community that is grounded in liberation, equity, and justice. Woke in the classroom requires self-reflection. It requires you to consider your privilege before you speak—be that due to your race, gender, ethnicity, sexual-orientation, or otherwise. It requires you to

promote inquiry and critical consciousness. Woke in the classroom is where students know that you support them when the world outside seeks to oppress them. Here are three vignettes that suggest what that can look like in drama education.

la migra

I arrived a little late one morning to the high school where I was teaching. Such was the way when I didn't have a homeroom class to supervise prior to the start of the day. But as my first-period students began to file into the classroom, something was clearly amiss. Between my classroom and the next, there was a pass-through doorway—the kind you'll find in some adjoining hotel rooms—and some of my advanced drama students were hurrying between the rooms. It seemed, some major drama was afoot and they needed to gather more students for support.

Before things got too out of hand, I went through to the other classroom to find out what was going on. Without hesitation, a girl told me, Cheli's mom was picked up by immigration.

Growing up in the Northeastern U.S., immigration was a non-entity. Border patrol on the U.S./Canada border existed—you might sometimes encounter them on a long-distance bus or train if you were near the border—but otherwise, they were the stuff of television dramas and newscasts. Such was my privilege. But to anyone living in an immigrant community or within proximity to the U.S./Mexico border, “la migra” was something else entirely. A viper waiting in the shadows to strike out against an unsuspecting victim at any moment. And on that day, the victim was Cheli's mom.

Given my naiveté, I needed information. As my class was just about to get underway, I returned to my own classroom, shut the door. And called the class to attention.

“OK, I know I am legally not allowed to ask any of you about your immigration status—and I'm not asking you about that now—but we have an emergency situation and I need information. If immigration picks you up—what does that mean? How does it happen? Where do they take you? And what can you do about it?”

My impulse was to find an immigration attorney and get the mom out of detention—but was that even possible? The students were quickly forthcoming with information as this was a scenario with which they were all too familiar. This amounted to a migrant being taken away to a

processing center, then sent to a temporary detention facility out of state, and ultimately being deported. And without major funds to disrupt this sequence, there was nothing to do but hope they could return at some point in the future. As they say, case closed.

Cheli was 18 years old at the time and within a few months of her graduation. And as she lived only with her mom, she was now alone. I couldn't make sense of the cruelty of the situation. Indeed Cheli was an 'adult'—but she didn't work and was left by a broken immigration system to fend for herself.

I thanked my students and put on a video—no 'teaching' was happening that day though there would be plenty of learning. I spent the better part of the day working with colleagues and students to figure out living arrangements for Cheli and making sure she would be taken care of. Cheli had been in my classes every year that she was in high school. She was in every show. She features in every memory of my time at that school. We were like family. And to quote her favorite film, she was *ohana*—a Hawaiian term that means family, and "Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten" (Sanders & DeBlois, 2002).

let's hear them sing

I taught at that same high school for a number of years and I could never comprehend the visual segregation in the quad at lunch time. All the Black kids congregated in the breezeway outside of the auditorium. The Armenian kids held court directly behind the main building. And then a vast sea of LatinX students covered the space between. Given the large immigrant community at the school, there were language and cultural differences that contributed to this scene, but what alarmed me was that no one acknowledged this self-imposed segregation. Over the years, I asked the students about this phenomena and they insisted that this is just how it was—they wanted to be with their friends who just happened to share their racial or ethnic makeup. This reality was not shared by all students on campus as there were many diverse sanctuaries that called to students whose interests guided their social groups. Students participating in the science bowl were hidden away in a classroom. The marching band were isolated in the music bungalow. Small Learning Communities had dedicated space with their faculty advisors. My people—the Entertainment and Media Academy—were no different, huddled together in their safe space in room 184. But for everyone who didn't gravitate to these special interest groups, they were relegated to

the segregation tableau in the quad. And no one talked about it. No one questioned it. Only me. It was with this segregation in mind that I elected to direct *West Side Story*--what I imagined to be a necessary commentary on what this school community seemed to ignore.

The show selection was not controversial, but one casting choice was. Nearly 90 students auditioned for the show. There'd been a two-year gap since the last musical production, so those who needed a theatrical outlet were primed for this moment—but also, this particular material really resonated with this population of students—resulting in this great turn-out of talent. It took two or three days to see everyone. I was committed to casting every eligible student, but given the material, we needed a few strong singers to make it work. As we made our way through the auditions, it became evident that we needed one more voice—and as the last student auditioned, it was clear that the requisite voice was not there.

A bit bereft, I huddled with my colleagues. *What would we do?* You can't do Bernstein's score without a voice. And in the midst of this, we overheard some commotion in the hall outside of the audition room. So I went out to investigate—it seemed there was yet one more student who wanted to audition. The commotion was that their peers supported the idea and their teacher was entirely opposed. You see, in the U.S., many students with documented special needs are permitted to stay in secondary school until they are 21-years-old if they need the time to complete their graduation requirements. This was one such student. And after 6 years navigating the student's many challenges and unreliability, their teacher basically forbade them to audition.

I didn't know the student. I didn't know the history. What I knew was—I needed a voice—but more, as this student had been so publicly rejected by this faculty member, I had to intervene. "Well, let's hear them sing," I said. And as anyone who's ever worked in theatre will know, a tear-inducing voice that only the muses could provide emanated from this young performer. They got the part.

I had a meeting with the student before I posted the cast list. I asked if they thought their teacher's concerns were valid. They responded in the affirmative. As such, I knew there would be much work to do, but their admission demonstrated their integrity. I let them know that I believed in them—and that 85 other students would be relying on them to do their part. My colleague insisted on contingencies—a performer contract, understudies, accountability measures—othering this student

all the more. But I remained determined. And four months later, the student delivered a triumphal performance, vindicating what I knew to be the right thing to do.

it gets better

In my 2021 editorial [Into the Traumaverse](#), I shared an excerpt from *Voices*, a devised theatre piece that I helped create and perform for the NYU LGBT Center. The piece was crafted from questionnaire data from young, queer adults reflecting on their experiences growing up gay. A portion of that excerpt follows:

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 et al., 2003)

This piece is never far from my mind given that it included a number of personal anecdotes from my youth—and the performance of this text

was the first time that I'd spoken publicly about the bullying and homophobia that I experienced as a young person. While I was teaching high school, I kept copies of this script in a filing cabinet in my classroom. I didn't know when or if it would become useful in my teaching, but I kept it close at hand, just in case.

Every couple of months, my colleagues and I took a group of students to see a staged reading, produced by Bonnie Franklin's Classic and Contemporary American Plays, a non-profit dedicated to sharing free theatre with professional actors for public school students. One spring afternoon, I'd just returned to campus from one such field trip. My classroom was empty and I was gathering materials to prepare for an after-school rehearsal. As I busied myself, one of my students came running through the door.

"Mr. Jones, you need to come quick. Aram is crying in the theatre. On the way back from the trip, some kids on the bus were harassing him and calling him a faggot."

Without hesitation, I dropped what I was doing and followed the concerned student into the theatre. When we went through the stage door, I saw that there was a small group of students sitting together, consoling Aram. As he wasn't alone, I purposefully returned to my classroom, went directly to the filing cabinet, grabbed the waiting pile of scripts, and took them back to the theatre. I arranged the students into a circle, assigned roles, and we read the script together.

As we read, the students were asking, "Is this 'Jonathan' you?" I hushed them and pushed them to keep reading. About eight pages in, a character says, "No one who likes Madonna that much could possibly be gay" (Jones et al., 2003)—at that point, they all laughed—as they then knew it was definitely me. As we made our way toward the excerpt recounted above, their initial laughter turned to somber recognition.

This was about five years before the "It Gets Better" campaign was launched by Dan Savage and Terry Miller wherein this gay couple posted a video online in which they "talked about the bullying and rejection they experienced as gay teens, and how life got better for them in the years after high school" (Compton, 2020). The couple posted the video in response to a spate of high-profile suicides by gay teenagers in the U.S. In the ten years following the release of their viral video in 2010, more than 70,000 such videos were posted online to echo and amplify their message. And it was with that same intention that I brought those scripts to the theatre that day to share with Aram and his peers—to tell

them not only that it gets better, but also to say that I had been there too—I understood the hurt and the shame. And after we supported him in this immediate moment, **we would act**. I was prone to say in those days, “Preach your hate in your church if you like, but keep it out of my classroom”—and though this incident didn’t happen in my classroom, its impact had seeped its way in nonetheless—and that would not be tolerated. So with steel in his spine, we walked with Aram from the theatre to the main office in solidarity as he formally reported the incident so that the perpetrators could be held accountable.

NOW YOU DO IT

As I recall these moments, trust that I am not patting myself on the back. Rather, I am castigating myself for not doing enough—for being reactive rather than proactive in each of these situations. But what I know is that there was no conceivable world in which I would have been presented with these challenges and responded, “I’m just here to teach drama. It’s not my place to intervene.” Not me. Not then. Not now. Not ever. Push away whatever conscious or unconscious thoughts that might be holding you back. The forces against us are relentless and we must face that head on. Though it may be a platitude, the quote attributed to William Johnsen rings true—you must believe, “If it is to be, it is up to me.” And that doesn’t mean you need to organize a protest (though you could). It doesn’t mean you need to take to the streets (though you could, as students in Sarasota, Florida did to speak out against the Don’t Say Gay bill [Lieberman, 2022]). It doesn’t mean you have to make public comment at your local school board meeting (though you could). The teacher who keeps a drawer full of emergency snacks for students they know are missing meals when the conservatives cut funding is doing their part. And if, like me, you worry after that you didn’t do enough—let that push you to do more the next time. They want you to be pacified. They want you to be cowed into silence. They want you asleep. And in light of this, I implore you: wake up!

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue, our contributors document and reflect on innovative educational theatre practices. **Joe Salvatore** interrogates a

methodology for verbatim performance, a form which asks an audience to critically engage with data from interviews and media artifacts via a presentational acting style that can include portraying across identity. **Scott Welsh**, **Elnaz Sheshgelani**, and **Mary-Rose McLaren** describes a ten-year exploration of the self and social experience which fused together two disparate theatrical forms, Persian Dramatic Storytelling and Real Fiction, to create an intercultural hybrid performance medium. **Christine V. Skorupa** advocates for expanding access for neurodiverse audiences, proposing a Universal Design for Theatregoing based upon the principles of Universal Design for Learning. **David Allen** and **Agata Handley** mine unpublished documentary evidence from Dorothy Heathcote's archive in which she created a space for "response-ability" through a series of "focussed encounters with 'otherness'." **Victoria Isotti** proposes methods for using creative drama in support of social-emotional learning for young children. Finally, **Alex Ates** deconstructs three collaborations with professional playwrights who developed new works for young people in order to overcome the discontinuities between plays for the professional stage and the artistic needs of diverse, school-based theatre production.

LOOKING AHEAD

Having recently concluded another thought-provoking dialogue at the 2023 NYU Forum on Collective Visioning, our next issue ([Volume 10, Issue 2](#)) will focus on articles under that same heading. We invite members of the Educational Theatre field to submit works that will share ideas, vocabularies, strategies, and techniques, centering on varying definitions and practices. That issue will publish in late 2023. Thereafter, look to the [Verbatim Performance Lab](#) for outreach and innovation from the NYU Steinhardt Program in Educational Theatre as well as a Symposium on Research and Scholarship to be presented in collaboration with the American Alliance for Theatre and Education in 2024.

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[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 editorial board for *Applied Theatre Research* and *Youth Theatre Journal*, and on the board of directors as well as chair of Research and Scholarship for the American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE) where he has recently been elected Chair-Elect and will serve as Chair from 2025-2027.

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. 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, 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 ["And So We Write": Reflective Practice](#)

[in Ethnotheatre and Devised Theatre Projects](#) in *LEARNING Landscapes*, 14 (2), 2022, Let Them Speak: Devised Theatre as a Culturally Responsive Methodology for Secondary Students in *Routledge Companion to Theatre and Young People* (edited by Selina Busby, Charlene Rajendran, and Kelly Freebody; 2022), [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). His book *Assessment in the Drama Classroom: A Culturally Responsive and Student-Centered Approach* will be published by Routledge in the coming year.

Recent speaking engagements include panel moderation for AATE's 2022 Leaders of Color Institute ([Cultivating Spaces for LOC in Educational and 'Professional' Theatre Settings - Opening Keynote with Daphnie Sicre and José Casas](#)), workshop facilitation for the 2022 AATE National Conference ([Biblioburro: Children around the World Access Books through Story Drama](#)) and Theatre in Our Schools ([Locating Order in the Chaos: Revisiting Assessment in the Drama Classroom](#) [2022] and [Stage to Page: Reimagining the Teacher/Practitioner Role in Scholarship](#) [2021]), featured guest spots on Fluency with Dr. Durell Cooper Podcast, speaking about [Origins, Inspirations, and Aspirations](#), and Conversations in Social Justice Podcast, York St. John University, speaking about [Activism and Race within University Teaching and Research](#) (2021); panel moderation for Theatre in Our Schools ([Stage to Page: Reimagining the Teacher/Practitioner Role in Scholarship](#)) and the AATE National Conference ([Pandemic Positives: What Do We Keep? Looking Backwards to Move Forward](#)); 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). Upcoming engagements include workshop facilitation at the 2023 AATE National Conference and co-facilitation with David Montgomery at the 2023 Dorothy Heathcote NOW conference in Aberdeen, Scotland.

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.