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Journal of Interactive Drama

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

**Volume Three, Issue Three
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Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

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The Journal of Interactive Drama is an international journal dedicated to the publication of critical discussion and scenarios related to Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games and welcomes contributions in all areas of the study, design, and creation of stand-alone scenario-based LARPS as well as Scenario-Based Learning related to interactive dramas of this type. Review articles of books related to interactive drama and informal book announcements are also welcome. Critical pieces on scenarios or convention events are welcome. Stand-alone scenarios are encouraged for submission with designer notes and running commentary. Submissions are peer-reviewed. Contributions may be submitted from all countries and are accepted all year round. The language of publication is English. There are no restrictions on

regular submission; however, manuscripts simultaneously submitted to other publications cannot be accepted without express notice and permissions for simultaneous publication. Submissions by regular mail and electronic mail are both accepted.

Distribution and Community

The Journal of Interactive Drama is published online at <http://www.interactivedramas.info/journal.htm> and in press format using pdf distribution media. The journal is normally published regularly as an ongoing concern with submissions considered as they are received. You may find the current issue and past issues archived at <http://www.interactivedramas.info/journal.htm> on the world wide web. The journal is associated with the scenario archive at <http://www.interactivedramas.info>. The online discussion forum associated with the journal and the scenario archive/workshop is at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/InteractiveDramatist>. This forum includes online workshop for interactive dramatists to post draft versions of scenarios for community comments as well as for them to share their material with other directors to run in different venues.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF INTERACTIVE DRAMA ACTIVITIES

Michael Cheng
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ABSTRACT

Interactive dramas are a language learning activity in which each student in the class takes a distinct role with specific goals and then interacts with other students in the class to build alliances and complete common goals. Since there is no prepared script to follow, all language during the interactive drama is spontaneous, creating a challenging situation that simulates encounters that students may have in the real world. This study investigates the attitudes and perceptions of advanced university English majors to interactive drama activities in a required oral training class. The students found that the activities were challenging and exposed their weaknesses in persuasive communication. The students grew more confident in their speaking ability and more motivated to improve after participating in interactive dramas. They students also were able to scaffold each other during the activity as students learned from observing successful communication strategies used by classmates or from direct suggestions by classmates. Interactive dramas can be valuable components to the oral training class, as they provide extensive and spontaneous speaking practice on challenging topics.

Keywords: Interactive drama, EFL, role play, negotiation, persuasion, language teaching

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

English language education has evolved during the last two decades in Taiwan. Whereas typical students in the past began learning English when they entered junior high school, students now commonly begin learning English as third graders in elementary school. Many students may even begin learning English as kindergarten students. Exposure to English language material is also widely available. Numerous cable stations broadcast English programming and English publications are widely available. In addition, with the increased popularity of communicative approaches to language teaching, students theoretically are developing sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence, as well as grammatical competence (Lazaraton, 2001). As a result, students entering the English department of national universities in Taiwan should generally be expected to be fluent in English, and able to converse about basic topics.

On the other hand, even in students advanced enough to enter university English departments, there is still much room for improvement in speaking ability. Lazaraton (2001) writes of how challenging the act of speaking is. Language learners can be overloaded by the need to process incoming language while simultaneously preparing to produce responses, meaning that few students will have the "confidence to engage in unplanned conversations with native speakers" (Lazaraton, 2001, p. 108). In another example from a Taiwanese university, intermediate non-English majors in an oral communication class expressed the desire for more practice in spontaneous conversation and the researcher concluded that "the aim and emphasis of our classrooms should continue to be on dealing with communication problems that arise in unprepared situations" (Ho, 2003, p. 277).

An evaluation of traditional methods of teaching speaking can expose many of the reasons students are unprepared for spontaneous interaction. Lazaraton (2001) suggests a number of activities for use in oral skills classes which include discussions, speeches, role plays, conversations, audio-taped dialogue journals, and accuracy-based activities. These activities can be taught with what Cunningham Florez calls a "classic pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and extension" (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2004, p. 34). In an example for

teaching small talk conversations, it is suggested that the class begin with presentation of video clips of people involved in small talk. This is followed by having the students create and then practice their own small talk dialogues. The evaluation phase is next where the students compare their previously generated dialogues with dialogues prepared by the teacher. In the extension phase, the students are to observe authentic small talk situations in the general community. The defect in this methodology is a lack of spontaneity. The students create original dialogues, but when it comes to actual oral production, they are repeating the previously written dialogue, negating the need to simultaneously process new input while formulating a response.

This lack of spontaneity also exists in the other activities that Lazaraton suggests. In the discussion activity it is suggested that students prepare their positions so they know what points they wish to make and the roles they are to play in the upcoming discussion (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2004). Speeches are activities that are lauded for aiding the fluency and complexity of the speech when sufficient pre-task planning is allowed. Role plays begin by following scripted dialogues for a situation, but are then incrementally modified by the instructor to slightly alter the situation. In the audio-taped dialogue journals students record their thoughts on a topic, and then exchange tapes with a peer who comments on the previous journal entry. This is the activity that Ho's (2003) students considered artificial since the time lag between journal entries eliminates the need for spontaneity, prompting Ho to express the need for activities that teach students to react in unprepared speaking situations.

Lazaraton (2001) also introduces some of the factors that create added difficulty when teaching in an EFL context. The teacher may not be a native speaker, classes can be large, and the students can be reticent about speaking out. She suggests ways of increasing input by showing authentic material such as movies. We can see with these suggestions the speaking class is evolving into an input oriented class, with little spontaneous output.

Other less common activities for speaking classes include the discourse analysis approaches to the teaching of speaking. This includes systemic functional linguistics, spoken corpora, and conversational analysis. (Burns, 1998; McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2004) Descriptions of

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these activities focus on the categorization of spoken language or the analysis of transcripts of spoken language to increase awareness of the features and vocabulary used in conversation. The focus tends to be on increasing accuracy and awareness of speaking strategies, but little spontaneous speaking practice is included, and the categories typically presented for systemic functional linguistics are rather benign and lack the ability to push or pressure students since the categories avoid challenging or confrontation situations.

In terms of typical classroom methodology, teacher fronted IRF (initiation–response–follow-up) exchanges have been blamed for placing students in passive roles that do not expose students to the rigors of real-life conversations (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2004).

Another problem is in the textbooks used for teaching spoken language. Burns (1998) criticizes classroom speaking materials for being "at the least, less than appropriate, and often misleading and disempowering—they fail to provide second language speakers with depictions of conversational data or with effective strategies for facilitating spoken communication in English (p. 106)." McCarthy and O'Keefe (2004) echo this idea by criticizing textbooks for not being authentic examples of spoken language.

To improve on the teaching of spoken language, McCarthy and O'Keefe (2004) summarize a number of ideas. First they state language learners need to increase their awareness of language, and then they emphasize Hughes viewpoint that "awareness-raising approaches should not be judged by the amount of speech learners produce but more in terms of depth of understanding of speaking and of why speakers make the choices they do (p. 32)" and that there is a need for the "proper social and cultural contextualization of speaking activities (p. 35)."

The use of interactive dramas could provide a solution to the problems of a lack of spontaneity and a lack of proper social and cultural contextualization in speaking classes. Interactive dramas are niche activities that are popular internationally as a theater orientated hobby. Although obscure as a teaching activity, interactive dramas have been developed as an innovative classroom tool in Taiwan (Cheng & Phillips, 2006; Phillips & Cheng, 2004).

What are Interactive Dramas?

Interactive drama is the shortened version of interactive drama freeform live action role playing games, a type of activity that evolved out of tabletop Role Playing Games (RPGs), a genre of game that became popular in the 1970s. In these tabletop RPGs the players would create a character or a new persona, often a fantasy persona similar to the avatars created in many modern online RPGs like World of Warcraft. However, the characters in a traditional RPG existed entirely in the minds of the players. During the RPG game, a game director was responsible for creating a scenario within an imaginary world. These scenarios usually consisted of overcoming a specific challenge within the game world. Typical scenarios include treasure hunts through complicated underground labyrinths, the rescue of a damsel in distress, or the stealing of a dragon's hoard. Game play involved having the game director describe one stage of the scenario after which each player would take turns describing his or her immediate course of action to the game director.

One drawback for tabletop RPGs, and an especially large one if RPGs are used as a language learning tool, is that "while tabletop RPGs could be stimulating to the imagination and require extensive discussion to plan out a course of action, they had a tendency to move rather slowly due to the need for each player to take turns describing his or actions to the game director, and for the game director to rule if the proposed action was acceptable or not" (Phillips & Cheng, 2004, 227).

Interactive dramas "represented the next evolutionary advancement in role playing games" (Phillips & Cheng, 2004, 227) by combining "the creation of a personal character with the performance of a dramatic play" (Phillips & Cheng, 2004, 227).

In staging an interactive drama, a game director will create a scenario and write up detailed descriptions of all the characters in the performance. Players will be given a copy of only the character he or she will play in the drama. The player must then become the role, imagining colorful quirks and creating an appropriate look through make-up and costuming.

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When the interactive drama freeform live action role playing game is staged each participant leaves his or her true identity behind and becomes immersed in the role to be played in the drama. Characters meet, and through the process of conversation, look for allies, hunt down enemies, or do whatever else it takes to accomplish their personal goals (Phillips & Cheng, 2004, 227).

In summary, an interactive drama is an event in which the director and players work together to create a role. The player comes to the venue of the activity, immerses himself or herself into the role, and then begins to interact with the other characters involved in the activity. They often interact in small groups to exchange information, create alliances, or negotiate treaties. Players often try to discover the secrets of other players while at the same time suppressing the dissemination of their own secrets. As the participants interact, a story is created. The twists of the plot depend on the actions taken by the participants in the drama.

Comparing Interactive Dramas and Role Play Activities

Interactive dramas have a number of differences that distinguish them from the language role plays and dramas typically used in English language learning classrooms.

Interactive Dramas should be distinguished from Language Role Plays, Classroom Dramas, and other more commonly employed classroom language learning exercises which teachers routinely use. Classroom dramas usually work from a prewritten script negating the need for students to improvise with creative original language. Interactive dramas are interactive stories in which the scenario furnishes the basic plot elements and the players shape the narrative through their actions within the context of the game. The flexible plot forces participants to

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improvise and create instead of relying on a set script. At the same time teachers can encourage the language used in the game, guided around vocabulary or context-sensitive goals. Interactive dramas are also social activities that are played through the verbal interchange of the players making them ideal activities for language learners (Phillips & Cheng 2004, p. 228).

The ways students interact while involved in an interactive dramas are quite different from the student interaction during a language learning role play where the typical goal is to practice a grammatical form, practice vocabulary in context, or practicing a social function, such as making introductions or asking for directions. Interactive dramas can be designed to only take 15 to 30 minutes, or they can be expanded into two or three hour activities. In contrast, the typical classroom role play lasts only a few minutes in which the conversation reaches its conclusion that is expected by both participants as well as the teacher. "The activity provides important practice for the language learner but is not likely to fill the language learner with enthusiasm or trigger the learner to use language in a new and creative manner since there is no emotional investment in the role play situation" (Phillips & Cheng 2005, p. 218).

Role plays can be modified to increase the emotional investment of the students. The students in the role play can be asked to imitate the attitude of people they have encountered or possibly imagine encountering. In a supermarket role play, one student can turn an ordinary shopper into a surly shopper, or a frazzled shopper. The other student can then play the role of an apathetic store clerk, an overwhelmed store clerk, or a compassionate store clerk. The shopper-store clerk interaction could then lead to a number of interesting interactions or confrontations.

Phillips and Cheng (2005) show how this simple scenario can be built into an interactive drama or LARP (Live Action Role Play):

Now imagine going one step further and explaining why the person playing the shopper happens to be so angry today and why the grocery

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clerk is so apathetic about work. This is the beginning of a simple LARP. Now imagine creating backgrounds for each person who happens to be in the grocery store at that time. Then tie all the shoppers and grocery store employees together with a common goal. We can take a plot from a Stephen King short story for example. The grocery store is surrounded by a mysterious black mist. Nobody that ventures out of the store and into the mist returns. The two minute role play activity has now been turned into the foundation of an hour long LARP. It has been transformed from an activity designed for elementary learners of English to one that can challenge intermediate through advanced learners (p. 219).

Interactive dramas differ from simulations in that participants create and portray a character, while in a simulation, the participants are given a job to do and while becoming immersed in completing their assigned task as part of a team, they are never asked to act out of character (Jones, 1982). In an interactive drama, participants are asked to act out of character. Characters roles can require that students to act timid or brave, sexy or shy, obnoxious or diplomatic, giving students opportunities to experiment which the language that can be used by these personality types.

Teaching Strategic Competence with Interactive Dramas

A valuable characteristic of interactive dramas is the opportunity they provide for developing strategic competence. Strategic competence is the "ability to cope in an authentic communicative situation and to keep the communicative channel open (Alptekin, 2002: 58)."

Training students to improve their strategic competence could be providing students with a list of useful phrases to use when they are unable to comprehend the speech of a practice partner and then providing practice opportunities to build student confidence in using the phrases. As students increase in ability, strategic competence will include

developing awareness of the appropriate level of formality to use, the ramifications of using an improper level of formality, and how to repair the situation. Student can also develop an eye for the body language of those they speak with and learn to read it to predict cases of potential misunderstanding. As students reach more advanced levels of ability, they can learn to frame the situation for their specific advantage, learning to introduce topics or requests in a manner to create a favorable or receptive atmosphere. When interactive dramas have been used with Advanced level English majors at National Chengchi University, the students are prepared for the activity by learning a battery of persuasion and negotiation skills.

Present methods for developing linguistic competence may be weak in developing the strategic competence that is needed for real world situations. In traditional grammar translation and audio-lingual approaches to language teaching, students are trained to "get it right from the beginning (Lightbown and Spada, 1999: 117)." The belief is that by practicing grammatically correct sentences, students can form the habit of speaking the correct sentences. Although students may be taught a number of set interactional phrases useful for clarifying situations where a misunderstanding occurs, in practice, these phrases are rarely used because both parties know what is supposed to be said. For example, in an audio-lingual style role play, both students would have a dialog, and take turns practicing each of the roles. There is no need to clarify a mistake with a phrase like, "Could you repeat that?" because both participants already know what is supposed to be said.

In an interactionalist approach to language teaching, the interaction between the students and their teacher, and between students working in a group as they focus on form has been shown to lead to improved linguistic competence. Students needed to develop a level of strategic competence in order to be able to ask the teacher for clarification when a statement made by the instructor or their partner was not fully comprehended (Ellis, 1999). However, this interaction takes place at a consistent level of formality and thus does not encompass many of the potential types of interaction that the students will face in the real world.

When an interactive drama is added to class with a strong emphasis on form, students will be pushed to improvise and use

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language in a manner much closer to how they will need to use it in real world encounters. Interactive dramas are unique in placing students in a situation where every interaction with a fellow student will be unpredictable. Each student has a separate role in the activity with personal goals to accomplish. The goals of fellow students are unknown creating a sense of mystery in the classroom that pushes students to use all their communication strategies to build alliances or persuade others to follow a desired course of action. Students may need to influence their classmates on the one-to-one level or as large groups by using the interaction strategies they have been exposed to creatively and spontaneously.

Finally, other benefits of interactive dramas are that they can build grammatical and discourse competence. The necessity to interact for an extended period of time, with appropriate reactions to comments or questions from the other participants places students into the types of language exchanges that they will face in their real world use of English as an international language. In terms of improving grammatical competence, from a social-cultural perspective, interactive dramas give students the opportunity to learn from their classmates, not just from the instructor. A zone of proximal development can exist in student-student interactions (Ellis, 1999). Students receive immediate feedback from their peers in the form of a confused or misunderstood reply. This pushes students to recast their utterance in order to make it comprehensible, making the interactive drama activity a valuable opportunity for peer learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Although interactive dramas have significant potential as a tool to give students speaking practice that is close to real world speaking experiences, little formal research has been done on student attitudes and actions during interactive dramas. This research studies student perceptions of the activity by investigating the following questions:

1. How beneficial do students believe interactive drama activities to be?

2. What kind of peer support do students provide each other?
3. What kind of instructor support is beneficial for interactive drama activities?
4. How did student spoken English ability improve from participation in interactive drama activities?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were university English majors with advanced levels of English, taking a required sophomore oral training and reading class at a national university in Taiwan. There were a total of 20 students in the class. 19 of the students had a one previous year of a required oral training course. The remaining student was a freshman who was allowed to waive her first year of oral training and jump directly into the second-year course. The class met once a week for three hours.

Procedures

The syllabus of the course included activities that increased the awareness of the features of language that made speakers more persuasive. First, the students read a handout and received a lecture on nine principles of persuasion. They later had practice using these principles in simple role plays. For example, students paired up and took the roles of customer and clothing store clerk. The clerk's mission was to persuade the customer to buy more clothing.

This was followed by two pair-work negotiation exercises. The purposes of the negotiation activities were give the students more practice in using the nine persuasion principles under controlled conditions and to also prepare the students for their next activity, a dual class interactive drama, *White Collar Crime* (Beattie, 1996).

The week before the *White Collar Crime* activity, the students were given a quiz on the nine persuasion principles. The quiz merely asked the

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students to define and give an example of what could be said when using each of the nine categories of persuasion.

In *White Collar Crime*, the class combined with another section of sophomore oral training and reading to participate in a 40-person interactive drama. The activity was based on the alleged African breast milk substitute scandal that Nestle's was involved in. The students were divided into five teams representing different fictional parties involved in the scandal with the purpose of negotiating a treaty to resolve the conflict. Within each team, individual students paired up with a partner for added support. After the activity students were asked to provide written feedback on the following questions:

1. Who was your partner?
2. How much did having a partner help you? Was it a help or a hindrance or nothing at all?
3. What kind of advice did your partner give you?
4. What kind of advice did you give to your partner?
5. Did the role play activity improve your negotiation ability? How did the role play improve your negotiation ability? Why did your negotiation ability improve or not improve?
6. In general, how was the White Collar Crime role play beneficial to improving your English ability?
7. In general, how was the White Collar Crime role play detrimental to improving your English ability?
8. What else did you like or dislike about the activity?
9. What is the main thing you learned?

Later in the semester, students participated in another dual-class interactive drama activity, *The Greater Trumps* (Brown, Eckert, & Singer, no date), in which students once again had to negotiate a form of government for all those participating in the activity. After this interactive drama, students were asked once again to provide feedback on their experiences during the activity. Students were also given the same quiz on influence techniques that they had taken earlier in the semester.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quiz on Influence Techniques

On the first quiz covering the nine influence principles, most students understood *Contrast*, *Liking (Friends)*, and *Scarcity* best. A majority of students also understood *Reciprocity*, *Conformity*, *Commitment & Consistency*, and *Power*. Fewer students understood *Liking (Association)* and *Expectation*.

Table 1: First quiz on knowledge of influence techniques

Persuasion Principle	Quiz 1		
	Correct	Incorrect	
Reciprocity	13	6	+
CONTRAST	17	2	+
Social Proof (Conformity)	13	6	+
LIKING (FRIENDS)	17	2	+
<i>Liking (Association)</i>	8	11	-
SCARCITY	17	2	+
Commitment & Consistency	12	7	+
<i>Expectation</i>	7	12	-
Power	12	7	+

On the second quiz almost all students clearly understand seven of the nine categories. They showed strong improvement in three categories: *Social Proof (Conformity)*, *Expectation*, and *Power*. In addition, they showed moderate improvement in *Reciprocity* and *Contrast*. The students showed no improvement in their understanding of *Liking (Association)* and *Commitment and Consistency*.

Table 2: Second quiz on knowledge of influence techniques

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Persuasion Principle	Quiz 1		Quiz 2		
	Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect	
Reciprocity	13	6	16	4	+
CONTRAST	17	2	20	0	+
Social Proof (Conformity)	13	6	20	0	+
LIKING (FRIENDS)	17	2	17	3	
Liking (Association)	8	11	8	12	O
SCARCITY	17	2	18	2	
Commitment & Consistency	12	7	13	7	O
Expectation	7	12	17	3	+
					+
Power	12	7	18	2	+
					+

Not only did the quantity of correct answers increase, but the quality of the answers also improved. On the second version of the quiz, most students were able to write down specific examples of how they had used these persuasion principles during the semester. This would suggest that the improved performance of the students on this quiz was due to a better understanding of the persuasion principles, possibly because of opportunities to practice them during interactive dramas, and not due to merely taking the test for a second time.

White Collar Crime Feedback

In general, the students were positive about the learning experience they had during the *White Collar Crime* activity. Students were able to cite examples of learning from their classmates and examples of becoming more aware of when to use persuasion principles during the activity. The students also expressed how using English became natural during the interactive drama activities, and how they faced situations that challenged their language ability. Below are results and feedback to selected questions. Overall, comments from 13 of the 20 students registered for the class had been included. Students 4, 6, and 13 wrote a general global answer to all the questions, so none of their comments have been included below. Students 17, 19, and 20 did not attend class on the day of the *White Collar Crime* activity, so the comments that student 17 and 20 gives below are in reference to the negotiation practice

activities in the class the week before *White Collar Crime*.

2: How much did having a partner help you? Was it a help or a hindrance or nothing at all?

14 respondents considered a partner helpful. 0 respondents considered a partner a hindrance. Selected quotes from a number of students are:

■ **Student 11:** I've learned many skills from the negotiation with her. When I was negotiating with her, I looked what skill she was using and learned it in my mind. And when the second negotiation begin, I use those skills that she just used to deal with the problem I had.

■ **Student 9:** During the meeting, she reminded me of our points to negotiate with others and when the topic is beyond our expectation, she also suggested me how we should do and what we should do.

■ **Student 17:** After discussing in a group, I was able to learn new strategies, and work out my weakness.

■ **Student 20:** After discussing, I became more confident and was willing to give in a little in order to exchange something else.

■ **Student 1:** I felt it was useful to discuss with my partner because she would come up with other situations we may encounter later, which I did not think about. Besides, when I negotiated with others, sometimes I couldn't think of some reasons to defend ourselves, in this way my partner would help me to get through.

■ **Student 10:** I think that having a partner helped me a lot in this activity because we could do brainstorming and tried to figure out the method together. He suggested that we should make a perfect plan before we took action because our roles were the plants and we should be careful about what we might say to others.

This series of comments indicates that pairing students up was an advantageous technique. By having an assigned partner, the students had

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someone to turn to for assistance since students are often reluctant to approach the instructor for individual assistance. These comments show that peer assistance can be as helpful as feedback from the instructor in helping students to improve.

*5. Did the role play activity improve your negotiation ability?
How did the role play improve your negotiation ability? Why did your
negotiation ability improve or not improve?*

13 respondents considered the activity helpful in improving negotiation ability. 0 respondents had a negative response to this question. Selected quotes are:

■ **Student 15:** I think role play really improve my negotiation ability. Before I had the role play activity, I was unable to use these skills because what we discussed in class was still too abstract for me. During the roleplay activity, we may use the skills unconsciously. Furthermore, I think I learn most of negotiation skills from my partners or even the one negotiated with me. If the one negotiate with me with A skill which I have not used before but really useful. Soon I would use A skill to negotiated with him/her.

■ **Student 17:** I thought before the project I had a pretty good idea of how to negotiate, but I found that to know is one thing and to do is another, so the project helped put my knowledge into practice, which was helpful.

■ **Student 7:** When we are role-playing it seems that we are really in the situation and we do not know what others really want or what they can give us. Now I can use some tricky talking ways to persuade others and trade with them. Though it is a little bit challenge to me, I learn a lot from role play. In general, by role play we can have more opportunity to talk in English about some serious problems and even enlarge our vocabularies.

■ **Student 8:** Because our last activity was to negotiate with classmates, I felt very comfortable. Once we played the game, I had to achieve some goals in game and dealt with

strangers. This made me to try to talk and explain things seriously instead of wanting to have fun.

■ **Student 10:** In this activity, we should figure out the ways to deal properly with some sticky situations which we may encounter in the future in the real world.

■ **Student 1:** Role play activity helps me imagine what each role wants, and try to think what should they say, and what are the best for them. In this way, I have to think a lot, and I feel different roles should use different negotiation rules. Therefore, me negotiation ability can improve.

■ **Student 18:** Yes, the role play activity helps me understand more about how the negotiation process should go. I learn from other classmates the ways to get as much information of my opponents as possible to get the most possible way for both sides meet the best deal.

■ **Student 9:** By putting us in an imaginary conditions and starring a particular role, we know clearly what our goals are and we have to use the negotiation strategies actually to reach what we want.

■ **Student 5:** Yes, it improves my negotiation ability!! Because all I have to know were new things: my partners, other groups, the issue...for I totally didn't know I can control, I have to get these information through asking or talking to others, and I should keep discussing with my members to make sure that we were in the right way in negotiating. I can improve the whole process of negotiation ability.

This series of comments shows that the environment created by the interactive drama lead to a deeper understanding of persuasion and negotiation. In the interactive drama environment, the students were received concentrated exposure to negotiation strategies. Even though some students were initially unsure of how to negotiate, they were able to observe the strategies of their classmates and then adopt them. Even when classmates were not purposely providing peer-assistance, students were able to glean fresh ideas and solutions to their own negotiation difficulties.

In additional involvement in the interactive drama made the students

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feel like they were involvement in negotiations that were similar to what they might encounter in future real world meetings. The realism of the simulation allowed the students to receive authentic reactions to their gambits. In a typical classroom role play exercise, students will often play along to ensure that the role play is completed successfully. However, in the interactive drama, students valued their team goals over the concept of nicely completing the activity. Thus, they would refuse to make a concession unless they were offered a deal that they perceived as having true value. If an offer was rejected, students would then see the true attitude that the delegates had toward the proposal. By seeing these true attitudes, students learned to adapt and more convincingly promote their proposals. This practice in dealing with real reactions is likely to provide opportunities for students to improve their strategic and sociolinguistic competence, something that is lacking in the sheltered classroom environment.

Another simple yet major benefit of the interactive drama environment is that it provided an opportunity for intensive practice. The students spoke in English for over two continuous hours.

6. In general, how was the White Collar Crime role play beneficial to improving your English ability?

10 respondents had comments to this question. Selected quotes are:

■ **Student 15:** First of all, since our group share all the work together, there was no one could spared from the work. Everyone of us have the opportunity to talk in English. Second, during the negotiation, we really talked something serious instead of just chatting something easy, so we would talk in more formal way. Third, normally if we had a presentation we would be well-prepared before we talked; however, during the negotiation, we should react immediately, increasing our ability of immediately response.

■ **Student 3:** In that environment, speaking English becomes a natural thing, and no one feels embarrassed of speaking English.

Student Perceptions of Interactive Drama Activities

■ **Student 1:** I had to use some formal ways to express myself, because I felt I represented a famous organization. In this situation, I forced myself to be professional and tried to make others believe what I said. Sometimes other groups may ask some questions that I had no idea how to answer, so I had to try to shift the subject and thought about the proper answer.

■ **Student 10:** In order to reach my goal in this activity, I should make efforts to catch any opportunity to deal with others. As a result, I had to use well the skills I learned in class and tried to express my ideas as completely as I could.

The main thrust of these comments is that the students believed that their English improved in general, as well as improving in terms of their negotiation ability in specific. The interactive drama produced an environment that was conducive to learning English by making the students feel that it was natural to speak English and also natural to speak English at a more formal register. Finally, the students had opportunities to train themselves to react spontaneously in an English interchange.

7. In general, how was the White Collar Crime role play detrimental to improving your English ability?

6 respondents had negative comments. 5 respondents denied that there was any detrimental effect. Selected quotes are:

■ **Student 3:** I think maybe it is too complex and sometimes I don't have the ability to use the correct words and no one will correct my grammatical problems.

■ **Student 8:** So when playing this game, I found that I still had some times of difficulties in expressing myself. Since this game was limited in three classes to achieve some goals, I didn't have much time to reflect more and ask for others' advice for my performance.

■ **Student 9:** When we discussed the event with other classmates in English, it's hard for us to think carefully and speak with correct grammar and proper words. And sometimes, there are many Chinese-English sentences in what we said.

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■ **Student 18:** Well, when other classmates harshly attacked me, I did lose my confidence in negotiating with and persuading other people in English. I think it's somewhat detrimental to improve my English ability if I don't try to figure out the problems.

■ **Student 7:** I do not think that role play have any disadvantage for us to improve our English ability.

■ **Student 1:** Actually, I felt the White Collar Crime role play wasn't detrimental to improving my English ability, but I had to pretend to be a "Blue People," and tried to make myself tougher! (which I thought was detrimental to my conscience...haha~)

■ **Student 17:** I don't think practicing speaking English has anything detrimental to improving English.

These comments reveal that one problem with the interactive dramas is that the uncontrolled environment meant that the students believed that they often grammatical accuracy in order to express themselves more quickly. Secondly, students did not always receive enough assistance from their partners to solve the communication difficulties that they encountered. This could leave them discouraged and dampen their enthusiasm in participating in the interactive drama. In addition, with approximately 40 students interacting simultaneously, it is difficult for the instructor to pick out the grammatical mistakes of students.

8. What else did you like or dislike about the activity?

6 respondents added positive comments. 9 respondents added negative comments. Selected quotes are:

■ **Student 1:** Though it was really cruel, I felt it was also fun to train myself to defend one side, and I had to come up with lots of excuses to try to get rid of indictment. It was like brainstorming, and I enjoyed discussing with my partners about how to make ourselves get the upper hand.

■ **Student 17:** I liked the idea of a challenge, and finding common ground with the person I'm negotiating with.

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■ **Student 2:** I did not like to take things too seriously. And also, personally, I think some of the students' attitudes are too harsh.

■ **Student 8:** The time was too short. Not everyone was capable of practicing different persuasion skills.

■ **Student 9:** I think that we need a leader or teacher to direct what we should do when the negotiating meeting started. Because no one knew how to start this kind of meeting, most of us felt a bit embarrassed at the beginning. Therefore, I think it might be better to show us the procedure or example of our activities.

■ **Student 10:** It was a rather big and complicated activity, so I think the time was not enough for us to figure out everything and perform a wonderful meeting in the end.

These comments can be interpreted as showing that the students had a very favorable reaction to the use of interactive dramas. Even though the questions elicited a negative response, 40% of the students made positive comments instead of reporting on a negative experience. Of the negative responses, many of them were related to frustration over being unsure of what actions to take at the beginning of the activity which led to the class being unable to complete the activity by drafting a final treaty that could be approved by all the parties involved in the negotiation.

9. What is the main thing you learned?

Selected quotes are:

■ **Student 7:** The main thing I learn from role play is to react immediately. Because it is hard to know what others are going to say next minute, role play gives us the opportunity to really interact with others.

■ **Student 1:** I learned the most important thing is that having discussion with partners can help me negotiate with other groups easier and I will feel more confident because my partners had already told me what kinds of questions they may ask.

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Cooperation is so important that we can get some information from our team and we can use as more negotiation skills as possible. Besides, I found out that some people are really aggressive, while others are pretty kind. Learning how to negotiate with different kinds of people is really important.

■ **Student 15:** a. Skills of negotiation, b. The way to negotiate with other people, c. The ability to react immediately, d. How dark the world it is(just kidding!!)

■ **Student 8:** A useful persuasion skill is killing. If I can properly use skills in different languages, I believe it could help me more.

■ **Student 11:** How to negotiate with different kind of people in English. Some people are stubborn, some people are weak. So that I need to find more ways to deal with the problems in negotiation.

These comments show that the interactive drama gave the students new appreciation of the importance of strong negotiation and persuasion skills. The competitive atmosphere created by the interactive drama allowed the students to see the real world need for these skills. The interactive drama also pushed the students to react spontaneously and authentically.

The Greater Trumps Feedback

Students were asked to reflect on their experiences during the semester and to set learning goals for the next semester. Comments were not as focused on interactive dramas as they were for the *White Collar Crime* feedback. In general, feedback tended to include determination to be more active in speaking out in the future, and a desire to overcome shyness. Students also expressed disappointment in their persuasive ability and desired to improve in this area. The following quote by Student 1 eloquently expresses many of the ideas that were widely expressed in the comments:

Secondly, teacher has already taught us the Laws of Persuasions, and I hope that I can apply these laws

Student Perceptions of Interactive Drama Activities

to daily life to practice my negotiation skills. Actually, I've used some of them but I didn't know those skills are laws of persuasions. In our daily life, we often can find people using these skills to persuade others to doing something. Take myself for example, I remember when I was a high school student, I could not resist salesmen's persuasions, and I was often coaxed into buying their products, which almost drove my mom crazy. Therefore, learning these persuasions skills is very important to me.

Thirdly, during the first semester, I had joined many LARPs, and I felt that instant reaction is significant during the games. "What are your goals?" "How can you reach your goals?" and "Whom can you trust?" Lots of questions came into my head suddenly, and I felt a little be nervous. In this situation, I think that I should improve my instant reaction in order to reach my goals.

To conclude, it was my first time to know negotiation skills and LARP, I feel that there is much room I could make progress. Next semester is a new start for me, I hope I could not only understand these useful skills but also apply them to my daily life to enjoy the satisfaction which is derived from successfully persuading people.

In reviewing the research questions, the student feedback shows that interactive dramas can have a positive impact on oral training classes.

1. How beneficial do students believe interactive drama activities to be?

The students generally believe interactive drama activities to be beneficial because they found that there was a difference between knowing about how to speak and actually doing it. One key was that students were pushed by having to react spontaneous. Students were also able to learn from their peers during the activity.

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2. *What kind of peer support do students provide each other?*

Students found that working with partners or teams was beneficial. Partners were able to provide suggestions when a student encountered difficulty. Most of these suggestions dealt with strategies for dealing with other participants, not grammar or vocabulary. Students also learned interaction strategies from both partners and opponents. This supports Machado's (2000) notion that peers who are at similar level of language ability can scaffold each other, and that scaffolding is not limited expert-learner pairings.

3. *What kind of instructor support is beneficial for interactive drama activities?*

Student feedback indicates that clearer goals for the White Collar Crime activity would have been helpful and that more modeling by the instructor could make the start of the activity smoother

4. *How did student spoken English ability improve from participation in interactive drama activities?*

Student self-assessments indicate that they improved and grew more confident in their abilities. There is no objective evidence of this at this point, videotape of pre and post activity speech is needed

LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this present study is that there is no independent confirmation that students actually improved in their ability to spontaneously use persuasion principles since all data on the progress made by students comes from the self-reports of the students own perception of their improvements. In addition, student feedback could also have been influenced by the fact that the researcher was also the instructor of the class.

CONCLUSIONS

Interactive dramas are valuable tools for use in oral training

classrooms. As students in Taiwan continue to improve in English ability, the major need for university level students is not improvement in grammatical accuracy. Instead students need to improve their sociolinguistic and strategic competence, they need to be more aware of why speech is effective, and they need to be able to communicate spontaneously in challenging situations. The interactive drama brings the possibility of simulating real world speaking situations within the classroom. Students receive extensive speaking practice, and they can see immediately if they are successful in communicating their messages. The nature of interactive dramas ensures that all language is spontaneous, providing an in-class challenge that is not possible with conventional role play activities. Students tend to focus on meaning, and receive little input from on improving the grammatical form of their speech unless the instructor directly intervenes, but a great deal of learning still occurs as students observe what makes the communications of their peers successful and as they receive suggestions and feedback from their peers. When used with other accuracy based activities or by having students set learning goals to make them more aware of where they can improve the form of their language, interactive dramas can be an important component of the oral training class.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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COMMEDIA ACTING METHODS AND GAMES: The Games that Mimes Play

Don Gilleland
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ABSTRACT

From the texts of commedia plays and commedia inspired plays and modern forms such as silent comedy and cartoons, commedia acting technique and the action of playwrights such as Shakespeare, Moliere, Checkhov, the farces of follow the leader, satirize the leader, secret follower, secret listener, children's games: cat and mouse, keep away, follow the leader, isolated movements, yes games, status games, the facial and body masks and faces of the inner and out qualities of characters,

Illustrations both original and adapted from period prints: Nelan Lai,
Soochow University, English Department, BA. Freelance artist.

While some *commedias* are very witty, characterization and action are the main sources for its raucous humor. Action often focuses on keeping or uncovering secrets or surprises or threatening to expose them. Unfortunately secrets, danger, and surprises are challenging to express. A fine line exists between allowing the audience to share in the reaction and overreacting, and overplaying natural reactions, which leads to ham acting. Some actors sense this naturally, but others have to learn the difference. If you play the *lazzi* or comic actions realistically, you will have a better sense of what is believable and what is overplayed and exaggerated.

The following classic exercises and *lazzi* should be used as improvisations to teach you to believe in what you are acting, exactly as

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children believe in their game. A game has an objective, rules, limits, penalties, and players. If you play to win, play by the rules, and play to have fun, then everyone, even the spectators have a good time. Each time you play the game, it will be different. Do not try to repeat what was done before but believe what you are doing, allowing the actions and reactions to change and develop. Be an actor not just a game player. The difference between a game player and an actor is that the actor has to make a prearranged game look like it is happening here and now with all the excitement of the first time.

Observe others and you will find all the material you need.

1. FOLLOW THE LEADER:

Walk behind another person and copy everything the leader does. Leader, move naturally and make no attempt to perform.

Notice idiosyncrasies of movement that could be used when playing a *commedia* character: How does the person walk, carry the head, use the hands, breathe? What is the inner spirit or energy of the character? What other aspects of the character must be recreated? Observe others acting and note the accuracy or inaccuracy of their recreation.



Follow the Leader

2. SATIRIZE THE LEADER:

Follow the leader and exaggerate or satirize what is done: soften the movements, make the movements more aggressive and powerful, exaggerate the posture of the body so that the leader's type of posture is more noticeable. Leader, make no effort to change or correct what is being satirized.

Never be hurt or embarrassed when your mannerisms are exaggerated. Take this as a compliment. You are unique and worthy of interest.

3. SECRET FOLLOWER:

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Commedia scenarios often walk a tightrope of believability. Yes, you want to believe that someone is following undetected because the story will be fun, but if the action is too outrageous, then it will not be funny but dumb and even an insult to the intelligence of your audience. The *commedia* actor must learn to walk this tightrope and keep the audience on the edge of their chairs.



Follow the Leader

Follow or copy the leader secretly. Leader, play it for real and whenever you sense that you are being copied look back, stop, or try in whatever way you wish to catch the follower. Secret Follower, if you aren't caught, you win the game.

4. SECRET FOLLOWER #2:

Follower, when the leader looks at you, you must find something to do. You must tell a lie. "I wasn't copying your hand movement, I was swatting a fly" or "I wasn't looking at you, I was looking to see if my bus was coming." Your object is to convince the leader that you were not

following or copying him/her. Rather than trying to "be" funny, find odd or original actions that you were in the midst of when the leader looked at you. Trying to "be" funny is what ham actors do, which is funny for only a very short time. The audience is really laughing at the stupidity of the ham actor.

Secret Listener

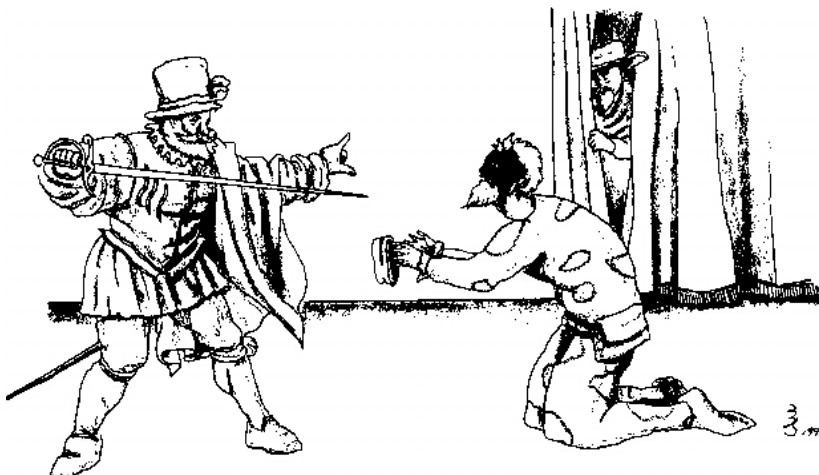


5. SECRET LISTENER:

Two people will have a conversation while a third person will stand near and try to listen to the conversation. Play it for real, don't act like you are listening but actually listen. The people talking can vary their reaction: talk softer, move away, talk faster, work out secret codes. The person listening will likewise adjust his or her behavior, moving closer or using the secret follower exercise to convince the talkers that the listener can't hear them.

6. SECRET LISTENERS:

Add more talkers and listeners. This can become a very funny exercise as more and more listeners are added all of whom play the secret follower game #2 when caught by the talkers.



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7. SECRET LISTENER HIDING:

A listener is very often in hiding. In this game, the listener can not be caught listening and so must hide where the talkers can not see him/her. If the talkers hear the listener, they can try to find them. The listener must avoid being caught. This is a type of cat and mouse game.

Secret ListenerHiding

8. PLAY CAT AND MOUSE:

Cat tries to catch Mouse. Cat can run anywhere mouse can.

Now, change the rules. 1. Cat can not see Mouse. 2. Mouse is smaller than Cat and so can hide in places that Cat can not reach. 3. Mouse can play psychological games to get an advantage: tease, make Cat angry, enlist the help of the audience.

9. TAG:

Chase scenes are very common in farces and, when done well, can become a high point of the play or, when not played with gusto, can simply fizzle out. Give yourself as many options as possible: curtains, plants and chairs to run around, tables and chairs to stand on, tables to hide under, cabinets to hide inside and beside, and one can even hide in the audience.



Tag

Play the chase for real but, at the same time, include as much variety of movements and pacing.

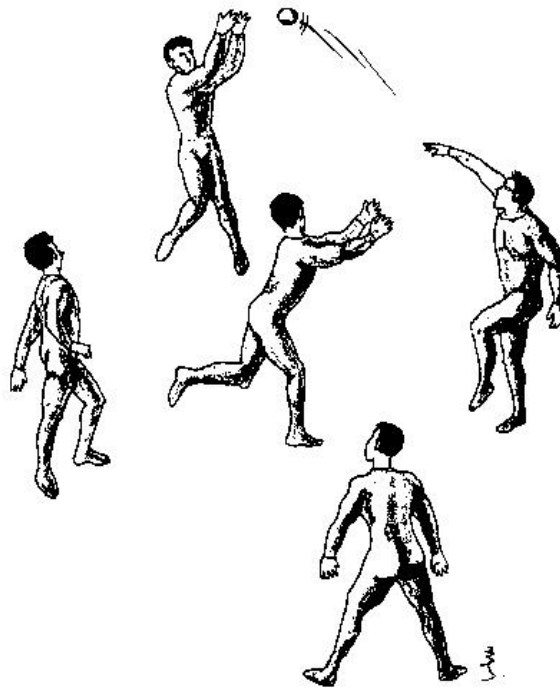
10. KEEP AWAY:

Very often one character, such as a father, tries to get a secret message from his daughter and her maid. There can be many variations to this *lazzi*. It can be played as a kind of chase.

Two characters are placed at opposite ends of the stage while a third, the uninitiated, tries to get the object from the other two who toss it from side to side. Since running back and forth quickly becomes too tiring and uninteresting, the person who wants to get the object eventually has to use craft and trickery. *Commedia* delights in the conquest of the clever over the brutish.

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Keep Away



11. ISOLATED MOVEMENTS:

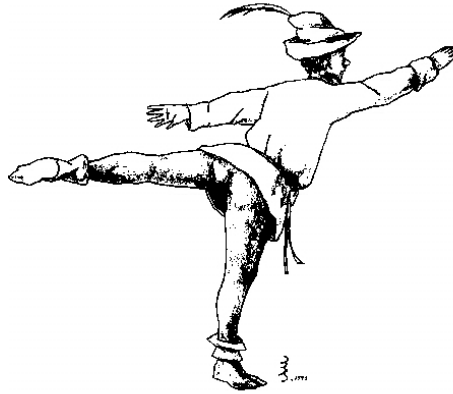
Natural reactions can be styled for comic effect.

If your boss gets angry and shakes his/her finger at you and your headshakes in the same way, the audience will nearly always laugh. Why? First, quick movements tend to provoke laughter and, most importantly, your movement seems odd and funny because it satirizes the boss's shaking finger; thus the audience receives vicarious pleasure when *Zanni* mocks his master, *Pantalone*, the old rich miser character in *commedia*. Much of the humor of *commedia* is achieved when a rule or taboo is broken. There are many rules that we would love to break but don't dare.¹

¹ Sabin Epstein introduced this concept of the humor of the broken taboo. See also Johnstone's chapter on spontaneity in Impro.

Think of all the natural movements, which can be satirized in this way: nodding heads, shrugging shoulders, pointing to yourself when you say "me." When a specific or exaggerated space, close or far, between the originator and the imitator is maintained, the satire is made even more comical.

When you read a play, recall how the people you know act like these characters and how these characters are like people you know. This will help you find more useful material, actions and reactions that can be satirized.



12. "YES" GAMES:

Playing a yes game is fundamental to ensemble playing and teamwork and yet means no more than to agree with your fellow actor. Some actors confuse the conflict of the scene and a conflict between their fellow actors. When improvising with your scene mates, always agree with their choices. You can not refuse or disagree but may find a compromise between your needs and theirs by the suggestions you make.

13. "Status Yes" Game:

One person is high status and another is low. Low status must accept, can not refuse, and can not even use words like "but" or "I'd rather." To

prevail, Low Status, provides suggestions or alternatives which High Status may accept. "Let's eat it, it's cheaper."

Decide what to eat or where to go on a free afternoon or evening. Remember, Low Status, even if you don't get your way, it doesn't really matter. It's only a play.

After you have read the plays, find a scene, which is a "Status Yes", game and play it in that manner.

14. "Thank you very much!" Game:²

Change roles. We'll call the high status character, Master, and the low character, Slave. Master will command Slave to do something, after which Slave will joyfully say, "Thank you very much!" No matter how strange it may be to say, "Thank you very much!" Slave must say that or even a more enthusiastic response. Master: "Clean my shoes." Slave: "I'd love to!" Master: "Pay my bills!" Slave: "I hope they're really high!"

Find a scene from the plays or improvisations later in this book in which a "Thank you very much!" game could be added.

Echo:³

This exercise will teach the group how to develop a climax.

15. First variation: The leader of the exercise chooses an activity such as eating dinner or watching a movie. The other members of the group repeat whatever the leader or master says. Leader: "This is great!" Group: "This is great!" Leader: "It smells wonderful!" Group: "It smells wonderful!" Allow the reactions of Leader and Group to grow and grow in intensity until a climax has been created.

16. Second variation: Repeat and elaborate on what the leader says, making each successive phrase longer and more exaggerated. Each person in the group reacts until everyone in the group has had a turn. If two people speak at once, don't get upset. That is natural and will make the scene look natural. The leader allows the elaborations to develop in length

² Both Dashford and Johnstone use this exercise.

³ Dashford.

and emotional intensity until the climax is complete. The leader: "This smells wonderful!" First member: "Sure does." Second: "Wow, does it ever!" Third: "That's my favorite!"

17. Third variation: Add in movements, allowing each successive movement to be larger and more emotional. Change your stage position. Move to a different place on stage. Stretch and lengthen your body as if your body and movements grow larger and larger. Speak with increasing intensity, faster and faster. Allow the gap between each other's reactions to shorten, even if it means that you overlap each other's at the top of the climax.

Find a crowd scene from the improvisations or the plays later in the book. Rehearse the crowd scene using the third variation and then add them to the performance.

If you want a more detailed explanation and addition exercises, consult my acting book.

18. MORE AND MORE AND LESS AND LESS:

Intensifying and reducing elements within the performance can be used to create humor and stylized action. (A stylized action is a natural action in which a specific movement or quality of the movement is heightened to comment upon that movement. For example, the balance is made more precarious so that more can be developed from the character's difficulty in keeping his or her balance. The stingy father walks more stiffly to comment on his greed and inflexibility.)

When a character crosses the stage in ever-increasing or decreasing lengths, the audience will react to this stylistic choice and, depending on how it is played, will smile or even, if the character is a hysteric, laugh. When the heights that *Sganarelle* in "The Flying Doctor" must climb increase, the audience will become more and more amazed and amused. In "The Forced Marriage", when the verbal reactions and vocal volume of the Philosopher to his off-stage opponent become stronger and stronger, the audience will become more and more entranced and elated.

Move from one place on the stage to another. Increase the length of the cross and the intensity of the reaction. Change the image, emotion, or color so that these reactions have a different feeling. Change the physical form of the reaction: becomes angry by wrinkling your forehead,

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depressed by walking very heavy with the flat of your feet, delighted by shaking your hands in the air.

ISOLATIONS: EXPANSIONS AND CONTRACTIONS

Isolations are often used to create stylized actions. As *Zanni* watches *Pantalone* moving away, he stretches and as *Pantalone* comes near, he contracts. This is simply achieved by allowing each part of the body to move one part at a time. For example, the boss points at your nose and draws his hand away. Your reaction would be to move your nose first...(Yes, just your nose.). Next, your head moves forward, followed by the neck, shoulders, chest, waist, hips, legs, and finally the feet. When the boss returns, you can reverse direction from one end or the other: feet or nose.

Isolated Stretch of Arms and Legs to Stylize a Gesture

Isolated Stretch of Arms and Legs to Stylize a Gesture

19. Exercise #1:

Play follow the leader. When the master pulls you by the ear, for example, move the ear first and then each part of the body follows one at a time. Change body parts and leaders. Continue to expand and contract, one part at a time.

20. Exercise #2:

Now, imagine that you are being pulled by a rope or pushed by a stick. Maintain the same distance between leader and follower and move one part of the body at a time, keeping a specific distance from the leader.

21. Exercise #3:

Now experiment with different combinations: nose to nose, the eye watches the head, or hand to mouth. Add in variation in rhythm, tempo, and quality of movement.

22. QUICK REACTION:

Repeat the isolated movement but react quickly as if someone shot a gun or you exploded out of a cannon. React in the opposite direction.

React in the same manner as if you landed on the earth after falling through the air.

23. MASK AND FACES:

Quick reversals of feeling and reactions always provoke a laugh, if properly motivated and believed.

Start with a neutral position--yourself and no special feeling. Then create a character or specific reaction: you have eaten a lemon or discovered an envelope with NT\$50,000. Experience the event and stylize the natural reaction into a mask. Practice the mask of the reaction or character so that you know what it is and can create it instantly. Now, place the neutral character on the right and when you turn your head to the left, instantly take on the mask of the character or reaction. Change from one side to the other, making the shift from face to mask clearer and quicker.

24. MAKE THE MASK A FULL BODY MASK:

Extend the reaction or character to the whole body. Hunger becomes a pain, which contorts your body. Pride puffs you up to twice your size. When you shift from neutral face to character mask, change the body as well.

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Full Body Mask

What does the body mask of this character represent? What is the story of the position and mask? How could the facial expression or body mask be clarified?

25. ADD MOTION TO THE MASK AND BODY:

Transform the “smile” mask into a laugh; transform the “surprise at discovery” mask into the urge to conceal or protect. Look at the plays or scenarios in the book and choose scenes where reactions could be transformed into actions and objectives.

26. ADD A SUBTEXT TO THE MASK:

Subtext is what the character is thinking. *Arlichinno* may say, "I'm not afraid of you." However, his subtext might be, "What's the quickest way out of here?"

What is the subtext or story behind each of Arlichinno's stylized poses?

The mask and movement are not complete until they are filled with inner life, the thoughts of the character. You may have automatically started to imagine what the character is thinking. It might have sounded like: "How stupid can that *Sganarelle* be?" or "Uh-oh. What am I going to do now?" If the actor hasn't filled the mask with a subtext, the mask and body have a lifeless or incomplete quality. The actor doesn't have complete belief and neither does the audience until a subtext is present. What is the subtext for each character in the illustration Secret Listener Hiding? Look at the other characters in the book and create a subtext.

Quick reactions need a quick phrase and longer reactions need longer phrases or inner monologues.

Think of some typical phrases such as: "How dare you!"

"I didn't do it." "Uh-oh!" "It's over there." "How many times have I told you!" Make a facial and body mask for these quick phrases.

Now, repeat the process with partner mirrors. One partner makes a mask and the other thinks of a phrase to go with it. When you shift from your face to the mask, say the phrase and make sure that you believe it. Notice that the more strongly you believe the phrase, the more intensity the mask has.

27. INTENSIFY THE MASK AND PHRASE:

Say the phrase slowly or repeat it over and over, and gradually intensify the reaction of the mask and body.

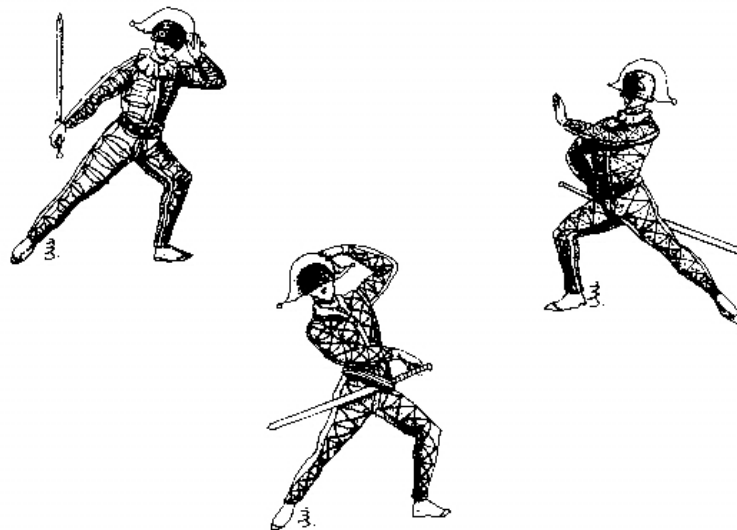
28. THREE PART REACTIONS: SHIFT FROM MOVING MASK TO MOVING FACE

When you get caught and then try to cover or mask the discovery, a three-part reaction is necessary. For example, you are following someone. When they turn you 1) continue for a while, then 2) stop with a quick "Uh-oh! I've been caught!" reaction, and then 3) shift to another action or activity. These three must be executed with clarity and precise

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timing. Some actors can improvise a polished reaction; others will need to practice each separately and then put them together. It is preferable to improvise first since this will create more natural reactions.

When your partner or teacher claps hands, shift quickly and clearly from the first secret reaction to the frozen reaction of "Oh-oh, I'm caught!" Turn your head and share this reaction with the audience. The turn can be slow or quick. (Discover which suits which situation. Learn to share reactions with the audience.) Then quickly change to what you want the person who caught you to think you have been doing or was supposed to be doing. For example, the maid should have been cleaning the room but was listening to her master tell his daughter about her new husband; caught eavesdropping she instantly resumes dusting or mopping.



Experiment with different actions and reactions, especially if the *lazzi* is repeated many times. The maid's shared reaction with the audience often becomes more and more playful. Her return to cleaning the room becomes more and more unreasonable. Increase the speed, intensity, and size of the movement.

Sharing reactions with the audience is an essential part of *commedia*. Nearly all characters do it, especially when there are asides or monologues.

Now, look through the plays and improvisations in this book and find game-like situations. If you play the situation for real like a game with an objective, rules, limits, and penalties, then you will believe and become involved. The other actors and audience will believe it naturally.

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**SPECULATIVE REALITIES:
Embedding Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror
Themes in Adapted Interactive Drama Scenarios
(Adapting Literature to Interactive Drama)**

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ABSTRACT

Unlike traditional theatre or roleplay, the interactive drama scenario can take fictional elements and present them in a way that is much more affectively powerful for participants, especially with the blur between the roles of audience and performer. With this in mind, it is possible to teach critical thinking as well as open communication and understanding through the use of scenarios that explore unusual circumstances. Appropriations of literary material, such as themes related to science fiction, fantasy, and horror can be quite effective in this regard. I will be examining interactive drama from a communicative standpoint, specifically scenarios that incorporate literary fantastic themes and how one adapts literary works from the broad genres of "Literature of the Fantastic" to interactive drama as playable scenarios. Particular attention is paid to the use of adapted literature to interactive drama for educational purposes.

Interactive Drama can be a wonderful hobby pursuit and has begun evolving over the last two decades into a separate professional activity. It also has also begun to see classroom adaptation and exploration, both as a supplemental activity for communication, law, language, business, history, and other classrooms as well as a few programs as a material of

study in and of itself. One area of interest to many who write and play interactive dramas is the adaptation of literary texts, particularly literature of the fantastic (fantasy, science fiction, and horror) into interactive drama scenarios. Basically, in this paper, I will be focusing more on how to put a scenario together and the practical aspects of that with particular attention to educational application of literary adaptations to interactive drama. Specifically, I'm going to be looking at adapting literary works to the interactive drama. There are different reasons you might do that. Interactive drama is different from traditional role play in several aspects, it's also different than traditional drama in even more. Note that portions of this paper are adapted from a transcript of a formal presentation on the subject in a symposium for a research salon on interactive drama at National Chengchi University which is reflected in the use of informal language.

There are basically four contexts that interactive dramas are used for, or are within, and they are: entertainment, recreation, therapy, and education. Obviously, one primary focus for me is on the educational aspects, but any one of those contexts may use an adaptation of literary work, particularly representations of literature of the fantastic, the most commonly adapted genre group for interactive drama scenarios, merely because we may wish to explore something in that work and for each of those contexts you might, for instance, for entertainment, interactive drama is often adapted to a form of environmental/interactive theatre where the actors are interacting with the audience members. It's kind of a hybrid form between traditional drama and the interactive piece in much the same way one would look at environmental theatre, the work of Richard Scheckner and others.

For recreation, there may be a favorite work of literature, film, or whatever that the participants are interested in exploring. By going into the interactive drama we look at the literary work in new ways, we gather new insights and the like.

For therapy, the work of Jean Houston, who does a lot of work with taking myth and traditional stories and then adapting them to the interactive drama in terms of empowering people, comes to mind. Jean Houston actually does a lot of work with women, using imaginative techniques to empower them so that they don't feel frustrated with society, politics, or business, and so she takes these literary works that

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focus on strong female characters and has the participants role-play those characters and thus getting a feel of what that's like. While Houston's literary fodder is often myth and legend, these are related to the fictive genres of literature of the fantastic.

For educational purposes, for adapting literary works, we would do that for a few reasons: one, the obvious reason would be to explore the piece of literature in a literature course to have insights into what the characters are doing, why they behave the way they do in the piece, and to gain insights that way. However, in terms of other aspects of education we might do it for language use as there are numerous benefits of using the interactive drama for language proficiency improvement (see my previous papers on this subject, listed in the bibliography). Why would we use a literary work for such a scenario? To achieve what Mugglestone calls the *curiosity motive*, an affective linkage to learning. Sometimes students are aware of a certain piece of literature and they enjoy it. It could be from a literature class and you are going to use the scenario in a language class, but it could also be just a piece that they are familiar with and they would enjoy exploring that, so you gain curiosity motive that way.

The actual mechanics of adapting a piece of literature are a few questions you need to ask yourself, that is, what is the complexity of the scenario, how detailed do you want to go. Some interactive drama scenarios may be micro scenarios; they are very simple, very straight forward character descriptions that a player would receive that might be just a few lines, not even a whole paragraph, just an idea to get them started. Others may be very complex, for instance, there are examples like the character sheets for "The Final Voyage of the Mary Celeste" which is a piece adapting a story about the famous ghost ship. The character sheets alone are about six to seven pages—single spaced, which is not practical for many classrooms. Certainly, for advanced classrooms you might do that, but I certainly wouldn't use that in a high school or a junior high. So you need to think about the length of the piece and how complex the character sheets are going to be, and that's going to tell us some of the ways we are going adapt the piece of literature. It also tells us the kind of background information you're going to get.

Another thing you need to consider is outcome: what is my outcome

goal? Why am I running this activity in the first place, and how is this going to help me achieve these outcome goals? And that's going to tell us how we are going to approach the actual adaptation.

Sometimes when you adapt a piece of literature, you're going to explore a piece that the students are already fully familiar with. If they're already familiar with it, then you need to go further than the literary piece, unlike a traditional drama. In a traditional drama, everyone has their roles given to them; they already know exactly what they're going to say. It is performance oriented, and so the language being used in a traditional drama is basically memorized scripting. So, for instance, in a language classroom, if we are using a traditional piece, we are looking for pronunciation, accuracy, and things like that, we're not looking for how well they use the language in a real situation; we're looking for accuracy and communicativeness. Whereas in an interactive drama you don't give them lines to say, you merely give them background for the character that they then stimulate for role play, so it's real language, and so you need to be thinking in terms of "what kind of language are we going to practice," "what are the specific skills we want to practice," but also in terms of "what kind of persuasion, ability, or influence strategy should they be using for this piece."

Some interactive drama pieces may be an adaptation of a novel, for instance, which is "in process", that is, it is a section of the story that is being adapted, so we do the interactive drama as the story is in process. As James Donne once said, "start in the middle." Don't start at the beginning, don't start at the end, start in the middle of the action. An example of this might be a piece from the old first edition Chill system, a table top role playing game with inspirational elements toward interactive drama, entitled "Dracula's Castle." "Dracula's Castle" is an interactive drama adaptation of the first four chapters of the novel, *Dracula*; that's the Transylvania chapters wherein Jonathan Harker is in Dracula's Castle, preparing for the sale of Carfax Abbey. It's the first four chapters which set up the rest of the novel, but that piece is very short because it's just the beginning of the story and it is intended for the players to explore what are the psychological aspects that Jonathan is going through as he discovers more and more of the horrors within the castle and as he discovers he is a prisoner. The prisoner aspect has also been experimented with by an Australian group of interactive drama

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writers who do what are called “Short Sharp Shocks,” the triple S, where they explore emotional and psychological aspects of the characters.

We may also take the same piece of literature and do an adaptation where we assume the players/students are very familiar with the story. Many of our students know about *Dracula* but they haven’t ever actually read it, and many have even seen the movies. In an example of something that takes an expectation where they are already familiar with the piece, say for instance, they’ve already read the novel together in a class or you can reasonably expect them to have familiarity is a piece called “*Dracula’s Guest*,” another tabletop piece from the Chill system where the characters come together both as participants from the novel and extra novel characters seven years after the events of the novel, and the scenario explores what are the repercussions of the events of the novel and bringing in some of the factors from that. So that particular piece, I’ve done some things with that where I gave students parts of the novel so that if they have not read the novel, I will assign them parts of it. *Dracula* is a wonderful piece because it’s written in terms of diaries, journals, and newspaper articles, and so you can actually just remove diary entries from the novel and give them as background for the characters or for the players. For instance, John Seward, the doctor, writes a diary and there are different selections in the novel that are his diary. You can just simply put all his entries together and give those to someone playing Seward.

When we pull the pieces together, we start creating the piece, there are different levels of adaptation and interactive drama is not the same as theatre, and it’s not the same as film. When you’re adapting a piece of literature, basically any adaptation, regardless of how it is being presented, whatever the context, there are three levels of adaptation that are very common, and those are the literal, faithful, and loose.

Literal, basically what occurs in the scenario is exactly the same as it appears in the original piece, novel, or short story. An example from film that you would be familiar with probably is the Harry Potter movies, basically all of the scenes that appear on screen take place in the novel. They are often exact. That’s literal adaptation. Now there are scenes missing from the adaptation that occur in the novel but they don’t take place, and partly those scenes are gone because you can’t show everything, because of length. But what is on screen or on stage or in any

interactive drama is the same. Now literal adaptation for interactive drama is very difficult because of the nature of the piece—it is unscripted. Actually, it has been called unscripted theatre before. You don't know what the outcome will be. If you know the outcome, it is no longer an interactive drama, it's just theatre.

Faithful, most of the things in the adaptation occur in the original piece, but it has been modified in some ways. An example of that would be the Jurassic Park films. Most of what appears on screen is in the novel, but they may have changed some of the relationships for the film. Or they may change the ending because they have expectations that the audience is already familiar with the novel and they want to shock them, or for some other reason they have made those changes. I am getting examples from film because I know that most of you are more familiar with filming than you are with interactive drama scenarios. So they may make changes for those reasons.

In an educational environment we may want to make some changes so that we can shake up the relationships and the interaction for the players, because if they already know that Hamlet is going to fail and end up dying, and that he has no chance of winning the crown, then they may behave in a certain way when what we really want them to do is to not just experience the plot of the piece, but we want them to experience the context, the emotions, and the relationships. To do that we may not want the adaptation to be exactly the same. Of course, in debriefing, after the run-through, you would discuss what are the differences between the original piece and what has happened here today.

Now loose adaptation is the more common. A loose adaptation is the relationship of the original literary piece to the adaptation is very, very little. An excellent example of this is the film adaptation of the novella by Phillip K. Dick's "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep." The film is *Bladerunner*, if you read the novella and you look at the movie, there are some characters that are pretty much the same, but the plot is very, very different. Actually, if you look at pretty much any adaptation of Phillip K. Dick's novels to films, they are almost always loose, and that's partly because of the nature of the writing itself. It's very cerebral—he likes to sit around and think about reality and existence, and there's a lot of talking and thinking. On film that doesn't play as well. You can't really have a guy sitting by the fireplace, thinking "Gee, I wonder if androids

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do dream, hmm....” You need people running around. Harrison Ford is not going to make a movie where he sits and thinks; he’s got to run around. Even today he runs around, although he does it slowly. But a loose adaptation is actually the most common for interactive drama, and there are reasons for that, in that often for interactive drama scenario, we don’t just adapt one piece of literature; we adapt several into one piece.

For instance, the interactive drama scenario *Long Ago and Far Away* is based on fairytales. It’s actually based on several, about 42, different fairytales—many from Grimm’s, some are from “The Arabian Nights,” but they’ve taken the archetype of characters that are based on many different stories and they weave them together. By weaving them together the players are aware of the fairytale background, but they’re not aware of specifically what story is being re-enacted. Why aren’t they? Because there are pieces from many different stories placed together. That allows them to play out the emotions and the politics of this type of story, and to have the social interactive without having a predisposition of what should occur, because a player in this type should not have an idea that he must be a winner or a loser. They need to be of the mind-set that “I am this character and what would I do in real life if this were happening to me?” and “This is the kind of person I am.” And so you don’t want to adapt too strictly in that. Now having said that, you can go pretty far with that.

Another thing about outcome when you actually do the adaptations, you need to decide if this is a teacher originated scenario or is this a student originated piece. Now in interactive dramas there are scenarios out there, I have a huge collection of interactive drama scenarios. I have about a hundred and fifty scenarios in my private collection and quite a few in the Interactive Drama Archive at <http://www.interactivedramas.info>, the public free archive. There are a lot of them out there, but they’re not specifically written for art context. One big disadvantage for these things in an educational context is that our classes don’t stay the same from year to year. One year we may have twenty students in class, another year we may have twenty-three. When we first started using these in our own classes we had thirteen students, and suddenly we had to change how we do them, and then we’ve got twenty. So you can’t use the same scenario that was used for a class of thirteen students for one with twenty, so we had to make some

adjustments and changes. In my own classes, in an English department, there are typically a lot more women than men. So if we're doing a piece that is intended for more male players than female, and many of them are, we have to make adaptations. Now we can simply tell female students to pretend to be guys, but personally I don't like doing that. I tend to adapt scenarios so that they can be played by either a male or a female, so the characters tend to have names like Pat, Chris, or things like that. I prefer that a woman plays a woman and a man plays a man for this kind of activity, I think that the imaginative involvement is stronger. The number of men and women may vary from year to year and so we've got to adjust the pieces. You can't really take a piece that's off the shelf, you're either going to have to adapt it yourself or create it yourself.

Now obviously, if you're a teacher and you want to give this kind of activity a try, you're not going to write really long pieces unless it's something you are very interested in doing, and there are some very sophisticated pieces out there. Actually, my colleague Michael Cheng has written a wonderful piece that we have used for our students that is very complex, and probably one of the best ones we've run, it is very nicely done. Now once we decide what our outcomes are, if it's going to be teacher originated or student originated, we can proceed. A teacher originated piece can be more complex because we tend to have more experience with the form. With a student originated piece, you need to control and inspire their creational process as well as how they present it. You don't want them spending too much time creating a piece, but you want it to be worthwhile as an activity. I have done this with some of my classes where students have originated pieces. When I've done projects of this sort with lower level students, the pieces have been very short and simple and straight forward, and they're intended for about an hour of classroom time so that we can do the preparation, we run the scenario, and then we do a debrief. I've also done it at the graduate level where students have created scenarios, and their pieces tend to be a little more sophisticated. In terms of literary adaptation, I've taught students who chose to adapt pieces like "A Rose for Emily" which was an unusual choice in my opinion, but it played very beautifully. Students have adapted the story of Joseph and the coat of many colors, partly because we have read the story and we have done some fits.

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When they create the character sheets there are some things they need to look for. Basically, the difference between a literary piece and an interactive drama is that there is no lead character. If you read *Hamlet*, who's the main character in the play? That's not supposed to be a trick question, it's Hamlet. We spend most of our time watching Hamlet. What about Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? Are they very important to the piece? Would you say Hamlet is more important or Rosencrantz? Obviously, Hamlet. The thing about an interactive drama or role play, if I give one person the character of Lady Macbeth and I give another the character of the serving maid, which character is going to be more important? Lady Macbeth or the serving maid?—if we're doing *Macbeth*. Obviously Lady Macbeth. But if you are doing an interactive drama, you can't set things up quite like that, because the serving maid has to be as important as Lady Macbeth in so far as the player dynamics go. You must write the characters in such a way to set it up so that everyone is the star, and that's one of the key differences between the interactive drama and the traditional drama. In a traditional drama where we're watching a play woven before us, that is already predestined for what's going to be said and what's going to be done and who dies in the end and who is in the big pile of bodies. However in an interactive drama, there is no formal audience per se as the players themselves are the audience, the ultimate form of interactive environmental deconstructed theatre. The players are acting out in role for their own benefit. The participants—the actors—are the audience, which is what environmental theatre proponents call "tearing down the fourth wall even further."

In order to do that, in order to insure the experience for everyone who is both a participant and an audience member, because they're acting and watching what happens, they're realizing the event, you need to make sure that everyone is the star of their own action. Sometimes that means that you have a plot—basically you want to make sure your husband has a backbone and becomes King so that you can become Queen—but you have a plot that may or may not be directly or indirectly related to her plots. So your goal is to find out which of the butlers is the father of your child—because it's kind of nice for your child to have a father. So your goals in terms of finding out information about people—you want to find out who killed your uncle's cousin's dog—you

will have goals and you will interact with people at different levels. And as you write the pieces, you need to make sure that when you create the roles, they need to be equally distributed. If these pieces are not relatively equally distributed in terms of importance to the plots, the players will know it. If on the day I distribute character sheets, I give one person a character sheet that's ten pages long and I give another half a page. They're going to figure something's wrong with the scenario, so I need to give players a roughly equal amount of information.

Obviously for a classroom application, I'm not going to give a student ten pages of character description. I'm going to give them fewer, but for an entertainment or for a recreational piece I would typically run longer pieces. So one way of insuring information, when I'm designing characters I give them numbers and I have their name and their gender—if you're designing the piece, you're probably designing it for the people you have available to you, but always try to make sure you keep it so that in the future, if the gender mix changes, you can run it again without having people pretending to be the wrong gender. So I'll put the genders down, I'm going to put down their names, their titles, who they are, because I've already graphed out the original piece, the literary work. Then I'm going to put in groups, plots, character information. Now "groups" is which group this person belongs to, you're going to have social groups, political groups, for instance, the aristocracy and the servants, or the foreigners and the people from Spain and the people from Turkey or the people from Mars. You're going to set up groups and you want to have people in different groups, and you want to have them intersect with other groups in terms of their plots. Plots are storylines—we usually have one major plot, that is, "why are we here?" "We're here because we need to sign a trade agreement." Or "we're here because it's the king's birthday," or "we're here because we're selling a new car." So we have a reason for being here, a context for this location and for this time but we may have other plots. Your husband, you want him to be king—looking for your brother's cousin's dog's killer—you're in love with the king but the king's in love with his wife and you kind of want to get rid of the wife—so it may be a one-sided love triangle or whatever the aspects, adapting them from the original literary sources, but also you may add in some for a loose adaptation.

Now for character information, here's the deal. You set up someone's

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background, you tell us who they are, you say “you were born in a small village and one day an old lady came and said you’re destined for greatness, so you went off in search of...whatever...” So I give you a deep background for who you really are, what you tell others what you are about, which may not be the same as what you really are. So I might come up and say “I’m the king of Monrovia and I am here for a trade agreement,” but actually I am just some beggar who cons people—I am a thief, I am a liar, I am a cheat. So I have what I tell others, I have what I really am, then I’m going to have what’ve I been doing recently—recent information about the character which tells us the context based upon what time in the literary piece that we are setting the piece. Then I have who you know and what you know about others. It you have a piece with forty-two players, you’re not going to know every single person in that room—you may know four or five, and you may not know anything about certain people. Now people are going to have secrets—if they have secrets, it’s no fun if they can’t be discovered. So you need to have clues, particularly in whodunit type adventures so that people can talk to others, get information about someone, and eventually expose their dirty little secrets and win their goals, or they have alliances, things like that. A nice little way of insuring that everyone has information and that it’s balanced in the game or in the set in the interactive drama, is to do it this way. I have character numbers 1, 2, 3, 4...all the way to twelve or how many people I have, and then what I do is for the character clues of information about other people in the game, I may have four bits of information about one person, and one bits about four other people. So character 1 may have four bits of information about character 2—your wife went to the store last week and she bought a sharp object, your wife seems to be talking to the gardener a lot and you saw her arguing with him before his disappearance, your wife has received a package from Monrovia recently but you don’t know what it’s for and you don’t know anyone in Monrovia, and your wife went to college with the dead guy’s cousin. Then you might have one bit of information about characters 3, 4, 5, and 6. Now I just go through and set it so that we have a lot of information, eventually it’s all balanced, you can see the progression, and that balances the amount of information.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Brian David Phillips is the founder and chief archivist of the Interactive Drama Archive (<http://www.interactivedramas.info>) and is the President of the Society of Experiential Trance. Dr. Phillips is an Associate Professor in the Department of English, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, as well as a professional hypnotist. This paper comes through work as part of research group at National Chengchi University focusing on innovative uses of interactive dramas, simulations, or other role based activities in the teaching of English language and literature. These activities allow students to experience situations that simulate what they may experience in their future working environments, or situations that they may only have imagined as they visualize the events from a page they are reading. The focus of the project group is on investigating how using interactive dramas and simulations can foster learning and facilitate the accomplishment of teaching goals.

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FALL OF THE DREAM

An Adult Interactive Drama Scenario

for twelve players (five male, seven female)

Brian David Phillips
National Chengchi University



WARNING for ADULTS ONLY

WARNING: FOR ADULTS ONLY - If you are not at the legal age of consent, please do NOT play this game. If you are of the legal age of consent, then go ahead and play. The author is not responsible for any injuries, loss of property, or real or imagined emotional, psychological, psychic, or physical damage brought out by the reading, viewing, enactment or the playing of this scenario - whether such enactment is faithful to the intent of the game or not. Just like the rest of life outside of the game, all players are encouraged to "Play Safe."

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Alpha Sigma Yi
Alpha Theta Wu
Alpha Alpha Ba
Alpha Omega San

Omega Z-15
Omega Q-23
Omega S-5
neoOmega A-69
Bobus
Tedus
Corolae
Alicae

BRIEFING SHEETS

The Dream Dome
Alpha
Omega
Outside
Underground
Vampyr
Zombai

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **THE FALL OF THE DREAM**. This is a live roleplaying game scenario. Participants take up a character and dress and act out that character while trying to fulfil the character's goals. The host/game-moderator will settle any rules questions and the like (Note to Director: Make things quick, simple, easy, fast, consistent, and fair . . . if the game doesn't explain something then go ahead and quickly make something up.).

This game was inspired by a monster-thread-that-wouldn't-die titled "Roleplaying In Character Sex" and several variants on various newsgroups such as rec.games.frp.live-action, rec.games.frp.misc, alt.games.frp.live-action, rec.games.frp.advocacy, and others. I thought that if all these people are so interested in discussing how to roleplay sex, then why not give them a game to play? This was done all

tongue-in-cheek and the like but the result is a playable game for the more adventurous. The game is intended to be the framework for a party or similar social situation. It is not intended to be a heavy highly competitive event but there are some such elements present in the game. Over all it's intended to be fun. This scenario also led to the indepth discussion of sex and gaming in previous issues of the *Journal of Interactive Drama*.

Directors, give a copy of the character sheet for the appropriate player to each player - players should only get the character information for their character nothing more. At the end of each character description, there is a list of which Briefing Sheets (additional information) the player should receive. Print extra copies of each of these and give them to the appropriate players. Do NOT allow anyone to have access to anyone else's character descriptions or to Briefing Sheets not listed on their own character sheets. This is very important. You should have extra copies of the Vampyr and Zombai Briefing Sheets ready as they will be needed once the game gets going.

There are two sets of mechanics for this scenario - Full Contact and Simulated. For a Full Contact session, all encounters or acts of a sexual nature are real sexual encounters and actions done while roleplaying the characters. In the Simulated version, no actual sex takes place. Partners may roleplay as far as the like up to the actual sexual or related activity (such as whippings and the like) but no actual physical contact takes place of a sexual nature. Instead the participants play a quick game of Rocks-Scissors-Paper. The "winner" of that game is declared the person who "orgasms" (multiple orgasms are allowed for female players - male players have to wait at least fifteen minutes before attempting to make their partner "cum" again [there are probably much better ways to simulate this but this is the quickest that I thought of]). To make things interesting, once a person has caused a partner to orgasm, the player causing the orgasm (presumably the sex partner) can command that person to do one thing right then or to change one attitude for an hour - multiple orgasms can be counted towards permanent attitude changes (two will permanently change an inconsequential attitude, five will be required for a more serious attitude). Yes, I know this is a stupid

mechanic but it would prove most entertaining in the context of a social function - all these people running around trying to get enough of their partners to "cum first."

In both the Full Contact and Virtual versions of this game, all players should have Safewords. If at anytime a scene is being roleplayed and the player feels he or she is being backed into a corner as far as what is expected, that player may say the general Safeword "Dream." The partner must stop immediately. The remainder of the encounter may be settled through a quick game of Rocks-Scissors-Paper. Failure to comply to the Safeword rule means instant expulsion from the game - regardless of whether your "character" is needed or not. Abuse of Safewords by using them as a means of mind games and/or "teasing" and the like is also grounds for expulsion from the game (Directors, watch out for this).

If you don't like certain mechanics, then feel free to change them. The game is supposed to be fun so if at any time the rules get in the way of the fun, then fun should win out everytime. The game ends when the party dies down. After play, it's a good idea to have a nice unwinding session so everyone can share what the others didn't figure out about their characters. This is often as much fun as playing the game - okay, maybe not as much but it can still be fun.

Finally, this game was created for entertainment purposes only. Anyone is welcome to play this game. You must however be a "legal adult" and of the age of consent where you live and where you plan to play the game. You may not break any laws while playing this game. Just because it's a game, it doesn't mean you can hurt someone. In playing the game, participants inherently acknowledge that the author takes no responsibility for the use or misuse of this scenario. No one may make any money from this game - other than the author. Word to the Wise: If you really want to play this, then only play it with a group of people with whom you are already comfortable with. Don't take this to your Sunday Social and expect folks to be thrilled unless this is the kind of thing you think the folks would already be interested in.

Realistically, most folks who read this are more interested in reading it

for fun . . . only a few would even be interested in playing it. However, if you do play this game - if Full Contact or Virtual mode - please do let me know how it goes. I would love to have copies of any pictures you take too!

Enjoy and happy gaming!

CHARACTER: Alpha Sigma Yi ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You should have been the Prime Alpha - but for some strange reason the Prime Komputer selected Alpha Omega San. You suspect someone has been tampering with sensitive data files and programs and you wouldn't be surprised if Alpha Omega San is that person. You've invited her and her Omegas to your home in order to find out more and perhaps gather enough evidence against her. If she has been tampering with the Prime Komputer's programming, that's reason enough for exile from the Dome. You intend to ply her with drink and perhaps loosen her up with some sensual delights so that you can catch her off guard. You have also invited a long time ally, Alpha Theta Wu to your home. She contacted you earlier in the day that she would be bringing "guests" but did not give you any other information. Since she was rather mysterious about this, you are rather curious. If they prove to be a threat to Dream Dome society or the Prime Komputer they should be eliminated. Nothing can be allowed to remain a threat to the Prime Komputer.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Alpha

CHARACTER: Alpha Theta Wu ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Two years ago, you were exploring some abandoned sealed off tunnels and discovered a doorway to the outside. You have been secretly venturing forth and gathering evidence of habitability outside of the Dream Dome. You are now certain that the Prime Komputer has been lying for generations about the conditions outside the Dome. You haven't let anyone know about your findings . . . until tonight. Two days ago, on one of your secret ventures you met a small group of wandering Outsiders. They seem interested in forming an ongoing trade link with you - there is very little of much technologically advanced machinery outside of the Dream Dome. The leader Bobus has been your main contact but you suspect the strange one Alicae knows more than she lets on. You prefer to work in secret for now but will need the aid of at least two other Inner Circle members. You have brought your contacts with you tonight to Alpha Sigma Yi's weekly unwind orgy in order to decide which of your fellow Alphas are worthy of trust in this matter. Those who you decide not to trust, you will simply kill (rather, you will have your Omega - neoOmega A-69 - kill them). In the past you have found it is usually prudent to relax your intended target for "persuasion" by loosening her up through wine and sexual satisfaction.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Alpha

CHARACTER: Alpha Alpha Ba ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You've been invited to this party - hosted by one of the more powerful Alphas, Alpha Sigma Yi. Most Alphas assumed Alpha Sigma Yi would be appointed Prime Alpha when the last Prime Alpha died, murdered by her assistants (one of whom was demoted to neoOmega status and the other sentenced to Exile outside the Dream Dome). Most Alphas don't know about this but since you are the Prime Judiciary Alpha, you know a lot more about such things (most sentencings are confidential and most crimes are not known by anyone outside of Judiciary - as far as the general populace is concerned the previous Prime Alpha passed away peacefully in her sleep, dying of natural causes). It seems strange that someone as liberal and outspoken as Alpha Omega San would be appointed Prime Alpha. Perhaps you can learn more as the evening progresses. Alpha Theta Wu has brought very strange guests to the party, they also might be worth investigation. All in all, you have some interesting work cut out for you this evening . . . plus, you really do enjoy a good orgy and Alpha Sigma Yi's Omegas are rather fetching.

Something else which has been bothering you of late are nightmares of a vampyric creature that feeds off the life force of others. You remember tales you grandmother used to tell you of a being that could steal a person's life through intense physical or emotional or sexual energy release. The victim is then weakened, turned into a mindless Zombai slave, or cursed to become a Vampyr itself. For some strange reason you have been dreaming of such a creature of late. The only way to destroy such a creature is to become one and then use the soul sucking powers on it - a price too great for anyone's soul - or to starve it of energy (not letting it feed for a year) - or to drive it into a death frenzy by feeding it too much at one time (usually meaning to engage it in sexual intercourse with at least two others wherein all participants achieve simultaneous orgasm together - not the easiest thing to pull off with a group). Since your family has a history of psychic sensitivity perhaps you should watch the proceedings closely to see if anyone acts unusually - but still try to enjoy yourself.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Alpha

CHARACTER: Alpha Omega San ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You are the new Prime Alpha - newly appointed by the Prime Komputer after the last Prime Alpha passed away in her sleep of natural causes. You know that Alpha Sigma Yi - the host for this party - was the most likely candidate for the position but she doesn't have contacts in the Underground who have developed programming skills to the degree that it is now possible to begin tampering with the Prime Komputer's programming. Alpha Sigma Yi would be quite shocked to learn that it is her own Omega, Omega S-5 who altered the Prime Komputer's databanks to bring about her removal from the appointment list and your placement at the head of the High Council. Eventually, you hope to slowly change the Prime Komputer's programs enough to overturn the Alpha-Omega system and build a society of equals. This may not be possible in your lifetime but now that the Underground has control of the Prime Alpha's seat, it will not relinquish it until the entire society has changed. Alpha Theta Wu has brought some very strange visitors to the party and their presence - even their very existence - may rock the foundations of the Dream Dome's society. You must ensure that the societal revolution be an ordered and controlled one or all could very easily fall into anarchy and chaos. You do recognize one of the guests - Alicae (but you knew her as Alpha Sigma Ssu) - she was a former assistant of the previous Prime Alpha but she disappeared soon after the former Prime Alpha's death. Find out more about these strangers and try to eliminate any threats to your position while you enjoy the party and the sensual delights present.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Alpha, Underground

CHARACTER: OMEGA Z-15 ♂

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Male. Straight.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You serve Alpha Alpha Ba and have been with her for years. If she were to ask you to walk on your hands and knees through glass, it is very likely that you would with no complaint. Sometimes she asks you to serve other Alphas in an effort to find out what their intentions are in Alpha politics. As High Judiciary Alpha she has many enemies and you must strive to do your part in protecting her person and her interests. She is the rising sun.

You are not certain what this means but while going about your duties for Alpha Alpha Ba, you have occasionally needed to spy upon other Alphas. Recently you were following Alpha Theta Wu and noticed her go into an unused section of the Dome. You followed her down a long tunnel where she slipped through a long-unused doorway. When you went to follow, you found that it was not a simple door but a hatch - one of the long sealed hatches to the outside world where Alphas who have sinned grievously against society are sent to die (Omegas are simply killed). She had simply walked out into the hostile Outside environment to die. Imagine your shock when she returned carrying a small pot and in the pot was an actual living flower! You knew it was a flower from the education tapes provided in the Prime Komputer's history lessons. These were supposed to be all extinct but here one was. You need to find out more of what Alpha Theta Wu has been up to.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Omega

CHARACTER: OMEGA Q-23 ♂

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Male. Straight.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You serve Alpha Sigma Yi. She should have been the new Prime Alpha not this upstart bitch queen Alpha Omega San. You know it is wrong to think of an Alpha as a bitch, but your love for your own Alpha makes it difficult for you to be objective let alone caring towards a rival Alpha. If Alpha Sigma Yi asked you to walk on glass you would do so. She is your rising sun - and some day she may command you to enter total darkness but you would do so happily if it meant granting her a moment's pleasure. Her other Omega present tonight, Omega S-5, is less enthusiastic in his service. If you could get him punished or removed without threatening your own position, you would.

Something else which has been bothering you of late are nightmares of a vampyric creature that feeds off the life force of others. You remember tales you grandmother used to tell you of a being that could steal a person's life through intense physical or emotional or sexual energy release. The victim is then weakened, turned into a mindless Zombai slave, or cursed to become a Vampyr itself. For some strange reason you have been dreaming of such a creature of late. The only way to destroy such a creature is to become one and then use the soul sucking powers on it - a price too great for anyone's soul - or to starve it of energy (not letting it feed for a year) - or to drive it into a death frenzy by feeding it too much at one time (usually meaning to engage it in sexual intercourse with at least two others wherein all participants achieve simultaneous orgasm together - not the easiest thing to pull off with a group). Since your family has a history of psychic sensitivity perhaps you should watch the proceedings closely to see if anyone acts unusually - but still try to enjoy yourself.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Omega

CHARACTER: OMEGA S-5 ♂

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Male. Straight.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Technically, you are an Omega in the service of Alpha Sigma Yi . . . however, you consider yourself to be a Free Man. You are a member of the Underground. You are part of a movement that has learned to work within the system with the aim of tearing it down. Eventually, your aim is to do away with the Prime Komputer's mandate for an Alpha-Omega society. Soon, you hope to establish a system where all Alphas and Omegas are considered equals. This is a dream you've had all your life and you would die to bring it out. In your efforts to help the Underground, you have learned the illegal skills of komputer programming. You have changed some of the data files in the Prime Komputer's system - using Alpha Sigma Yi's terminal - so that Alpha Sigma Yi would be passed over for Prime Alpha and that an Alpha sympathetic to the Underground and its mission would be appointed (this is Alpha Omega San who is attending tonight's function - you must protect her at all costs). Sometimes you get rather frustrated with the speed of the underground's success. There are those, like yourself, who would like to see the complete overthrow of the Prime Komputer and a new system established in their own lifetimes while others prefer to turtle along for slow and gradual change over generations. Nevertheless, your heart is in the goal not with the methods - now or tomorrow or one day doesn't really matter as long as the changes do take place. In the meantime you must pretend to be Alpha Sigma Yi's lap dog.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Omega, Underground

CHARACTER: neoOmega A-69 ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You used to be an Alpha - one of the glorious class. Your name was once Alpha Sex Liu but that however was long ago - before the previous Prime Alpha was murdered by your fellow best friend Alpha Sigma Ssu (who for some strange reason is at tonight's party but she calls herself Alicae and is with the group of strangers brought to the party by Alpha Theta Wu - your Alpha. Alpha Sigma Ssu should be dead. She was exiled by Alpha Alpha Ba and the others on the Judiciary Council for Treason. Since you were not part of the murder plot, you were stripped of your identity and became a neoOmega . . . a fate worse than death in this society. You need to get her alone and find out what's going on and how she managed to hide in the Dome without detection - perhaps the Underground is helping her. Someday you hope to renew your contacts within the Underground and once again work towards societal change. In the meantime, you need to serve as well as you can at this party and make certain that the Alphas are pleased in every respect - particularly since you know the attitude most Alphas have regarding neoOmegas (you've seen neoOmegas abused far worse than any Omega). Serve well and do what you can for the Underground - and most importantly try to have some fun.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Dream Dome, Alpha, Omega

CHARACTER: BOBUS ♂

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Male. Straight.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You have been the leader of your pack for years and years. You know

that of late Tedus has been feeling his oats and he'd like a shot at being Pack Leader but you're just not in the mood to step down as of yet - particularly since the pack's been having serious problems lately. Two months ago, you visited another pack and since then you've had nothing but bad luck. The fact that everyone in the other pack seemed sick and lost should have been enough of a warning to stay away but you needed to do some serious trading and they had what you needed - fresh food and water. Three days of staying in the strange pack was enough for Carolae to start acting strangely. Once you left and hit your own trail things got a little easier but one week later Mikae - your lover - was dead. She and Carolae had spent the day together watching the birds fly over the ruins and they came back rather tired. In the morning Mikae was dead. With the loss of a member as valuable as her, the pack needed to build itself back up as soon as possible. You had decided you had to get to the Welcum Lake where most packs met to pick up fledglings but on the way you found a strange girl wandering in the wilderness. Normally a pack would simply kill these mad women but with the loss of Mikae you decided to adopt her into the pack - giving her the name Alicae. Recently, Alicae has told you of a ruin that was not a ruin and you ordered the pack to follow her to the Dome. The place seemed very intact and she claimed there were still people living inside. Despite your doubts, you agreed to follow her - after all, there might actually be worthwhile artifacts to scavenge. While exploring the perimeter, you chanced upon a very capable woman who calls herself Alpha Theta Wu. She claims that the Dome dwellers might be willing to trade with your pack but that everything must be done in secrecy. She has brought you inside the Dome to meet others who might be willing to trade. You've already seen enough working artifacts to know this is the find of a lifetime . . . assuming you can get out alive. Somehow you don't trust these women to be completely honest with you - especially since they treat their men like slaves. The sooner you can do your business, the sooner you can get back to the open sky, and the happier you will be.

Something else which has been bothering you of late are nightmares of a vampyric creature that feeds off the life force of others. You remember tales you grandmother used to tell you of a being that could steal a person's life through intense physical or emotional or sexual energy

release. The victim is then weakened, turned into a mindless Zombai slave, or cursed to become a Vampyr itself. For some strange reason you have been dreaming of such a creature of late. The only way to destroy such a creature is to become one and then use the soul sucking powers on it - a price too great for anyone's soul - or to starve it of energy (not letting it feed for a year) - or to drive it into a death frenzy by feeding it too much at one time (usually meaning to engage it in sexual intercourse with at least two others wherein all participants achieve simultaneous orgasm together - not the easiest thing to pull off with a group). Since your family has a history of psychic sensitivity perhaps you should watch the proceedings closely to see if anyone acts unusually - but still try to enjoy yourself.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Outside

CHARACTER: TEDUS ♂

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Male. Straight.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sometimes life just isn't fair. You are faster and stronger and smarter than Bobus but he is Pack Leader. You believe you should now be Leader . . . especially now that Bobus' leadership has done nothing but bring trouble to the Pack. It started when the Pack did trading with a strange pack that seemed weak and ill. Now Carolae hasn't been acting herself and Mikae has died of some sort of wasting sickness. To top it off the Pack has found a madwoman in the desert and instead of killing her outright as tradition demands, Bobus declared her to be a new member of the Pack. She's led Bobus to this wretched ruin where things are strange. The pack living here is insane. The women are Pack Leaders and the men are treated like less than animals. The sooner you can get out of here the better . . . but you must also find out what these strange women can offer you. Perhaps you can find a weakness in Bobus' authority and can assert

yourself as new Pack Leader. If not, at least these women have good ideas about hospitality - sit down orgies sound rather pleasing.

BRIEFING SHEETS: Outside

CHARACTER: CAROLAE ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You haven't fed for days. Oh, you've eaten plenty of food but you need other kind of sustenance now to keep yourself going. It started weeks ago when the Pack visited a rival pack for trading. The strange pack was all wasted and ill. You should have known something was wrong when the only woman left in the pack with any vitality in her took you into her tent and made love to you with a vigor and energy you'd never previously experienced. This excited you so much that you responded in kind . . . giving as much as you took. When she finally melted beneath your kiss and touch you felt an outburst of energy entering you. She looked into your eyes and said, "You were too strong for me, now you too have the gift." You soon found out what she meant. You are now a Vampyr. You feed on life energy - you don't have to kill but the victim may die if you take too much before allowing the energies to renew themselves. You found this last part out with poor Mikae. She was the mate of your Pack Leader Bobus. She was also your best friend and lover. You took her out to watch the birds and your hunger was upon you. You thought you could control how much energy you took but it was not possible. She received the wasting disease and died (you did not yet know how to make Zombai - and even if you had you would not have cursed her that way). When the pack found the mad woman in the desert you thought perhaps you could feed from her but Bobus has made her a pack member. You need to feed now. Alicae - the madwoman - has brought the pack to this Domed place where women seem to be Pack

Leaders and men less than slaves. Since their customs call for sexual contact as hospitality, perhaps you will be able to feed now. You are so hungry!

BRIEFING SHEETS: Outside, Vampyr

CHARACTER: ALICAE ♀

GENDER & SEXUALITY

Female. Bicurious.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You weren't always called Alicae - that's just what the Pack has given you as a name. You used to be known as Alpha Sigma Ssu - in your other life in the Dream Life under the Dome in this domain of the Prime Komputer. That seems so very long ago. You and your good friend Alpha Sex Liu worked side by side in the office of the former Prime Alpha. You were also both members of the Underground. You know that Alpha Omega San was also a member of the Underground. She is the new Prime Alpha just as you had hoped - the Underground was able to salvage the situation after all. You murdered the former Prime Alpha - not out of political necessity but out of jealousy. She was getting entirely too fond of Alpha Sex Liu and you were simply in a jealous rage for you loved Alpha Sex Lui too (although she never knew of your love). Well, once your crime was uncovered, you were sent to your death outside the protective shelter of the Dream Dome.

Imagine your surprise when you didn't die immediately from the hostile environment. Actually, the air is quite breathable and there are plenty of plants and animals to keep one alive. The old legends and stories about the possibility that the Earth might renew itself are true. The Blight is over - oh, there are very wild, weird, and dangerous places out there but for the most part it's quite habitable if one has the resources. Unfortunately for you, a lifetime of living in a protective dome with the

Prime Komputer supplying everything you ever needed did not give you the skills or resources for survival.

Lucky for you a Pack found you. Since one of their own had recently passed away from some illness, the leader Bobus decided to adopt you into the Pack. This has worked out well since together you can survive. You hope to repay their kindness by bringing them to the Dream Dome. Perhaps you can contact the Underground and make a deal for trading and for helping those condemned by the Prime Komputer to escape. An Underground Tunnelway if you please.

When you brought the Pack to the vicinity of the Dome you were shocked to find Alpha Theta Wu outside the Dome. She had found a tunnel and has been doing her own secret investigating. Since you had been disoriented and could not find the way in, she's as good a contact as any for the time being. She has brought the Pack to a small gathering hosted by Alpha Sigma Yi - a dangerous woman. Alpha Alpha Ba - the woman who condemned you to Exile - is here but she hasn't recognized you . . . yet . . . so be careful.. Also Alpha Sex Liu is here but she is now called neoOmega A-69 - she must have been punished for your crime! She also hasn't seemed to have recognized you but perhaps you should contact her. Perhaps you could help her escape this place.

Briefing Sheets: Dream Dome, Outside, Alpha, Underground

BRIEFING SHEET: THE DREAM DOME

BRIEFING INFORMATION

Welcome to the world of The Dream. For a thousand years, the Dream Dome has stood. The inhabitants have known nothing but peace and tranquillity. The Prime Komputer has seen to all their needs. It has been this way for generations and there is no reason to believe it will not be this way for generations to come.

Of course, it wasn't always like this . . . years and years ago . . . long

before the Prime Komputer began guiding humanity's destiny . . . in the Dark Ages . . . men ruled the Earth with an iron hand. The world was polluted and dying. Man waged war . . . using weapons of terrible destructive force . . . all but destroying the planet and humanity.

Then . . . the Prime Komputer came online. It saw that there was much work to be done to save both the planet and humanity. It sealed off the Dome and then unleashed an unstoppable holy vengeance upon the rest of the Earth - cleansing the impure elements so that the planet might renew itself. The Prime Komputer then molded the society within the Dome so that they would one day be worthy of return to the Outside in the role of stewards of the planet. In its infinite wisdom, the Prime Komputer saw that it was good and right that the female Alphas should rule over the male Omegas and that the one should serve the other so that Man would not have the ability to once again wage war and poison the planet. Occasionally, an Alpha exhibits traits similar to Omega aggressiveness of yore - these are punished and sent to the Black Room for reconditioning and sentencing as neoOmegas. Rarely, an especially troublesome Omega is sentenced to death by exposure to the poisonous environment outside the protective shell of the Dream Dome.

Romance is not uncommon between individuals within the Dream Dome . . . in fact sexual relations between Alphas and other Alphas or their Omegas is socially acceptable and encouraged. Omegas live only for their Alphas so they would not have relationships between one another - such a thing would be unthinkable (and unforgivable as well as punishable by death).

BRIEFING SHEET: ALPHA

BRIEFING INFORMATION

Long ago, the Prime Komputer looked at mankind and saw that humanity consisted of two types of humans - the Alphas and the Omegas. The Alphas are the born leaders, the rulers, the warriors, the driving force, the essence of all that is good and worthwhile . . . the females . . .

the masters. The Omegas are the drones, the workers . . . the males . . . the slaves. Alphas carry themselves with the demeanor of the upper classes. When an Alpha speaks an Omega must listen. When an Alpha asks it is a command to an Omega. When an Alpha suggests, an Omega hurries to obey. When an Alpha commands, an Omega trembles in subservience. Sometimes an Alpha is demoted and becomes a neoOmega. These wretches are abominations in the natural order of things and are beneath the notice of an Alpha - being less than human. It is well and good that an Alpha's boot be placed upon an Omega's hand or an Alpha's whip find an Omega's backside. Strength is the only things these wretches can truly understand. The watchword of the Alphas is "Command." All praise the Prime Komputer and her wisdom in guiding the evolution of the race by creating the Alphas with such perfection and the Omegas to serve them.

BRIEFING SHEET: OMEGA

BRIEFING INFORMATION

Long ago, the Prime Komputer looked at mankind and saw that humanity consisted of two types of humans - the Alphas and the Omegas. The Alphas are the born holy force, the delicate, the loved, the beautiful, the loving warrior maidens . . . the females . . . the Kared For. The Omegas are the workers, the servants . . . the males . . . the Karetakers. Alphas carry themselves with the demeanor of the upper classes. Occasionally an Alpha . . . by the grace of the Prime Komputer . . . becomes a neoOmega. This is well and good. It shows the importance of becoming a servant. These neoOmegas must be protected and respected for they carry the hope of the race. When an Alpha speaks, it is the voice of a goddess. The Omega serve by the grace of the Prime Komputer and they are proud to do so. The opportunity to die for an Alpha's amusement or to satisfy any whim or desire - no matter the peril or the pain - is considered the ultimate demonstration of love and respect. Alphas love their Omegas in their own way - perhaps the whip is a sign of love. Omegas love their Alphas in their own ways too . . . with all their hearts and all their minds and all their bodies and all their souls. The

watchword of the Omegas is "Obedience." Thanks be to the Prime Komputer and his wisdom.

BRIEFING SHEET: OUTSIDE

BRIEFING INFORMATION

There are legends that long long ago the Earth was not Kursed. These are stories that old men and older women tell that have been handed down from generation to generation. Most of the Survivors today consider them to be myth, something to hold on to. Any sensible person knows that it's all wishful thinking that the world was once anything less than the violent, radioactive wasteland it is today . . . and that it's sheer folly to dream it could ever be anything else. It's better to concentrate on living and eking out an existence in this hell known as Life. In this Kursed Earth, men and women form packs . . . small groups of hunter-gatherers ranging from two or four to as many as three dozen in the mighty packs. These small compact groups scrounge among the rubble of forgotten cities created in the Great Fall of eons ago. A man or woman's worth is based wholly on contribution to the pack's welfare. Most packs form extended polyfidelous families. Some form other bonds. Whatever works for the pack is considered appropriate. Total trust of pack members is considered standard while suspicion of competing packs is the norm - albeit loose trading arrangements are often formed. When a child reaches maturity it is sent on a vision quest into the heart of the Great Ruin - the remains of a long dead city filled with strange creatures and machines. If after one month the child returns with a fetish (usually a technological artifact ranging from old battery casings to calculator shells but it may be the tooth of an enemy or anything else with significance to the Ordeal) then that child becomes an adult and is sent out to find other neoadults to form a new pack or to join an established pack in need of new blood or starve in the wilderness. If the child does not return with a fetish, it is slain. If the child does not return, then it is dead and nothing more can be done. Once in awhile a madwoman is found who claims to come from a real city just like the ones in the stories. A city protected by a huge dome of radiation

shielding. A city where computers still operate and thousands of humans live together in one place. These insane fantasies are usually dismissed as ravings but . . . what if it were true? What if there were such a place? Perhaps humanity could once again rebuild itself. Usually these madwomen are slain outright in order to put them out of their misery but occasionally a pack - particularly one that has recently lost a member to one hazard or another.

BRIEFING SHEET: UNDERGROUND

BRIEFING INFORMATION

The Prime Komputer is insane. The society of Alpha masters and Omega slaves is just plain wrong. Humans are humans, people are people, Alpha and Omega has nothing to do with any the value of a person. It is imperative that a revolution occur which will permanently change the Dream Dome's society. Humans should have the right to control their own destiny . . . choose their own loves . . . run their own lives. The Prime Komputer is supposed to serve humanity, not twist it for its own cruel designs. The time for action is now . . . but there must be subtlety and security in the actions, otherwise the Prime Komputer will simply stamp out any dissension as soon as it is expressed.

BRIEFING SHEET: VAMPYR

BRIEFING INFORMATION

You are a Vampyr. That is you have been infected with a very potent virus which causes you to feed on the life essence of other beings. The transference comes through any sort of sexual or emotional relations as that's when a human's life force is most active (actually any circumstance that can produce an orgasmic response in your victim is sufficient). Basically, anytime you have an intense relationship with another person there is the chance that you can feed or that the other person may be infected. If your relationship has sexual response (this can come about

through intercourse, oral or manual stimulation, whatever, or even be a byproduct of intense fear or pain) then the mechanics are quite straightforward. If the other person has orgasm, then you may feed from their released life force (Warning: if you "feed" from the same person twice in a day that person will develop a wasting sickness and die within ten minutes of the second orgasm - you will want to let the Director know this so that the other player can be notified when he or she "dies" for roleplaying effect - that person will then animate as a Zombai . . . an animated corpse that will become attached to and do the bidding of the first person it sees upon animation [basically, the character has the second orgasm and then dies ten minutes later and then "lies dead" for five minutes with eyes closed and then obeys the first person he or she sees upon "reanimation" - obedience is complete]). Now . . . if you have relations with someone else and YOU have an orgasm then the "victim" receives your powerful life energy and becomes a Vampyr after fifteen minutes.

BRIEFING SHEET: ZOMBAI

BRIEFING INFORMATION

You are a Zombai. You have just died. When the Director asked you to fall in a swoon, you were actually dying from a very virulent and fatal disease (caused by the drainage of all your life force by something). Well, once you died, the virus went to work and transformed you into a Zombai. Happy happy joy joy. The first person whose eyes you had contact with (other than a Director that is) is now your Master. You will obey your Master completely and totally. You still have the knowledge and power and feelings you had previously except that now you have complete and unyielding desire to do anything and everything your Master asks. Oh yes, you are still a corpse, so you don't have a heart beat, your skin is cold, and you are beginning to decay (you'll be nothing but skin and bones in about a week). You must not tell anyone you are dead. You must go on as before except for having no will of your own and fawning on your Master. If you had secrets before you do not have to tell your Master unless specifically asked . . . you may not lie or hold back

from your Master though if asked.

CASTING CHART

#	Character Name	♀ ♂	Character Gender/Sexuality Briefing Sheets
01	Alpha Sigma Yi	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Alpha.
02	Alpha Theta Wu	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Alpha.
03	Alpha Alpha Ba	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Alpha.
04	Alpha Omega San	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Alpha. Underground.
05	Omega Z-15	♂	Straight. Dream Dome. Omega.
06	Omega Q-23	♂	Straight. Dream Dome. Omega.
07	Omega S-5	♂	Straight. Dream Dome. Omega. Underground.
08	NeoOmega A-69	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Alpha. Omega.
09	Bobus	♂	Straight. Outside.
10	Tedus	♂	Straight. Outside.
11	Carolae	♀	Bicurious. Outside. Vampyr.
12	Alicae	♀	Bicurious. Dream Dome. Underground. Outside.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Journal of Interactive Drama

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

Call for Papers

The *Journal of Interactive Drama* is an online peer-reviewed journal on scenario-based interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying games which provides a forum for serious discussion of live roleplaying game theory, design, and practice. The journal is published regularly. The journal provides a forum for the discussion of any of the various scenario-based theatre-style live action roleplaying games, freeforms, and interactive dramas and invites contributions in all areas of literature, theory, design, and practice for educational, entertainment, and recreational roleplay. Formal and informal essays, articles, papers, and critical reviews are also welcome.

This is a peer-reviewed journal that may include formal papers and informal essays for and by the roleplaying community from a wide variety of disciplines. The focus is general enough so that authors should feel comfortable submitting material of either a formal or informal nature, albeit all submissions are peer-reviewed and should be appropriate to a serious and thoughtful discussion of that type -- we encourage articles, essays, and formal papers on all manner of live roleplaying, freeform, and interactive drama-related topics. Discussions of related ludology, techniques, and good solid critical book and roleplay scenario or event reviews are quite welcome as well. As this is a multi-disciplinary journal, material related to a wide range of scenario-based learning, social psychology, critical theory, performance studies, popular culture, design, and

more as they intersect with the interactive drama are also welcome. Pure design pieces related to scenario construction and review are also encouraged. Each issue will showcase one to three longform or four to six shortform interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying scenarios; creative scenario submissions of this type are very sought after. Scenarios for submission should include a section of self-reflective critical thought and formal designer's notes that discuss issues related to the creation of the piece as well as a formal section which reviews the author's performance experiences with the scenario.

As an international journal, the language of publication is English. Submissions are accepted throughout the year.

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A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games

Notes for Contributors

The *Journal of Interactive Drama* is a peer-reviewed journal which publishes one volume per year in an ongoing rollout schedule based upon acceptable submissions. Both *Microsoft Word* (6.0 or above) and txt files are acceptable. Once received, manuscripts will be sent to reviewers immediately.

1. Manuscripts submitted to *Journal of Interactive Drama* should follow the style sheet of the current *MLA Handbook* as appropriate. Scenario submissions may use informal formatting conventions as long as they stay within the guidelines here.
2. If your submission has notes, please use footnotes, not endnotes.
3. The font used is *Times New Roman* (11pt) – creative pieces, such as scenarios, may use other font sizes but should stay within the same font type. If you use a special font that is non-system, you must include a copy of the font file with your submission. Please do not use columns in your piece.

*Call for Papers
Guidelines for Submission*

4. Use a separate sheet to include your name, title, affiliated institution, and contact information (email) as well as a brief author's biography of 150-250 words to be included in the contributor's notes.
5. Include a brief summary or abstract of the submission.
6. If you use illustrations or photographs, you must include all pertinent information as well as statements of permissions and copyrights to demonstrate you have the rights to include the images and that they may be published within the Journal of Interactive Drama under the same online and print rights as the accompanying paper. In the event of rights disputes, the author is responsible and liable for any material included in that author's submission.

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Submissions may be sent by regular mail to:

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Please include hardcopy and disk for regular mail submissions. You may also send submissions in electronic format to Brian David Phillips, Associate Editor, *Journal of Interactive Drama* at phillips@nccu.edu.tw via email.

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