

**College of DuPage Theatre Department  
Presents**



Created through Improvisation  
by Cast and Director

**Characters:**

Traveling Story-Tellers

**Time**

Once upon a time

**Place**

In a land far away

**Director's Note**

College Theatre's touring 'family' show has evolved over decades; it is the long loved and much labored product of improvisation between director, designers, and cast. It is meant for children and adults to share in the unique experience that only live theatre can offer, the power of the imagination. The genesis of this particular production was inspired by the way we view ourselves and those expectations that hold all of us. I hope that you are inspired to look at yourself and what you value. Please don't sit back — come and play with us! ~AB

## **Improvisational Theatre**

The focus of our dramatization is to give life to the story for both the youngest members of our audience as well as the most seasoned theatregoer. Family theatre is exciting to us as teachers and theatre artists because we seek a dynamic creative theatrical process. Our task is to guide both the student actor and the audience through a process in which we develop, express and communicate ideas, through the telling of the story. Our improvised scenario has been developed in order to motivate and extend learning. We hope to expand language, laugh at our own popular culture, communicate, encourage participation, problem solve and create. For our audience, we aspire to foster empathy, social awareness, and to clarify universal social values. Ultimately, we hope that this experience will integrate the investment of imagination, energy, feeling and ability in all of us! ~AB

## **The Story**

Our production has three tales about ‘staches and their effect on how we see ourselves, others, and the world around us. Shhhh...it’s a surprise!

Background on the inspiration for our three stories:

[dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com)

### **expectation**

- 1.the act or the state of expecting :  
to wait in expectation.
2. the act or state of looking forward or anticipating.
- 3.an expectant mental attitude:  
a high pitch of expectation.
- 4.something expected; a thing looked forward to.
- 5.Often, expectations. a prospect of future good or profit:  
to have great expectations.
- 6.the degree of probability that something will occur:  
There is little expectation that he will come.

## **THE BLOG**

### **What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?**

**10/14/2015 10:54 am ET | Updated Oct 15, 2015**

**Jodi Weiss**

For the past decade, I’ve interacted with Millennials and Generation Z students in a college classroom setting, which means that twice a week I get to hear their gripes, their joys, what they care about, and I learn quickly the fastest route to boring them: preaching. Like everyone else, college kids do not want to hear me or anyone else preach to them

about what they need to be doing, should be doing, or must do. They want to carve their routes and live out their journeys. But so many of them don't know what they want to do - what major to choose? What career to pursue? What topic to write their papers on? More importantly, they wonder why any of it really matters.

One of the best books that I have read on how our young adults should be approaching their 20's is Dr. Meg Jay's *The Defining Decade*. I have taken to sharing her TED talk "Why 30 Is Not the New 20" (<http://on.ted.com/Jay> ) with my students, too. Basically, Dr. Meg Jay explains why one's 20's are a vital time in a young adult's life to actively, if not aggressively, discover and pursue all that one seeks in terms of career, family, friends, and relationships. She asserts that our brains rewire themselves in our 20's, preparing us for adulthood; a reminder that one's 20's are a perfect and critical time to set the agenda for one's life.

### **The One Life**

From the time we are in elementary school, people ask us what we want to be when we grow up. I recently asked my friend's eight-year old the question and she said, "I'm just a kid; how could I know what I want to be when I'm an adult?" Maybe the questions should be: what do you love to do? What means something to you? What makes you feel happy? What do you care about regardless of any rewards? Maybe if we can implant that train of thought early on, what someone wants to do when they grow up will be less about picking and choosing and more about following one's innate path.

I believe in the one life - that is, that who you are is imbedded in all you do, whether you are at work, or at home, running a race, or driving a car. The same passion and intensity that you give to the things outside of work are what you need to invest in your career, and if that's not the case, you need to ask yourself why? Are you in the wrong career? The wrong life? Have you gone on autopilot?

### **What You Seek**

I'm a believer that you first need to define where you wish to arrive before you start your engine to get there. How do you want to spend your days? Do you want to have time to travel? To work remote? To be on a plane throughout the week? Do you want to sit in an office or be outdoors? How do you define success? And how important is success to you? What will you do if you fail? How will you prepare yourself for hardship? Do you like to work 8 hour days or 12 hour days? What is the one activity in your life that if you have to give up more than two days in a row, you would feel miserable about? Is what you want to do tied to your parents/family's expectations, or is it your personal ambition?

### **Easy Access: The Pros & The Cons**

From my experience, the Millennials and Generation Z students I've met in my classroom are a mixed bag of passion, ideas, ennui, and a faint belief that the world of

work as older generations may define it, is b\*\*\*\*. Maybe they're right. But maybe not. Students of today's generation have grown up in a world of easy access - cell phones, text messages, email on the go, and the internet to find anything and everything that they seek instantaneously. I am always grateful that I encountered the internet and email and all of our modern day technology when I was already in graduate school. I'm grateful that when I was in college and the start of my graduate career, I still had to visit the library and dig in the card catalogues to find the resources I needed to write a research paper. Why? I loved the synergy I felt when I found the research I needed to prove my case and thus write a stellar paper.

Nowadays, a few clicks, and students find the articles they need. Sure, that's great and quick and convenient, but I believe that there was something in the hunt - a persistence, a patience, a focus, that was learned. An ability to redefine and re-evaluate ones ideas and routes. And for me, there was something in the trenches of libraries that was magical in the same way it was magical that we made our way to appointments without GPS to guide us to locations - there was a sense of accomplishment, of focus, strategy. Convenience is convenient, but it is often a mindless act, too.

On that end, I still savor the good old days when I had to wait to get to a movie theater to watch a movie or wait until a movie came out on a VHS cassette to watch it at home. Maybe I am old fashioned, or maybe I like the pause that waiting brought us. The self-reflection; the time to re-evaluate. The floating time that occurred when I wrote a letter, tossed it in the mail, and it made its way to my recipient. To me, that was the time zone of possibility and wonder.

### **The Evolving Journey**

What does anyone want to be when they grow up? Money has its allure, but financial reward only takes one so far in life. A career devoted to helping others is amazing, but not if you never get to help yourself or if you don't have time to help the people closest to you in your life, such as aging parents or children. If your career is immersed in others, then you need to ask yourself if you are ignoring your own life. Titles and corner offices are great, too, but what does any of that mean in the long-term picture of your life? Does it provide freedom or make you more of a slave to your career?

What do you want to do when you grow up is perhaps one of the most complex questions. What you don't want to do, is waste your life. Wake up in your later years to realize the things you cared about most were not what you devoted your life to. That you missed your opportunity. That you took short cuts and lived your life taking the easy way versus the way that was right and honest and true for you. Because sometimes it is too late. Sometimes you miss your moment. I hear again and again from folks that when you are 20 you think you have forever, but somewhere along the way, forever diminishes. What you want to be when you grow up is something that only you know, and it's

something that only you can take the time to figure out. It's something that may evolve throughout your life, but it's likely that the passion and motivation that leads you in one direction, will come along for all of your journeys and pursuits throughout your life.

## **Literature Review - Hans Christian Andersen and 'The Emperor's New Clothes'; A Lesson for the 21st Century, Hubpages, June 30, 2014**

### **INTRODUCTION**

On 7th April 1837 the great Danish teller of fairy tales Hans Christian Andersen penned the third volume of his 'Fairy Tales Told For Children'. The whole collection of tales included nine stories, but this third volume included just two. One was 'The Little Mermaid'. The other, though very brief, was a story of great morality and highly perceptive commentary on the human condition. It was of course, still a fairy story intended for children. But this was a fairy story which, in the opinion of the author of this page, has merits far beyond those of its humble origins - merits for which it deserves to be considered as a great work of 19th century literature. It was called 'The Emperor's New Clothes'.

On this page, I relate the story of 'The Emperor's New Clothes', how it came into being, and the messages of the story which are still hugely relevant in the 21st century.

### **WHAT'S THE STORY ?**

Two weavers are approached by a vain, pompous Emperor who desires the finest and most luxurious clothes in all the land for himself - clothes befitting of his supreme status. The two weavers promise him just such a set of clothes, so fine and wonderful that they will be only for the eyes of the greatest and the best in society; indeed, they will be quite invisible to anyone who is stupid, incompetent or unworthy of their position in society. What's more, the clothes will be made of a material so fine ('as light as a spider web') that they will not weigh down the wearer, so fine, the wearer will not even be able to sense them draped over his body. Such a set of clothes would be perfect for a great Emperor. They would suit his sense of his own importance, and their magical properties would enable him to find out which of his ministers were unfit for their jobs ('and I could tell the wise men from the fools').

Of course, the weavers are nothing more than a pair of con-men - swindlers who have no intention of creating a fine set of clothes. They have heard of the Emperor's vanity and they believe they can turn his failings to their own advantage. So they decide to go to the pretence of making this set of fine clothes. Of course when the Emperor goes to visit the weavers at their work and they make a show of enthusing over the cloth and the clothes they are making, he cannot see anything at all. But he is too proud and arrogant to admit that he cannot see the clothes. To do so, he feels, would be to label himself as stupid and

unfit to be Emperor. And of course when his courtiers and ministers visit the weavers, they also cannot see the clothes, but they too pretend that they can - because if they say anything different, they will be admitting their own incompetence and unworthiness. ('Can it be that I'm a fool? It would never do to let on that I can't see the cloth'). And if any of them did have their suspicions, well to voice their doubts about the existence of the clothes would be to imply that the Emperor himself was stupid enough and gullible enough to be taken in by this foolery.

When the Emperor finally walks out among his subjects in his non-existent finery, the crowds watch eagerly. They all want to see which of their friends or neighbours are so stupid that they cannot see the clothes. What actually happens of course, is that none of them see any clothes. But not one of them says anything except to praise the clothes. Perhaps some are embarrassed to tell the truth because they think that they themselves must be too stupid to see the cloth. Perhaps others believe that to say anything would be to draw attention to the truth of the Emperor's own stupidity. Perhaps others simply do not wish to be the first to speak out with a contrary voice to the crowd. Only one small child who is far too innocent of all this pretension and conceit and social convention shouts out 'But he hasn't got anything on!' At first his father tries to correct the boy, but gradually the news breaks out and everyone finally realizes they are not alone in their inability to see the clothes. And everybody now finds the strength in numbers to admit that there is nothing to see, and they begin to laugh. The Emperor cringes, but continues with the procession, because to turn back would be to admit his own stupidity and gullibility. Better by far to continue on in the pretense that he is the only one with the wisdom to see the clothes. His courtiers likewise feel they have to continue to live the lie, and continue to dutifully follow their leader.

### **HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AND HIS COLLECTION OF FAIRY TALES**

In 1835 the first of three installments of fairy tales was published by Hans Christian Andersen in a series called 'Fairy Tales Told for Children. First Collection'. This first volume published on 8th May included four tales of which the best known are 'The Princess and the Pea' and 'The Tinderbox'.

Towards the end of 1835, the second installment was released on 16th December. Three tales were included, one of which was 'Thumbelina'.

The third installment was delayed till 1837, when 'The Little Mermaid' and 'The Emperor's New Clothes' were published.

Other famous fairy tales written by Hans Christian Andersen in his career include 'The Steadfast Tin Soldier' (1838), 'The Ugly Duckling' (1844), and 'The Snow Queen' (1844).

## **THE HISTORY OF 'THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES'**

Where did Hans Christian Andersen get his inspiration for this particular fairy tale? It is known that some of his stories including 'The Ugly Duckling' and 'The Snow Queen', were entirely his own creation, while some others including 'The Princess and the Pea' were adaptations or ideas based on old folk tales. 'The Emperor's New Clothes' is in this latter category.

The story is based on the seventh of fifty cautionary tales in a 14th century Spanish collection by the colorful politician, soldier and writer, Juan Manuel, under the titles 'Libro de los ejemplos', also known as 'El Conde Lucanor' (Book of the Examples of Count Lucanor). This collection in turn was derived from many other sources including Aesop's Fables and Arabian folktales.

The original story - 'A King and Three Imposters' - was very similar in many respects. Rather like Andersen's tale, it featured a ruler (a king) and a trio of unscrupulous weavers who had fabricated a story about invisible cloth. However it was somewhat different in its focus; Andersen's tale is principally about vanity and pride. In Juan Manuel's story, the clothes could only be seen by the true son of the man who was wearing them, and as such it was a story about illegitimate paternity - the king and his 'sons' were all concerned that if they confessed that they could not see the cloth, then this would prove that they were not of true royal descent. So they all pretended that they could see the non-existent cloth.

There is one other intriguing difference. In Andersen's tale, it takes the innocence of a child to point out the truth. In Juan Manuel's story it takes the innocence of a black spectator to point out the truth - the black person had no claim to be the son of the King and presumably at this time would have been of low status in society, and therefore had nothing to lose in telling the truth. A translation of this ancient story from 1335, can be found in the references, and makes an interesting read.

Quite why the key revelation was changed so that it comes from the mouth of a child is not clear. Of course the change would have made the story more appealing to children, the intended audience. However, it may have had its origins in an occasion when as a small boy Hans Christian Andersen had himself watched a parade in which he saw the then King of Denmark Frederick VI. No doubt he had been told of the power and finery of the King, and he later recalled that when he saw the King he had expressed surprise that the King looked 'just like an ordinary human being'.

Following publication in 1837, 'The Emperor's New Clothes' became a staple of recitals in polite society, and soon became one of the most popular of fairy tales. Since then the story has been adapted as the subject of a ballet, a musical, film and television cartoons, and thematically aspects of the story have been applied to many satirical works. It has been translated into more than 100 languages, and its place as one of the great children's

tales has therefore been cemented. My aim is to show that it is also a great work for adults to learn from.

The ultimate irony in this story is that in attempting to conceal a supposed stupidity (by claiming to see clothes when none exist) the Emperor and his courtiers only succeed in confirming their real stupidity and gullibility. The ultimate irony in this story is that in attempting to conceal a supposed stupidity (by claiming to see clothes when none exist) the Emperor and his courtiers only succeed in confirming their real stupidity and gullibility

### **WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT IT ?**

In my introduction I suggested 'The Emperor's New Clothes' might be considered one of the great works of 19th century literature. Can that be defended? In some respects of course, it may be seen as an exaggeration. First of all this is a very short piece - just 1500 words in the English translation - which cannot bear comparison for literary merit with great novels. However brevity is not in itself a contraindication to greatness - one cannot judge greatness simply by the number of words written; otherwise no poetry could ever be considered as great. And Shakespeare himself said in 'Hamlet' that 'brevity is the soul of wit.'

It may also be argued that this is 'only' a trivial fairy tale for children. So what? There is no literary law which says that fairy tales cannot be as meritorious as serious stories for adults. Many look down their noses at such seemingly trivial pieces of fiction in the same way that some of the most pompous of classical actors may look down their nose at comedy dramas and classical musicians may look down their noses at popular music. They are wrong to do so.

But I would not of course recommend 'The Emperor's New Clothes' on the basis of its brevity or its target audience, and not even on the quality of writing. No. What sets the majority of revered works of literature apart from the rest is the thought provoking insight that they provide into the human condition. It is in this area that 'The Emperor's New Clothes' scores over other fairy tales which rather formulaically feature beautiful princesses, handsome princes, wicked witches and romance, and not much in the way of real perceptive comment. In this respect, 'The Emperor's New Clothes' also has more to recommend it in its few short paragraphs, than many an epic novel of action and adventure.

Some of these insights into human behavior will be analyzed in the next section.

**IN A FEW SHORT PARAGRAPHS THIS FAIRY TALE DEMONSTRATES HOW:**

The Emperor's pride makes it impossible for him to admit that he cannot see the clothes. Such an admission would deem him to be stupid. Pride makes him deny the truth of his own eyes. He ends up deceiving himself, because his pride matters more to him than the truth.

The message in the real world is that pride comes before a fall. The more pride one has, the more difficult it is to admit one's fallibility, and the more likely one is to allow that fallibility to influence one's judgement.

The Emperor's vanity and his overwhelming desire for the finest set of clothes ever to be fashioned, allows the con men to manipulate him. They can play on his vanity. They flatter him to deceive him into parting with his money.

The message in the real world is that vanity can lead one into making the worst of decisions and specifically the worst of purchases. Con artists play on people's vanity. And it's also how advertisers persuade consumers to spend money on expensive luxury items whose beauty may be illusory.

The folly of the unquestioning acceptance of 'facts' means that the truth is ignored. The Emperor and courtiers believe what the weavers tell them, and the crowd believe what their leader tells them, in spite of a total lack of hard evidence. The Emperor, the courtiers, the crowd - one after the other - they all assume that the existence of the clothes is unquestionable.

The message in the real world is that we should be critical and objective when examining 'facts'. Too many 'facts' which we hear are in reality merely beliefs and opinions (or even lies in the case of this story). The evidence needs to be very rigorously examined, and this alone should form the basis of our 'facts', or 'truth', even if it results in one arriving at a conclusion which is not popular or politically correct.

The Emperor's sense of self importance is boosted by having a bunch of obsequious 'yes men' around him. None of these 'yes men' is prepared to question the intelligence of his judgement and none of them is prepared to say or do anything which might damage their standing in their ruler's eyes.

The message in the real world is that gathering 'yes men' around him is the worst thing a leader can do, be it an emperor, a president, or a managing director. If the followers of a leader are unwilling or unable to tell him the truth, to stand up to him, to criticize when he is wrong, then detachment from reality grows and the leader's conceited self-belief

will soar to levels of self-deception. If no one tells him that he is sometimes wrong, he will believe he is always right.

The folly of behaving like sheep leads to the crowd living a collective lie. All the crowd can see no clothes and yet none of the crowd is willing to stand up for the truth. It's so much easier for everyone to just go with the consensus and conform, rather than to think for themselves.

The message in the real world is that the instinct to conform and agree with the majority, too often outweighs the courage to say what one actually believes. But history has shown that the majority is not always right. If people in the crowd refuse to stand up for the truth in the presence of a falsehood, then that way lies the descent into a sham society in which the truth is never spoken. The worst excesses of dictators have not come about when they have been forced to brutally defend against courageous opposition. The worst excesses have come when the dictator has been free to continue to live and escalate his lies because the majority - both in the inner circles of government (the 'courtiers') and in the general public (the 'crowd' lining the streets) - have failed to speak out through self-interest or through fear. (Think of the rise of Nazi Germany, and its culmination in the holocaust to see how true this is).

The folly of everyone in the story who claims to see beauty where no beauty exists, is the direct result of the collective, undue respect for supposed experts - fake weavers who enthuse over their 'wonderful' cloth, and the court officials who praise the invisible clothes.

The message in the real world is that just as in the story, we far too often believe that something must be good because an 'expert' tells us it's good. The best examples are in the fields of popular culture, fashion and modern art where an absolute absence of talent and beauty may be dressed up with 'image'. In the case of much popular culture and fashion, it should be clear that real talent is lacking - otherwise the culture or fashion would survive. Fashion, by definition, is transient, whilst true talent and beauty will be recognized forever. In the case of modern art, works which require little imagination in their conception and no talent in their creation, sell for \$1000s, because they are hyped with pretentious pseudo-intellectual babble (in much the same way as the clothes in the story are hyped by the weavers whose 'expert' words are believed).

The Emperor continues his parade even when the crowd are laughing at him. To turn back would be to admit that he cannot see the clothes (which would label him as 'stupid' according to the weavers) or that he realizes he has been fooled by the weavers (in which case he is gullible as well as stupid). Either way, he'd be deemed to be stupid. Instead he

continues blindly on pretending that everyone else is wrong and he is right - the most stupid response of all.

The message in the real world is that folly is only compounded by continuing with it. Too many people prefer to carry on blindly rather than admitting to a mistake and withdrawing gracefully and humbly. Many tragedies, even wars, have been caused by continuation with a course of action even after all the evidence has shown it to be misguided.

The child who speaks out when no one else dares to, is at first exposed to ridicule and scorn. But eventually truth wins the day as the crowd recognize the lie they've been a party to.

The message in the real world is that free thinking individuality and freedom from social conventions which may be rooted in folly can allow the truth to emerge even when no one else is initially prepared to admit it. This is so true even today. For the innocence of the child in the story, to the man who can see an injustice in society which others are blind to, all should have the confidence to speak out. If the individual is wrong, then at least he has shown guts, but if he is right, then people will gradually appreciate his rightness, and society will change for the better.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

If one looks behind the very simple language in the telling of this fairy tale, one finds a story of the failings of human beings - failings which have caused so much grief, hardship and sadness in the world. The vain, proud Emperor, unsuited to the job of high office, the pandering obsequious henchmen whose support is offered uncritically, and the crowd who fail to recognize truth and prefer to allow lies to continue because that is the easier option - we can recognize all of these in today's nations and societies. We recognize them, but we do not necessarily apply them to our own lives. There are undoubted lessons in 'The Emperor's New Clothes' which have not been learned by all. But they are lessons which make this the most intelligent of all fairy tales for both children and adults.

## **Background on College Theatre Improvisational Shows**

### **Originally written by Connie Canaday Howard for *Sleeping Beauty***

At COD, a variety of classes in Theatre are offered. One of our most highly demanded classes is Improvisational Acting. Each summer, for many years, we create a family show.

Generally, we start with a scenario created by the director and with which designers and director have been collaborating for weeks prior to auditions. Once cast, using the scenario as a basis, the work begins. Always, the scenario changes and flexes, based on the work in rehearsal; sometimes this change is subtle and other times it is dramatic.

At the core of the experience is practical application of improvisational skills to create characterizations and believable action (in the context of this ‘fantastical land’). Most often the basis of our use is children’s stories, but with new plot-lines, environments, and/or characters. Some titles in recent years are *Duck, Duck Goose*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* (including a hen and harp, and Giant on stilts), *The Emperor’s New Clothes* (including Prime Minister, Emperor, and Honest Girl) *Joe White and the Seven Dwarves* (including our central character of Joe, as opposed to Snow, White and female seven dwarves), and *True Confessions of the Wolf* (including the Wolf, Three Little Pigs, Boy Who Cried... and Little Red Riding Hood, all in a Courtroom presided over by Judge Mother Goose).

Also, in some way, we always include audience interaction. Characters mingle in the audience, ask for volunteers to help with certain segments of the show and quarry the audience for reactions. We also use dialogue, slang, and music from traditional children’s stories, as well as from pop culture. For instance, a recurring line in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, when the cow would not give milk was, “No milk” as opposed to the ad campaign of “Got Milk.” When the cow finally milked, the line was “Got Go-gurt,” as that was a new and hot snack item in pop culture.

## **Background on Improv.**

### **Originally created by Connie Canaday Howard for *Sleeping Beauty***

Though every director and instructor teaches with their own individual style, our ultimate goal is to teach believable action (within the realm of setting). We pull on aspects of both technical and method acting, and also rely on a woman commonly referred to as the mother of improvisation, Viola Spolin.

Born in 1906, in Chicago, “Viola Spolin trained initially (1924-26) to be a settlement worker, studying at Neva Boyd's Group Work School in Chicago. Boyd's innovative teaching in the areas of group leadership, recreation, and social group work strongly

influenced Spolin, as did the use of traditional game structures to affect social behavior in inner-city and immigrant children.

While serving as drama supervisor for the Chicago branch of the Works Progress Administration's Recreational Project (1939-1941), Spolin perceived a need for an easily grasped system of theater training that could cross the cultural and ethnic barriers within the WPA Project. Building upon the experience of Boyd's work, she responded by developing new games that focused upon individual creativity, adapting and focusing the concept of play to unlock the individual's capacity for creative self-expression. These techniques were later to be formalized under the rubric "Theater Games".

"The games emerged out of necessity," she has said. "I didn't sit at home and dream them up. When I had a problem [directing], I made up a game. When another problem came up, I just made up a new game". (Interview, Los Angeles Times, May 26, 1974).

In 1946 Spolin founded the Young Actors Company in Hollywood. Children six years of age and older were trained, through the medium of the still developing Theater Games system, to perform in productions. This company continued until 1955, when Spolin returned to Chicago to direct for the Playwright's Theater Club and subsequently to conduct games workshops with the Compass, the country's first professional, improvisational acting company.

From 1960 to 1965, still in Chicago, she worked with Paul Sills (her son) as workshop director for his Second City Company and continued to teach and develop Theater Games theory. As an outgrowth of this work, she published *Improvisation for the Theater* (1963), consisting of approximately two hundred and twenty games/exercises. It has become a classic reference text for teachers of acting, as well as for educators in other fields.

In 1965 she co-founded the Game Theater in Chicago, again working with Sills. Open only one evening a week, the theater sought to have its audiences participate directly in Theater Games, thus effectively eliminating the conventional separation between improvisational actors and audiences who watched them. The experiment achieved limited success, and the theater closed after only a few months.

In 1970 - 1971 Spolin served as special consultant for productions of Sills's Story Theater in Los Angeles, New York, and on television. On the West Coast, she conducted workshops for the companies of the Rhoda and Friends and Lovers television series and appeared as an actress in the Paul Mazursky film *Alex in Wonderland* (MGM 1970).

"In November 1975 the publication of the Theater Game File made her unique approaches to teaching and learning more readily available to classroom teachers; in 1976 she established the Spolin Theater Game Center in Hollywood, serving as its artistic director. In 1979 she was awarded an honorary doctorate by Eastern Michigan University, and until recently she has continued to teach at the Theater Game Center. In 1985 her new book, *Theater Games for Rehearsal: A Director's Handbook*, was published.

Spolin's Theater Games are simple, operational structures that transform complicated theater conventions and techniques into game forms. Each game is built upon a specific focus or technical problem and is an exercise that militates against the artifice of self-conscious acting.

The playing (acting) emerges naturally and spontaneously; age, background, and content are irrelevant. The exercises are, as one critic has written, "structures designed to almost fool spontaneity into being" (Review, *Film Quarterly*, Fall/Winter 1963).

By themselves, the games have liberating effect (accounting for their wide application in self-actualization contexts); within the theater context, each clearly fosters a facet of performance technique. There are games to free the actor's tension, games to "cleanse" the actor of subjective preconceptions of the meaning of words, games of relationship and character, games of concentration - in short, games for each of the area with which the growing actor is concerned.

Key to the rubric of Spolin games are the terms physicalization ("showing and not telling"), spontaneity ("a moment of explosion"), intuition ("unhampered knowledge beyond the sensory equipment - physical and mental"), audience ("part of the game, not the lonely looker - onners"), and transformation ("actors and audience alike receive the appearance of a new reality").

To achieve their purpose, Theater Games need only the rules of the game, the players (both actors and audience are considered to be players), and a space in which to play. Beyond the very tangible pleasures of "playing" which the games encompass, they also heighten sensitivity, increase self-awareness, and effect group and interpersonal communication. As a result, Spolin's games have developed currency beyond actor training, that is, in encountering techniques, self-awareness programs, and nonverbal communication studies.

Viola Spolin's systems are in use throughout the country not only in university, community, and professional theater training programs, but also in countless curricula concerned with educational interests not related specifically to theater.

The list of Spolin's guest lectures, demonstrations, and workshops is extensive. She has introduced her work to students and professionals in theater, elementary and secondary education, schools for gifted and talented programs, curriculum studies in English, religion, mental health, psychology, and in centers for the rehabilitation of delinquent children. She notes that "Theater Games are a process applicable to any field, discipline, or subject matter which creates a place where full participation, communication, transformation can take place" (*Los Angeles Times*, May 26 1974).

Exemplary of the broad recognition her work has received are a 1966 New England Theater Conference Award citing "contributions to theater, education, mental health, speech therapy, and religion," and the 1976 award by the Secondary School Theater Association of its highest honor, the Founders Award.

In her devotion to the development and application of Theater Games, Spolin has made a unique contribution to American theater. (Written by D.E. Moffit, [www.improvcomedy.org/hall/spolin1.html](http://www.improvcomedy.org/hall/spolin1.html))

### **Things to think about prior to performance:**

- What, if any, is the importance of family entertainment?
- How do you expect improvisational theatre to differ from scripted work?
- If an actor asks you a question, and your interaction fuels the performance, how will that make you feel?
- What makes a live performance different than watching TV or a film?

### **Things to watch for in performance:**

- Why, and how, is the audience directly involved in the production?
- What are the “universal themes” that are reinforced?
- Was the production accessible for young as well as old?
- How did the repeated elements contribute to your understanding and your experience?
- What are the lessons communicated by each of the three stories?
- What do the two - bridge games - communicate about perception and imagination?

### **Things to think about after the performance:**

- What were the major themes of this production?
- Was this production accessible to the entire family? If so, how?
- What did you take away from the production experience?
- What were your favorite elements in the production and why?

### **Other Analysis “Tools”:**

- What happens in the very last moments of the play? Certainly, the last few minutes, but, more importantly, the last thirty seconds? In that time, what happens or is said, and what does that say about what the play is ‘about?’
- And what is the significance of the title? Why did we decide that this was the most appropriate title for this piece?

### **Resources**

Canaday Howard, Connie. “Background on College Theatre Improvisational Shows,” *Sleeping Beauty Study Guide*, 2004.

Canaday Howard, Connie. “Background on Improv,” *Sleeping Beauty Study Guide*, 2004.

[dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com). "Expectation." Web. 25, June, 2016.

Weiss, Jodi. "What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?" Web. 15, October 15, 2015.

Literature Review "Hans Christian Andersen and 'The Emperor's New Clothes'; A Lesson for the 21st Century." Web. 20 June, 2014.

Moffit, D.E.. The Improv Page. Web. 1, June 2004.

**The running time for our production is 45 minutes. There is no intermission.**  
*Moustache Tales* is appropriate for all ages. Audience participation is appreciated and children are welcome to sit on the floor in front of the action.

In addition to the performances at the McAninch Arts Center, this performance is touring around in our community. Please join us at any of these locations! For more information about coming to a show below, please contact that venue.

Thursday, June 30 at 3:30p Early Childhood Center, College of DuPage

Friday, July 1 at 12 noon Bloomingdale Park District

Thursday, July 7 at 6p Wheaton Public Library

Friday, July 8 at 7p LaGrange Library

Saturday, July 9 at 10a DuPage Children's Museum, Naperville

Saturday, July 9 at 3p Cantigny, Wheaton

Wednesday, July 13 at 2p Lisle Library

Thursday, July 14 at 10a Winfield Public Library

Friday, July 15 at 7p Helen M Plum Memorial Library, Lombard

Saturday, July 16 at 2p Glen Ellyn Public Library

Saturday, July 16 at 5p MAC Pavilion

Sunday, July 17 at 5p MAC Pavilion

**We encourage you to view Grease in order to take advantage of our repertory experience (July 7-July 17)! College Theater's Box Office 630/942-4000**

Thursday, July 7, 7 p.m.

Friday, July 8, 7p.m.

Saturday, July 8, 7 p.m.

Sunday, July 9, 7 p.m.

Thursday, July 14, p.m.

Friday, July 15, 7 p.m.

Saturday, July 16, 7 p.m.

Sunday, July 17, 7 p.m.