

THESIS

**The Enchiridion: A Multi Media Handbook to LARP Critical Literacies, Communities and  
Educational Methodologies**

**Phase 2 of 5**

**CREATING, PRESERVING AND TRANSFORMING LITERACIES**

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“Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices; he enthralls and overpowers . . . he transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind and evokes in us all these beneficent forces that ever and anon have enabled humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night.” - Carl Jung

As a youth, I grew up in a strange world. My mother is a psychologist, involved in social justice, community-based work and a college professor at various four-year colleges. As a young child, would sometimes sit in on her classes and draw in the back corner of the classroom as she either taught psychology or was working with other professors to help develop courses and her other work as a college professor.. It was here that I learned the working of the mind and the will of the human being, how it was the same or different from animals, as well as how to ask why things are.

My father is a naturalist, a philosopher and patron of the arts. He would take me into nature, theater, and art museums alike, He would explain the world through a variety of lenses and ask me my thoughts about the subjects. After, we would end the day with meditations, and readings from Lord of the Rings or Carlos Castenada. Here I came to know myself through the lens of art and culture.

My grandmother worked at Plymouth Plantation as one of the featured actors. This living history museum founded in 1947 attempts to replicate the original settlement of the Plymouth Colony established in the early 17th century. Here I learned that a person or group of persons could transform the world we know into an alternative world, creating a space where the unthinkable could come to life.

My great Aunt Betty Caulfield, was a published astrologer and tarot card reader who

would explain to me the literacies of images, sound, movement and color. From her I learned that there are methods of communication and possibilities beyond our imaginations, that our subconscious is a powerful fertile tool and the language of the world of our dreams.

My grade school and middle school education consisted of public schools and summers filled with a variety of private fine art lessons and natural ecological science camps. In between art lessons and family camping trips, I attended Outward Bound. Outward Bound's mission is to change lives through challenge and discovery. Their vision is to create a more resilient and compassionate world by inspiring citizens to be resilient and compassionate. This is where I was exposed to the idea of destination experiential education and self-transformation.

When I became a teen, I invested deeply in martial arts and eastern philosophies as well as explored becoming a public visual and performing artist. This exposed me to cultural phenomenon like Burning Man and its inspired events as well as a DIY (do-it-yourself) and arts integrated culture. I would pick various work for accessibility to tools or materials to support my art ventures. As hard as I tried to not be my mother, I eventually found myself being a natural at teaching and working with community groups.

This brings me to where I am today. I have been working with after school programs and enrichment education for the past 10 years. Previous to this, I worked at private schools as an interdisciplinary art teacher. I also worked at two different alternative education outfits teaching science and technology through the arts, as well as operating private and group lessons on the weekends on personal transformation and empowerment through the arts.

The last decade, I have been developing new platforms to construct scaffolding to create

and implement new education models and methods. This development has been hand-in-hand with my education at Lesley. As I began my Masters in Community Education course at Lesley in Spring 2011, I have been working independently with my theories, testing them, as I construct curricula and new ways to integrate the arts into education through communities.

After a decade of research and development, I have honed in on the current models of education and what needs to be created, preserved, and transformed in order to move forward and create up-to-date education and communication technologies. When I talk about technologies, I'm talking about social change and cultural transforming technologies. Imagine if you will a day and time when reading and writing was new technology. Some people were apprehensive at first, but we know today, this were not a kills to be ignored. This was to become and still is our world's leading literacy in all forms of data. No one knowing what they know now would have ignored and put aside this information, this skill set and the doors it would open up for future possibilities for not only the empowerment of the self , but cultured the world. These are the kind of technologies I dream of.

I believe that new literacies can transform how we see ourselves, each other and our purpose as a species. I believe the technology I present here is part of the onset of such a technology, a literacy that is built upon all that we know and have created as a species. In short, this literacy is an immersive narrative experiential education model. This model is based upon the platform of enactments, live action role play, integrated arts and multicultural and multiple intelligence lenses, in addition to community scaffolding design for members to have agency.

I was never fond of the American education system as it was presented to me. It always

seemed like data was being compromised into a kind of high output, low quality, fast turnaround service dispensary, like fast food. It is convenient, but it is not as nutritious or wholesome and does not fuel beneficial health as well.. If education is food for the mind, so to speak, then it would be much better suited presented upon a beautiful dish of greens, freshly made and delicious, full of beneficial health and wellness fuel substances while being exciting and fun to eat. Whether it was public schools, private schools, workshops, afterschool programing or even weekend getaways, I found the youth and the leaders typically not fully engaged, passionate and inspired--not just with traditional subjects such as history and STEM, but n the arts as well Youth just were not fully present and passionate in the classroom. I used to think it was the physical environment, the classrooms, the school, or the individual teachers. However, I don't think that any of these is where the core issue in my lack of educational interests and engagement stemmed from, but they were merely symptoms. I wanted to find a solution, a way to make education more engaging and draw more value from it.

K. Robinson (2006), world-renowned education and creativity expert and recipient of the RSA's Benjamin Franklin award, asked the question "...do our schools kill creativity"? Robinson says, "... intelligence is, it's distinct.." and "...Picasso once said...the problem is to remain an artist as we grow up...that we don't grow into creativity, we grow out of it. Or rather, we get educated out of it." Robinson speaks to three different attributes of our intelligence and ability to learn and do. "One, it's diverse. We think about the world in all the ways that we experience it. We think visually, we think in sound, and we think kinesthetically. We think in abstract terms, we think in movement. Secondly, intelligence is dynamic. If you look at the interactions of a human brain, as we heard from a number of presentations, intelligence is

wonderfully interactive. The brain is not divided into compartments. In fact, creativity -- which I define as the process of having original ideas that have value -- more often than not, comes about through the interaction of different disciplinary ways of seeing things.”

The data is that there were no public systems for education, as we regard them today, before the 19th century. Education public systems were born to meet the needs of industrialism based upon two core ideas. One, that the most useful subjects for work are at the top of a one up culture. From this trajectory of education for industrialism, we can imagine that young students of this system were steered away from subjects that were inspiring or desirable based on the principle that one would never get a job doing that. According to this approach, subjects such as music, movement, and art were not as useful. The message was and still is in most cases, you won't be an artist and make a useful living. In addition this education system was developed during a world engulfed in the industrial revolution (Robinson, 2006). These models are outdated and no longer serve us well today. It's time to explore new literacies for education and communication, which ones we want to keep and are serving and what ones no longer serve us and can be let go.

I began to question how we gather data, internalize it, as well as express it. I wanted to understand how we communicate. What works, what doesn't, and how can we improve it--the art of information, if you will. With so many options out there for educational methodologies I was overwhelmed with options. I required a tool to help me discover what I was looking for and a compass to find my way, a compass constructed on the building blocks of humanity itself. What became vital for me was to look at morality, ethics, and quality of life to find a foothold to understand my inquiry. I kept coming back to one surfacing answer when facing the allegorical

mirror of my investigation. The query is “what is essential here in education and communication”? The answer that emerged was to look for new literacies for new educational methods based upon inspired transformational narrative experiences.

I have come to believe through my research that imagination and play are paramount for the human experience. These qualities enrich communities that create exciting and awesome experiences. These experiences are the very thing that foster a prosperous and well balanced life with wholesome human interactions. My journey began in my day-to-day work. I began to look at new ways to interact with youth, teens and adults through community and personal empowerment. I wanted my education to be inspirational, exciting and show something to each of us every day that uplifts our hearts with joy and gratitude and transforms our minds. Think of what would be the most fantastic place to go today. For example, perhaps to a waterfall, skydiving, or walking a national park with someone you love. That feeling, that inspiration, or what my old martial arts instructor Kenneth Proctor called, bring in spirit, what is that? That is an excited being ready for the day and full of possibility and wonder--the ideal mental and emotional space for learning, reflecting and expressing data, resulting in optimal brain and body function.

With my background in fine arts, music, movement, theater, teaching, gaming and event production, in addition to the last ten years of experiences and education of theory and practice through methods I have discover at Lesley University, Transformational Workshops and my own research, I find three themes that keep emerging in all ideal educational methodologies that create exponential resorts. I called it the *Peanut, Butter Jelly Sandwich of Ideal Educational Methods* or the *Trinity Elements of Ideal Education*. By bringing these models and methods

together, we can see a new platform emerge for education and information. These three themes are as follows.

One, education is most effective when presented in a multi-sensory, multi intelligence, fully engaging platform. This is the peanut butter. It's wholesome and empowering. This is what I like to call the *Immersive Experiential Arts Education*. The key to this element is that integrated arts are an outstanding platform for data. Think about if for a moment. If I'm learning with all my senses, am I not learning with all of the optimal data input I can receive? We all learn differently. We need different stimuli to engage information. An immersive environment covers this for everyone. No one is excluded because they did not get the literacies they needed to be part of the community or classroom.

In 1983 Dr. Howard Gardner, professor of education at Harvard University, developed what he coined the multiple intelligence theory. This theory suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, is far too limited when considering the capabilities of the human mind and body. These intelligences have been categorized as Linguistic, Logic, Kinesthetic, Spatial, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, and, Naturalistic Intelligence. Gardner mentions the some of us are naturally more inclined towards one intelligence over others. Armstrong (1994) tells us in his book *Multiple intelligences in the Classroom* that "Gardner suggests that intelligences are galvanized by participation in some kind of culturally valued activity and that the individual's growth in such an activity follows a developmental pattern" (p. 9). Furthermore Armstrong tells us that without considering the full spectrum of our intelligence through lenses such as Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, we are holding back are very capabilities of our intelligence. What this tells me is that we cannot for convenience, or, the lack

or training of our educational leaders, remain in an educational paradigm where we are limiting the access of intelligence and information. This would be like training to use dialup internet access to watch Netflix today. It just is not going to happen at all or if it does, it is extremely inefficient.

Wernick's (2014) *Empowerment Among Lgbtqq Youth* shows us that through embodied experiential learning in a community-based theater, when used in the context of larger change-making strategy, can be effectively used as a means to develop empowerment and, subsequently, healthy development. The process of using drama for literacy on a multi-sensory level was "uniquely situated to cultivate empowerment through the process of activity affecting changes in school and community" (p. 849). In addition, theater environments create transgressive secure community containers that embody a space that is a critical tool to recalling physical and emotional memory (Newkirk, 2011, p. 2). If we can tackle extremely difficult subjects such as identity for LGBTQQ students in high school settings and get results that are exponential and positive, think what we can do with other information and multiple perspective analysis.

Linda Nathan (2013) in her lecture *Why Art Matters* illustrates that we can go beyond the basic levels of learning and get empowerment. "Art can transform students' lives, in ways that are unprecedented, in ways that have the potential to change the very society in which we live." "Artistic identity, that blends their reputation in school with their reputation outside of school, through the arts, making creative work as an actor as a sculptor, as a painter, as a dancer, these are the kinds of things, that give young people a chance, to really develop a vision of self".

Nathan informs us that the best vehicle for education is an interdisciplinary arts method where we have arts integrating as a form of communication.

When considering these touchstones of progressive education models, we can see that the most efficient way to teach in a community or classroom setting is to engage all of our senses using all of the arts and all of our intelligences. This includes the use of narrative to engage students and get them excited. This is what I call the Immersive Experiential Arts Education platform. It means that the classroom becomes a multimedia and multisensory environment, addressing a wide variety of educational models in unison.

Also, education engages students most effectively for learning and retention through enactments and social interactions that inspire personal and social change. This is the Jelly, it is exciting and fun. I like to call this *Learning through Play*. If you think back to all the tests and papers from middle school, high school, even college, how much have you retained? Of course this data is the building block of information and complex ideas we have today but why not be able to recall them and make more of this time spent? Have ever been to the electricity show at the Museum of Science in Boston MA, called *Lighting*. It is where indoor bolts produced by the world's largest air-insulated Van de Graaff generator spark exciting explorations of lightning, conductors, insulators, electricity, magnetism, and storm safety. Would you remember it if you saw it at three years old, seven years old, fourteen years old, twenty one years old, or if it was yesterday, because it was scary, fun, exciting and exhilarating? Most importantly, would you remember what you saw, heard, felt and smelled this experience. It was immersive, had a narrative and was fun and exciting.

Just a fun fact, the origins of the word school in old English mean "place of instruction," which comes from the Latin schola "intermission of work, leisure for learning; learned conversation, debate; lecture; meeting place for teachers and students" from Greek skhole "spare time, leisure, rest ease; idleness; that in which leisure is employed; learned discussion" (School, 2017). The original notion is "leisure," which passed to "otiose discussion" (in Athens or Rome the favorite or proper use for free time), then "place for such discussion." The Latin word was widely borrowed (Old French escale, French école, Spanish escuela, Italian scuola, Old High German scuola, German Schule, Swedish skola, Gaelic sgiol, Welsh ysgol, Russian shkola). Translated in Old English as larhus, literally meaning "lore house". My point being, is that school has to do with leisure which we in the western world use as time to have fun and do things we like. The idea is that we learn best when we are not overly stressed and that this is the origin of education. In addition, the lore house of old was a place where narratives were expressed through art based literacies. I would be more or less going to see a theatre show to learn exciting things about my culture and the world.

In Campbell's (1988) *Power of Myth* he speaks to Jung's theories on story and narrative. "Without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of the imagination is incalculable". Jung is speaking to the origin of the evolution of our species and that imagination and lay created and solved our biggest and best technological advancements. That is was this very brain function that enables new and amazing ideas to form and find solutions to conflicts at hand. So people like to look down on play especially in our culture where the "early bird gets the worm". We Are driving to compete with each other in our western industrialized global economy. However, consider this is where the best ideas are

coming from to shape the world and bring change that is lasting and prosperous for all. These concepts are not born from frustration, hate or fear. They come from someplace entirely different. That space is from creativity, collaboration and critical skills.

Mark Turner (1996) in his book *The Literary Mind : The Origins of Thought and Language* also speaks to how critical the methods of fictional storytelling. Mark says that story is the base principle of the mind. Most of our experiences, our knowledge, and our thinking is organized as stories. The mental scope of the story is magnified by projection--one story helps us make sense of another. The projection of one story onto another is parable. Clearly how we store and recall data is dictated by how we perceive and relate to data on a mental, emotional and physical level.

Wilhelm (2012) in his book *Deepening Comprehension with Action Strategies* speaks to the power of play through classroom theatrical play strategies he calls enactments. “Enactments can be used in any curricular area or disciplinary study. Through enactments, you can highlight and teach strategies of reading and learning, and help students create interpretation of text and data sets that reverberate with artistic, aesthetic, and metaphorical meanings” (p. 22).

For example, kindergartners and elementary school students who use enactment as a lens to understand stories are told or read and come to know not only the narrative of the story, but are also able to express important details of plot. These details include character, word definitions and meanings in context, story sequence, the relationship of all the characters and cause and effect of actions and choices (Adomat, 2012, p. 344).

Here we find that we can gain wider perspectives and deeper understanding through the functions of play and enactment with any subject taught traditionally in school. Students exposed to Wilhelm's methods look forward to attending class with enthusiasm and retain more data than students learn by traditional methods. The classroom becomes a place of exploration of the self and others while developing multiple perspectives on the subjects presented. This relaxed and playful space allows for these perspectives to develop within the students' understanding of the subject and result in students being able to take risks, face fears and overcome challenges. In this method of education students are just not learning and applying data to answer test questions, they are internalizing this data and using it as life skills: collaboration, critical thinking and creativity to name a few of these skills.

Some may say that play and pretend are dangerous because they create a sense of escapism, or lack of "having your feet on the ground". I would also agree that being grounded and centered in your ideas and manifestations is critical to success and happiness in our lives. However, let's not undermine the power of fantasy or fiction and how it is a matrix for new ideas. In Patricia Leavy's (2015) *Method Meets Art* we discover that neuroscience and literature has implication for why fiction might be a particularly effective pedagogical tool. Leavy further leads us to believe that fiction creates higher brain functions that develop long lasting enriching benefits that can go on for days or weeks. Leavy furthermore speaks to these methods as ways to connect with audiences on a deeper, more emotional levels. This connection may evoke compassion, empathy and sympathy as well as understanding (p. 13). Play and enactments develop literacy skills through imagination and play, helping the participant to explore

themselves and others by developing deep personal relationships to the context of the story and experiences associated with it (Adomat, 2012, p. 349).

What we are finding is that play is the fuel for the fires of imagination and new ideas, perspectives and breakthroughs. And these breakthroughs are critical more than ever for the political and environmental issues we face today as a nation and a global community. In the 1980s, an array of governmental, academic, nonprofit, and corporate entities conducted considerable research to “identify key personal and academic skills and competencies they determined were needed for the current and next generation”. US Secretary of Education created the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1981. The organization found after examining the quality of education in the United States a situation that they called, “A Nation at Risk” and activated The Imperative for Educational Reform of 1983. Their key findings were that educational reform should focus on the goal of creating a *Learning Society*. (21st Century Skills, 2017).

In Bellanca’s (2010) *21st Century Skills: Thinking How Students learn*, we are faced with three hard facts. One, the world is changing from when we started creating educational and governmental models. Two, US schools and students have not adapted to these changes. I ask myself, what would Darwin have to say about this; probably nothing good. Three, that the US has no clear purpose or direction on how to secure our future. Bellanca illustrates that based upon Gardner’s findings that 21st century skills are an array of higher-order intelligences, qualifications, and educational methods that have been qualified as being required for success in 21st century society and workplaces by educators, business leaders, academics, and governmental agencies. In addition, these skills are linked with deeper learning, founded upon

the platform of mastering skills such as analytic reasoning, complex problem solving, and teamwork. Other skills include, enthusiasm for learning, application of learning, examination, inquiry, critical thinking and reasoning, communication, cultural understanding, social and environmental, understanding and implications, technology, as well as the arts.

Emotional intelligences through immersive narratives exemplifies students to find “a context for more sophisticated comprehension and the creation of elaborated meaning” of the story and data they are receiving. As students, they are gaining “multiple perspectives and viewpoints on stories”. We can see these students who explore emotional intelligence through immersive narratives tackling themes with deep comprehension in regards to “personal loss, exploring the wider world, belonging/loneliness, finding love and friendship, adoption, moving to a new home, importance of toys/object of comfort, acceptance of others” (Adomat, 2012, p. 348).

Using Wilhelm and Leavy’s methods, students as young as elementary school are developing 21st century skills. This catalyst for change is found through guided enactments and social interactions. It is through play and leisurely approach in a classroom setting that cultivates intelligences that create solutions not only for our personal success and happiness in our lives but for our world as well. I like to call this environmental element in the classroom, *Learning through Play*. The core to this idea is create a space from joy for inspiration to spark imagination. From this trajectory and perspective working students and or community will discover great things happening because they are all participating in finding solutions and teaching each other.

Education thrives best in environments where the container supports the community through growth and change. When students have agency in the classroom, the curriculum and a voice of their choice, they are invested in the process and the governance of the classroom and educational curriculum. This requires a guide, even be a guide book, for reference that the classroom or community follows. This guide serves as how we think of traditional teachers in the western world. It is our chalkboard and sound board for systems, values and beliefs. This is the bread in our peanut butter and jelly sandwich metaphor. It's what I like to call the *Inquiry Based Community with Agency*. Consider for a moment if you had a say in a word how your job functioned. What role does it play in the bigger picture? What if your needs and wants were part of your work's mission statement? How would this make you feel? For most of us, this would make us feel pretty good. This is just the tip of the iceberg of what I'm talking about here.

Steven Leavy's (2008) *Power of Audience* he presents us to the methodologies of "Inquiry Based Learning", or "Embodied Learning", where participants have agency in the educational process. In addition to "Expeditionary Learning" where the adventure is the key element to unlocking education, "the most effective way to engage these students in learning is to create an authentic audience, giving them a sense that someone else (besides teachers and parents) cares about their work. They need to have a vision of a product that matters. They need to learn content and develop skills to complete the product. One of the first things we consider when we design curriculum in Expeditionary Learning Schools is how students can apply knowledge and skills in creating a product that will serve an authentic community need" (p. 75).

Leavy not only speaks to the elements of adventure and play here, he also shows us that we can development of 21st century skills starting with building the classroom with the methods

in Power of Audience. Leavy introduces us to an educational model in action where the classroom environment focuses on teaching students leadership and cooperation skills as they build their own educational systems by taking agency and voice within in it. The student or community member no longer is doing, what the other has prescribe to them, but instead, what the collective “we” has collectively agreed upon.. The student now becomes the teacher and is invested in the entire classroom or community experience.

Another pioneer of entrusting in the participants to help lead and shape the community is Augusto Boal, legendary Brazilian political playwright and creator of Image Theater and Theater for the Oppressed. Augusto had his biggest breakthrough when he learned to stop showing the audience what Boal believed they needed to hear, and, began to ask them what they wanted to see. Rozansky (2009) speaks to Boal’s research: demonstrating that the participants of any age could “engage in high-level, critical understanding of characters’ oppression. Image Theater mediated their critical literacy. Incidentally, they also demonstrated appropriate reading skills and strategies as they reread text and made inferences” (p. 178).

Vygotsky states that all learning is social. The art of “Enactments give teachers a way to “socialize” meaningfully with students-engaging confronting, and challenging them, so they will outgrow their current selves and learn new strategies, stances, conceptual knowledge, and ways of being”. In addition, “Enactments give students a means of learning together” (Wilhelm, 2016, p. 16).

Through Leavy, Boal and Vygotsky we find that the structure of top down, or pyramid schemes for leadership and education are a thing of the past. This traditional model of western

education just doesn't work when addressing 21st century skills and creating community structure that will be prosperous. In this model we all need to have our voices heard and have agency in the trajectory of our shared experience. This creates a container where the participants are inspired and using critical thinking skills. I like to call this kind of environment an Inquiry Based Community with Agency. This is the bread that holds the symbolic sandwich together as well as adds foundational ingredients for education and change. Students are encouraged to ask why and seek new methods, enshrine methods that continually serve throughout the ages, and ,making good use of outdated approaches by finding why they don't work and making further new discoveries from this trajectory.

To recap the three ingredients or elements are as follows. One, Immersive Experiential Arts Education; it just works when you use all five sense at once in unison. Two, Learning through Play; it's Just Better for the Goal, Retention and the Experience. Three, Inquiry Based Community with Agency; we will invest more if we are all have a voice of our choice. The combination of these Trinity Elements creates a new literacy technology, namely a synthesized world of multi literacy, multi lensed platforms for communication and education. With this technological platform we get a place to try new identities, try new social skills, and a place to challenge our own ideas and beliefs. This allows a safe and experimental way to make new discoveries while practicing 21st century intelligences.

This combination of methods was revealed to me through my work with an immersive narrative literacy called live action role play. This literacy was first shown to me from my middle school arts students during an after school season of Dungeons and Dragons. The theory of *Power of Audience* was my trajectory point. I was invited to check out this thing called LARP

which was “Dungeons and Dragons come to life” as my students called it. I was so excited and as an artist and martial artist, I had always dreamed of such a fantastic world. However, I had no idea what that even meant, so let me try to explain it here.

Imagine you could walk into your favorite book, play, TV show or movie. What if you could become your favorite character in this story? Then you discover that you can control all the decisions, actions, directions, of this character, being able to influence the plot and outcome of the story in this fantastic world, living as they do. What would you do? Who would you become? Now imagine you're there with close friends and best friends yet to be. You are all going on this amazing adventure together, to face hopes and fears and find the secrets you have always been looking for, your own voice.

Lizzie Stark (2012) famous for her book *Leaving Mundania* tells us that “A larp, or live action role play, is similar to a theatrical play performed with no audience or script. One or more directors called game masters, or GM’s, organize everyone, select the form of the performance, and decides whether the setting resembles, for example, Lord of the Rings, Hamlet, or Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Game Masters have many jobs. They create plot obstacles for the player characters, challenges for the players to solve during the game. They also collect props and set the scene either by describing it verbally or by dressing the space. Sometimes the game masters write out characters and cast them, other times the players write their own characters. The outcome of every larp remains in question, as the characters improvise all their lines and use their wiles to solve the plot laid out for them. In all things the game master is the final authority,

the god of the little world, capable of decide who wins the cowboy shout out in the cinematic scene, if there is any dispute, and whether the found trinket is magical or merely petty” (p. 10).

Live action role playing, or LARP, or, larp, is a collaborative and interactive community arts that allows the participants to plunge themselves fully into different worlds or, even universes. With an array of costuming, props and scenography, this setting becomes the backdrop for a unique and astounding experience. A live action role-playing game is a form of role-playing game or enactments, where the participants physically act out their characters' actions. The players pursue their characters' goals within a fictional setting represented by the real world, while interacting with one another in character. The outcome of player actions may be mediated by game rules, or determined by consensus between players. Collaboration is a working together to complete tasks that produce a desired result...These folks are together for the sake of relationship and community” (LARPing.org, 2016).

The first larps were run in the late 1970s, inspired by role-playing games and genre fiction. The activity gained international popularity during the 1980s, and has diversified into wide variety of styles. Play may be very game-like, or may be more concerned with dramatic or artistic expression. The fictional genres used vary greatly, from realistic modern or historical settings to fantastic or futuristic eras. Production values are sometimes minimal, but can also involve elaborate venues and costumes. Larps range in size from small private events lasting a few hours to huge public events with thousands of players lasting for several days. (Wilson, 2009) The styles of larp have been broken down to three different general genres of larp.

The first genre is Adventure LARPs, Demonstrative LARPs, or, Boffer LARPs (mock combat with light touch foam weapons). These larps embody a community going on an adventure together (or just engaging in LARP style mock combat) that can be a single weekend or even a campaign setting that takes place over a number of years. The themes are typical based on the monomyth embracing themes of heroic call, separation, the unknown, temptations, self-discovery and return (Campbell, 1988).

The second are Parlor LARPs, Theater LARPs, or, Salon LARPs. The goal of these larps is more about the emotional engagement of the participants. In some cases there is no true goal to be obtained other than having experiences with others that you would not in your every day to day life. Creating a world for emotional literacies and facing challenges outside of our comfort zones and know scope of what is possible. These larps can and have been used to address difficult conflicts from history or modern events. Exploring through the literacies of larp is what does it mean to be human and what insights can we gain from being literally in each other's shoes.

The third genre are, Live Steel LARP's, such as the Society for Creative Anachronism or SCA. "These LARPs can range anywhere from being a tournament, for individuals or teams, to thousands of players taking part in a war. Their way of fighting differs from other LARPs because they use real weapons and real armor. An example of a Live Steel LARP is the Oxford Renaissance Festival" (George, 2017).

All larps focus on a variety of elements of the immersive world, from story to skill to craft. The only real difference is in the tools used to create the fictional world. One of the biggest

differences is the situational environment or platform from which the larp is built. Most larpers agree that there are two distinct factors. George tells us that larper Mike Young divides resolution systems on two axis which show the extremes to which LARPs can be categorized based on what they provide their players with to complete objectives. Mike calls this The Mechanics Axis and the Interactive Axis. The mechanical axis is made up of Live Combat Larp on one end of the spectrum and Simulated Larp on the other.

Live Combat or Lightest Touch Combat uses Boffers. Boffers are a larp term for foam simulated weapons. It is a world with the option for battle and consequences. “This adds a high degree of immersion, however the closer you come to player abilities and the character abilities the player is playing, the more constrained you become about the types of characters you can have and the genres you can represent” (George, 2017). I may want to be an Olympic athlete who can jump over a dozen enemies, but how do I represent that in a game if I can even jump over a trash barrel.

Simulated Combat on the other end of the mechanical axis is based role play, dice, cards, or other similar methods to resolve conflict and create character actions. Although this method allows for more flexibility than live combat, it is meddlesome because it removes participants away from the action. This removes the player from having an immersive experience.

The Interaction Axis, as Young explains, is about the Player versus Environment or Player versus Player. The ‘Player versus Environment’ is commonly an adventure style of play. The players tend to be a united as a whole under one community goal while being faced with the conflicts from bad guys, monsters, puzzles, and traps provided by the game masters and staff of

the event. The “Player versus Player is a game environment where the players are not united and their motivations as well as the narrative of the game focus on the interactions between the players” (George, 2017). For example there may be a larp where one group is playing a suppressed community during World War II while the other group is playing the suppressors or another group is politically stuck in the middle of this conflict.

Although there is a large array of larps than can come from this axis, the three mentioned before seem to be the ones that the members of larp communities gravitate towards most often. Larp in short tells a story through drama. It is an immersive narrative literacy. There is no audience per se, as the participants serve as their own audience. Players behave as they believe their characters would in this world. Larp happens in real time as well and has improvised dialogue. It is an open-ended story in that the participants write it as they react and reflect to information that is presented. What this means is that larping is a perfect medium for developing inquiry based communities with agency, for 21 century skills, while implementing immersive experiential art based education through multi intelligence scaffolding. The history of larp and its origins relays just why this immersive narrative literacy could be the problem solver we have all been looking for.

Stark (2012) suggests that the origins of the game maybe deeper in our history than we may suspect. She calls “this practice to pretend is ancient and pervasive” (p. 31) . Stark informs us that the Romans held mock battles. The medieval British held a “*Feast of the Fools*”, where master and servant roles and relationships were played in reverse. The Italians in the 16th century held a traditional *Commedia Dell'Arte*, where groups of improvisational actors engaged in comedy, city wide (p. 31). In 1510 King Henry the VIII dressed up as a rogue with some of

his friends and broke into Queen Katherine's room, scared her and did a dance for a gasp. Weeks later Henry held many different role plays impersonating people from different cultures. In 1515 after seeing Robin Hood on the short trip, Henry held a festival in the woods with over 200 people role playing Robin Hood, creating a cultural phenomenon (Stark, 2012, p. 32). Decades later 'Queen Elizabeth I presided over some extensive larp like entertainment. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, threw the queen an unbelievable and extravagant larp like event when she visited him at Kenilworth Castle in 1575. It cost him at least £17,000, which at that time was roughly enough money to field an army of 1,000 for a year. "Proof that people - even kings - have long wanted to live the mythic and heroic lives that escape a mundane human's grasp" (p. 32).

Stark updates her findings in her online article *Live Action Role Play's Rich Tudor History* (2012) when she explains that "the only true traceable history of larp began in the year I was born, 1977. A young college student and J.R.R. Tolkien, author of Lord of the Rings, fan named Brian Wiese started a series of costumed mock combats games called *Hobbit Wars*. This later became the famous LARP mentioned in Dragon magazine that blow up the larp world called *Dagorhir*". This marks the begging for most larp historians.

However, if we look closely enough at the literacies of larp and their methods we can even look further back than recorded history into the very traditions of our humanity, exploring and understanding the world together. Many indigenous practices included costumes props and simulated staged experts to express complex ideas, traditions, history, theory, initiation and transformational experiences through immersive storytelling. Specifically, many of these

literacies were focused on coming to age initiations. They served as a multi literacy to teach the more complex lessons of becoming an accountable member of society.

I was always jealous that I never had any formal processing for myself as a teen. I got a driver's license, I could go to war, buy alcohol, read adult literature and participate in adult entertainment. These experiences are not really an enlightening process when it comes to being a functioning member of society and a community leader. So I began to ask what was I missing that a thousand of years of humanity received. Was there some kind of embodied experience, some sort of secret data that as a culture we had removed from our traditions as we removed the existence of traditions from others as the western world progressed in global presence? Was my European whiteness blinding me for literacies that I could not even imagine? What was I missing? Was it critical to my happiness, development and awareness as a human being part of the organism of our species.

Interestingly enough, shortly after I developed and implemented methods to use larp in enrichment after school environments I began to study indigenous cultures and their methodologies for initiation. I studied with ManKind Project, a global network of nonprofit charitable and educational organizations, with the stated goal: "MKP supports men to "wake up, grow up, and show up" to build healthy male role models. MKP uses First Nation practices as their core form of literacy with themes from Jung.

I also worked with and trained with East Coast Village, an inclusive and diverse community that honors our connection to the Ancestors and Nature. Dedicated to empowering people through the practices of indigenous African spirit technologies as brought to the West by

Dagara Elder with Ann Sosua and Maledom Some. These teaching focus on the literacies of embodies elements and connect with the earth and nature on a deep profound level while claiming your birthright through one's ancestors.

I also read the works and workshop notes of Alisa Starkweather. My wife is one of her students in her second year of training. Starkweather is the founder of many powerful women's initiatives; the Red Tent Temple Movement, Daughters of the Earth Gatherings, the Women's Belly and Womb Conferences, the women's Mystery School, Priestess Path Apprenticeship and co-founder of the international women's initiation, Women in Power; Initiating Ourselves to the Predator Within. Starkweather's discoveries in Shadow Work amazed me and provided the tools for real deep and profound transformational experiences into my immersive experiential literacy vocabulary.

What I found was communities committed to healing and helping each other and the world. Through these ancient customs passed down orally I discovered a world where old wounds from the past could be healed. Where victims could become powerful healers and leaders. Where perpetrators could transformed the position of their psyche and find happiness in this life and forgiveness. I began to see elders who lived lives in pain find salvation and completeness. I found woman and men who had been heartbroken and sabotaged find love and empowerment.

Alice Morgan (2002) in her research on Living Stories or Narrative Therapy explains why this method is so effective. "Once the problem has been externalized, the re authoring process can begin...In my early explorations of narrative ideas, along with making changes to the

way in which I practiced therapy, I also found myself challenging and questioning some ideas I had held in relation to learning. I noticed some ideas about learning that seemed to hold me back from my explorations, and others that supported and sustained me. I started to record the ideas that moved me towards my new explorations of narrative ideas, and I began to challenge those ideas that held me back by examining where the ideas may have come from and what aspects of 'popular' culture, training or society supported them (p. 89). The stories of the elder women and men I mentioned before, as Morgan put it, had been changed because of the process of an ancient narrative therapy and literacy. Indigenous traditions and the game environment of larp are two very different methods; however, they share a similar platform which is immersive narrative embodies experiences.

I believe through my ten years of training in indigenous rites, the core purpose of rites is how to be in community and discovery empowerment and purpose. To gain new insights and perspectives on our identities and what we can accomplish in this world. Through these perspectives we can achieve our dreams and do so in such a way that respects and celebrates others. This relates to larp because both methods are using immersive narratives as a platform to communicate multi literacies. The difference between the two is one was about the serious business concerning survival and belonging to community in ancient times, where today's larps are about an entertaining experience at face value. However larp as a game experience can just be just for fun; in addition it can be used for experiential development as Morgan suggests in narrative therapy. The choice is up to the user or users of the of the medium. This is important because we are looking a platform that has a vast capability for multi-cultural communication and massive personal transformation. As my wife says, "it's something to consider".

Ancient as they may be, larp and gaming today has roots in the modern world. The history of larp is obscure there is no parent to the game. Pockets of larp simultaneously appeared across the globe enacting a 100 monkey syndrome of continuous embodying adventures and story. Live Action Role Play's Rich Tudor History online article tells us that, "The late 1970s and early 1980s gave rise to the modern hobby, and also saw the rise of genre fiction, sci-fi and comic book conventions, the Trekkers, and Star Wars. These events inflamed the imagination of Americans, offering heroic alternate worlds for fans to imagine themselves in. In 1974, Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson published Dungeons & Dragons, the first tabletop role-playing game, which allowed participants to enter and directly affect an imaginary world. Gygax & Arneson had been inspired by a strategic game that the 19th-century Prussian military required its officers to play, which over the years passed through the hands of numerous enthusiasts—including the writer H.G. Wells—who tweaked the game for their fellow hobbyists" (Stark, 2012).

So what do shamans, kings, and fools all want to do this immersive narrative methodology? The answer is to experience emotional literacy in an alternative world. Larp enables emotional interactions at a base level. It's not hard to start feeling things when you're in a synthesized world that interacts just as reality does. How else do we communicate emotions other than feeling them? You can't read about joy and sadness, well you can but it's like reading about how to ride a bike. You just need to actually ride the bike to learn how to ride a bike. Gilsdorf (2010) of *Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks* speaks to the benefits of alternate reality experiences for modern day participants and the extent that larp enables emotions that we cannot otherwise access.

Gilsdorf speaks to, Sociologist Norbert Elias author of *The Civilization Process*, written in 1939. Elias suggests that in our increasingly structured society, we must exert proper control over our emotions. In the “civilization process” described by Elias, people don’t get to flex our primal emotional muscles. So we have created acceptable arenas to blow off primal steam and experience adrenaline and danger-even if real death has been removed. Elias called it “control decontrolling” of emotions. Gilsdorf illustrates that It’s acceptable to bellow battle cries at football games, or hoot during rock concerts, or get drunk and crazy at Mardi Gras. Among the right group of friends, it’s also acceptable to hoot after killing a cave troll” (p. 271).

Gilsdorf is not only talking about blowing off steam so we can relax and enjoy our lives and practice leisurely activities, he is talking about understanding who we are and our identities from our emotional being. He illustrates this in his statement about identity and being a leader or in this case a hero to the community. “Being a hero ain’t what it used to be. We have entered a more complex age. We’ve lost the sense of self-sacrifice and faith that the epic poem’s ethical value system championed” (p. 273).

Gilsdorf even goes further to draw lines about our ability to socialize and function in society through emotional intelligence and its literacies. “Socializing is inseparable from the game itself, as are the bigger topics raised during games, such as politics, history, art, love, treachery, loyalty, and perseverance... just like in all great literature, we learn useful stuff about the human condition” (p. 274). Gilsdorf guides us to see that unless we make space to understand who we are, we can never feel complete or truly interact with others. Without our emotional muscles flexed we cannot find sustainable happiness and joy in life. We need a platform to exercise and discover our emotional being: A place to experience fear, anger, happiness,

surprise, sadness, disgust, etc. A place where we can explore these emotions as a single spectrum and combinations of intersections and varied degrees of intensity.

Boal (2009), speaks just before his death on national television to our need to express ourselves through drama and how we cannot distinguish our emotional interactions from reality to enactments . “We are animals that have the privilege to be actors because we are acting all the time, but at the same time we are spectators of our actions...We have theater inside we act and we are the observer spectator at the same time when we get together many people look at one point, they create this space, which is different than the physical space, more than a physical space, it is built on dimension, the three dimensions, it has also memory and imagination, so, we create the theatricality and third we use, the language that the actors use on stage, so there is no difference when we are in love with someone we talk differently, than if we hate the person, we don't talk the same way, so we do exactly what the actor does on stage, but the actor has the conscious of that and we don't have it in normal life”. Boal is expressing our need to connect and feel ourselves and each other through the use of drama, an emotionally drive medium. Through the role play of drama we can begin to understand who we are and the world around us.

Sharpton (2017) speaks to the advantages of the game and exploring the self. “Leading in character at LARP with no out of game risks is great practice for leading in real life. You won't get fired from LARP for making risky choices in game, so you can try them out in a safe environment. It helps you gain confidence in your decision making, and learn what you need to improve. It also helps you cope with losing. In a safe environment like this you can learn to cope with losses and be ready to cope with them in real life”. Sharpton is talking about emotional

discovery through social settings of a synthesized world and how these emotional discoveries can lead to new personal insights, perspectives and actions in the real world.

Vice, a website focused on arts, culture, and news topics founded in 1994 in Montreal, interviews Jon Gallagher, a LARPer with Asperger's syndrome, and sees how LARPing helps him make friends, learn social skills, get a job, and in many ways, saves his life. Jon says, 'Larping helps me with my disabilities, it helps me focus on a single thing. Here is where I feel most at peace. My character decides to be a hero not me, I can't do that but my character can. I started larping to prove myself.' In this documentary we see a case where people will change who they are in the real world because of finding through the larp environment (LARPing Saved My Life, 2017).

What we are seeing here is larpers without any goal other than getting together to play and have fun, are making changes in their lives from the discoveries they are finding through the larp experience. I asked myself what the catalyst for these new perspectives that are emerging from the larp game experience is. According to Gilsdorf, it seems that everyone is getting some kind of emotional charge from these events. I wanted to understand what was going on here. For this I turned to emotional intelligences.

Kris Girrell Tedex (2016) talks speaks to complexity of emotional literacy and using emotional intelligence and how it is the core principle for success leaders. He speaks about emotional processing and "regret being the birthplace of empathy" as well as "grief being the birthplace of compassion". That compassion is "the ability to bear with another's feelings"... "the glue that holds us together in difficult times"... 'the source that aids us in transforming our egos

and our dark night of the soul'. Carl Young once said "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life, and you will call it fate". These are emotional intelligences developing as Girrel puts it. "Learning to be intimate with your feelings" changes how your day to day relationships work. Furthermore Girrell expresses that the 'one thing that all races, ages and genders have in common are our emotions'. "Emotional intelligence is about the ability to connect with another person on an intimate level. It's the ability to know what's going on here (gestures to the heart) and see it in another, and when we do that we change the relationship totally".

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning or CASEL, is one of the world's leading organizations advancing one of the most important fields in education in decades, the practice of promoting integrated academic, social, and emotional learning for all children in preschool through high school. CASEL's methodologies are like Gardner's use of a wheel representing a spectrum of emotional intelligences that form the foundation for building critical thinking and advanced social skills. CASEL's wheel for Social and Emotional Learning, or what CASEL calls, SEL, is "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions". This wheel is held by the triple level container which encapsulates homes and communities, schools and classrooms. Within this container, is the "five core competencies that educate hearts, inspire minds, and help people navigate the world more effectively". These competencies are 'self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills and social awareness (Casel, 2017).

Helena Oikarinen-Jabai (2003) informs us that performative approaches enshrine experiences, and express the “desire, passion, ambivalence, powerlessness, uncertainty, shame, love, fear, and other emotions that are hidden in our relationships and our cultural discourses”. Performance-based methodology, especially LARP, “allows researchers to transgress borders with their research participants and serves as a mean for locating empowerment spaces, exposing contradictions, and building empathy” (p. 578).

Using this lens, we can see the importance of emotional intelligence for 21st century skills developed and nurtured within intentional community containers. Much like using a greenhouse to grow saplings before we bring them into the world to be planted, we need to create safe spaces for our students and community members to grow and explore who they are in order to grow strong roots of identity from emotional intelligences.

Stark (2012) reminds us also that “LARP can convey a political message, evoke strong emotions, or simply engross its participants in their shared fantasy.” Larp can bring everyone into a deeper understand quickly and efficiently (p. 225). Larp is the perfect greenhouse environment for discovering and developing critical skills. We are talking about how to grow consciousness within ourselves from the wellspring of our emotional intelligence. The question of how do we teach awareness is answered here. We need to be using these technologies in our communities and classrooms. This is the missing piece we have been looking for to address 21st century skills.

How do we know it will work? All we need to do is look at larps that are being invested into heavily that are focusing on creating this very experience for folks to discover emotional

intelligence and build them together through an immersive narrative and community with agency. Let me introduce to you what is commonly now being called the blockbuster larp. A blockbuster larp is a large, high-budget, high-profile larp which attracts international players and media attention. The style was invented by the theater based larp communities commonly called Nordic Larp. Nordic larps notable begin in 2013 with *Monitor Celestra*, a Battlestar Galactica larp on a retired Swedish destroyer and *Hell on Wheels*, a Czech western larp (Stark, 2017).

Nordic-style larp, or Nordic larp, is a term used to describe a school of larp game design that emerged in the Nordic countries. Nordic-style larp is dramatically different from larp in other parts of the world. Because of three contributing factors. First, the extent of immersion of Nordic-style larp. ‘Nordic larpers want to feel like they are “really there” on their narratives. This includes creating a truly convincing illusion of physically being in a medieval village, on a spaceship or in a WWII bunker. Participant play characters that are very close to their own physical appearance, as well as focusing on getting under the character’s skin to “feel their feelings”. Dreaming in character at night is seen by some nordic larpers as a sign of an appropriate level of immersion.

Secondly, the high level of community collaboration of Nordic-style larp. Nordic-style larp is about creating an exciting and emotionally engaging narrative experience together, not measuring your personal success or strengths. There is no way to win in this environment. Many players intentionally let their characters fail in their objectives to create more interesting stories and explore the depths of emotional intelligence and what it means to be human.

Thirdly, the commitment to the artistic vision of Nordic-style larp. Many Nordic games are intended as more than entertainment, they focus their resources upon artistic and political statements. The goal in these games is to affect the player's long term, to perhaps change the way they see themselves or how they act in society (What is Nordic LARP, 2017).

My wife and I went to two different well known Nordic larps over the past two years. In November of 2015 we traveled to Poland after visiting Stonehenge in England to play a Nordic larp with Dizobak LARP Studios *College of Wizardry at Czocha Castle Czocha* “began as a stronghold, on the Czech-Lusatian border. Its construction was ordered by Wenceslaus I of Bohemia, in the middle of the 13th century (Czocha Castle, 2017). Here in this amazing setting over the course of three days we attended classes of witchcraft and wizardry, inspired by the world of Harry Potter. We learned actual medieval magical theory, we competed to get into a house of our hearts desired and win a house cup. We have late night invitations, explorations and secret meetings. It was simply one of the most amazing things I have ever done in my life and I remember it as if it was yesterday. What I discovered at this event is that the larp focuses on making friends even in the face of competition of resources. Here we learn that comradery is more important than personal success or being the winner of a race.

In November of 2016 my wife and I traveled to Italy after staying in Venice and played the Terre Spezzate LARP Studios larp *Black Friday* at an old scout camp ground in the mountains of outside of Turin. The setting overlooked gorgeous mountain peaks dust by snow everyday while pastures and sheep grazed below our old flat rack houses alongside a steep slope. Over the course of three days, we experienced a life changing event that has altered my perspective on global development and economy forever. Black Friday is set as the day after the

Thanksgiving in an isolated mining company town and involves three groups of characters: Scientists of a pharmaceutical mega corporation, the FBI, the Delta force of the US government acting under secret presidential orders and the Mining Company personnel, clerks and laborers. “This larp focuses on what happens to common citizens when something potentially dangerous threatens the wealth of the US and possibly the planet. The dramatic events stretch out the thin line between rights and responsibilities and explore the implications of choosing a white lie or a terrifying truth; suggesting that nobody is really in control of his or any future in the “Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave”. The Black Friday is a dark page of American history that never happened, but could happen anytime soon” (Nordic LARP, 2017).

What I found at this event is that participants experience the abuse of power with data directly. Exploring conflict, opposition, social and political survival staged on a bittersweet human experience, exploring the full spectrum of emotions. You learn that you may be more like the enemy that you think. There is lots to care about, understand and be patient about in this world in order to gain an informed truth about a situation from multiple perspectives and emotional intelligence.

Both Blockbuster Nordic LARP communities, and many emerging larps now, bring people together and connect them through experiential literacies, creating long lasting connections across the globe because of the shared experience. Due to the power of the web’s community communication platforms and social networking, we are seeing after these events new cultural identities emerging and taking form through international partnerships. Wilhelm says that transformative teaching is a reflection of transformational learning, which is defined as a “learning experience that alters one’s understanding of oneself, one's notion of the nature of

knowledge or the meaning of knowing, one's ethical sense of the worldview, one's sense of self and one's place in the world, and, or one's life or vocational trajectory" (Wilhelm, 2012, p. 13). We are seeing this in action through the social awareness and movements coming out of these larp experiences. These communities, on an international level, are finding ways together to create multicultural and multi perspective lenses to approach difficult subjects and create change on a global level.

Stephen R. Balzac's (2017) holds masters degrees in computer science and engineering from MIT is a board member of the Society of Professional Consultants, or SPC, and is a former board member of the New England Society for Applied Psychology. He is collecting research on how larp participants view non-game social interactions. He explains that "we can teach ethics through engrossing, immersive, predictive scenario games in which players are forced to deal with ethical issues as they arise, where they have a personal stake in the outcome, and where there is not always a clear right answer. Predictive scenario games are a form of serious live-action roleplaying in which participants take on the roles of people involved in complex situations. This structure creates the opportunity for players to experience the consequences of their own judgment in realistic, ethically fraught situations, to receive feedback, and to engage in constructive discussion, within a relatively short time period" (p. 191).

These are the critical thinking that Bellanca was looking for through Casel's lens. This is the platform for Gardner's dream. This is Girrell's discovery process. This is Leavy's Power of Audience. This is Nathan's methodology of Arts Based Education. This is community integrated arts through immersive narratives. This work is inspired from a shared experience of the larp that only took place over three to four days. A deep emotional intelligence and connection developed

at these larps continues to feed community to connect, take action and create social change.

Think about what would happen if we utilized this technology beyond a weekend for entertainment and self-reflection and brought it into our communities and classrooms. Larp is a matrix for data and is an advanced platform for information.

Live action role play is the highest and most visceral form of art I have come in contact with in my life thus far. This process of delivering information through a flexible open ended multiple literacy platform to create an intersection of knowledge creates multiple perspectives. This data is of a reflexive and multidimensional nature. Only with widened and deepened comprehension of our reality can we make informed and grounded decisions. The goal here is to transform the behaviors and patterns (or data) and the processes that sabotage our lives and the lives of others. These patterns hold us in suppression, scarcity and fear. Continuing these behaviors only supports a system of control, manipulation and denial. Once these qualities are accepted and processed can we discover success, happiness, abundance, sole purpose, birthright, and wholeness. This is because we have made room within ourselves for our conscience to grow out of our emotional intelligence. The negative emotions are part of self-discovery as Girrell points out. I believe each of us has a gift if we can only find a way to remove all corrupted data and let our light shine, so to speak.

From this vantage point we can agree that larp is an impetus for change and action in the world. However, larp can be used to teach standard subjects such as history, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In the eyes of traditional educational subject what can we

extrapolate from these games? In order to answer this we need to look at where larp methodologies of live action role play are being used today in trainings, government and schools.

LARP is used for advanced government training in programs like “Combat Lifesavers Training Fort at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, a National Guard training center” (Stark, 2012, p. 137), in addition in the American Red Cross First Aid, CPR, AED trainings and in first responder training like Community Emergency Response Team or CERT, and, in most if not all military training programs. I myself have an instructor's certification from the American Red Cross. When I asked my instructor “why do we role play all of the training”, his answers was, “because it is the best form of education to save lives”. In my CERT training for triage (the assignment of degrees of urgency to wounds or illnesses to decide the order of treatment of a large number of patients or casualties), we practice all our skills after reviewing the theory of them in live action role play scenarios. When I asked my instructors “why teach like this”, they explained, ‘it has been proven by the US government to be the highest and most effective form of education for skills that are critical to saving lives’.

Brooks Harrelson, a volunteer at Arisia (Boston Sci Fi event with 4000+ participants), as well as a personal friend and colleague, said, ‘I use Live Action Role Play to find solutions to problems all the time’. Last year at Arisia our new ticketing process was a mess, this year, we can’t get enough compliments about how smooth and efficient it is because we used live action role play to training the staff.’ When I asked Brooks why does he think this works so well, he said ‘well you know, because practice makes perfect and how do you practice life, by a synthesized environment’.

It became clear to me the government, emergency services and high demand public services were using larp as an instructional method because it accesses the critical skills needed to perform these jobs. Although these training settings for our country's infrastructure are not fantasy based or using play as a tool to educate, they are using a similar platform to build the scaffolding for education methods. I began to wonder if there were any schools out there teaching traditional education subject such as history, science, technology, engineering, math, etc., using larp. I found one in Denmark.

At Østerskov Efterskole, a boarding school in Hobro, Denmark, immersion in the subject matter is the central educational strategy. Students can be immersed in literature, immersed in history, or even immersed in a mission through outer space as they flee from futuristic American astronauts, according to founder and headmaster Mads Lunau. LARP is a motivational tool at Østerskov. In what Lunau calls an "ordinary educational system," you do things in the hopes that you're pleasing the teacher. He sees this as a "narrow" motivation, and one that "certainly isn't the motivation you get when you get into your work life. "Simulated experience is, in theory, a mnemonic device, helping the kids remember important information they'll be tested on later. It's an assertion that has showed up in promising scientific research, but it likely deserves further exploration. However, in the case of the both the American and Danish programs, there's a bonus outcome for kids with autism and Aspergers, and it's an ironic one considering LARPing geeky reputation: an improved ability to interact with other people in a healthy way. Robinson's program works by putting kids and adults with social difficulties in a setting where they're working together for a common goal, and he says it works. "They're getting core social skills that

really don't get developed in a classroom setting or video game setting."..."You can use this system in a normal school if you wanted to" (Pearl, 2015).

In Lunau's school youth are motivated and inspired to learn through interactive methods where they have agency and identity. This creates the optimal learning environment. I can learn about Michael Faraday's scientific discoveries of electromagnetism and electrochemistry from reading about it. I can conceptualize his discoveries of the principles underlying electromagnetic induction, diamagnetism and electrolysis. However, what if I was in a classroom experience where I was being Faraday discovered electromagnetic principles? Wouldn't I remember this experience better than just reading about it? Would I not also draw new insights and conclusions from seeing the science present in the form of a discovery process? I would come away from the lesson with a deeper multi literacy understanding of the subject matter making it more likely for me to make new discoveries and breakthroughs in the field of my study because I'm seeing it through multiple lenses. I'm learning, science, history, philosophy, literature, engineering, technology and math all by recreating the lab of Faraday. Lunau makes it clear that once we learn the literacy of larp, we can add this method to our classrooms and ignite imaginations and a passion to learn within all our students.

Sarah Lynne Bowman (2017) is a scholar, professor, tutor, editor, event organizer, and game designer. Bowman received her Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2008. In addition to Østerskov Efterskole Bowman, makes us aware of other schools in Europe using larp as a literacy to educate. She calls this method Education larp, Educational Role-Playing, or, Edu-larp. She tell us that Edu-larp has received significant recent scholarly attention for the

following educational larp institutes, Danish Efterskolen Epos, Swedish Lajv Verkstaden, Norwegian Fantasiforbundet (p. 3).

Bowman explains why these schools are successful and receiving scholarly attention. The traditional learning method promotes a certain level of passivity, as students are expected to receive and assimilate information from the instructor... role-playing lends to a higher degree of active engagement and participation... role-playing exercise used as a method to improve teamwork... showing an increase in sensitivity to diversity and empathy (p. 4). He explains ...the usefulness of edu-larp as a pedagogical technique to engage and motivate students in an active, hands-on manner...As our current generation continues to engage in a more interactive, game-focused manner than previous classroom models can support, educators are challenged to find innovative ways to engage students. While not the only method, edu-larp offers a low-cost, highly-engaging option (p. 16). Bowman puts these theories to test in the United States educational system.

Bowman ran an extensive qualitative and quantitative research project on how larp can positively affect students and create change for a passion of education. Bowman conduct a mixed methods case study of Educational Larp in a school classroom with underserved youth and find effectiveness of an educational role-playing (edu-larp) intervention into the science curriculum of a charter school in Los Angeles”. Testing “five dimensions” evaluations of, “intrinsic motivation, perceived competence, school engagement, teamwork, and leadership”. This study consisted of 23 students. The “edu-larp intervention helped increase overall intrinsic motivation and interest/enjoyment of science in the quantitative data. The qualitative and quantitative findings merged to reveal improvement in perceived competence in science. In interviews,

students demonstrated a strong belief that larp aided in development of all five dimensions and expressed universal interest in learning through edu-larp in the future. (p. 1)

Bowman faced the difficult challenge of running a study that “explores the influence of a semester-long, science edu-larp curriculum on middle school students in a disadvantaged area of Los Angeles” (p. 2). She did this and found results. She shows us Edu-Larp in action in Europe and as well mentions schools in the Finland, Brazil, Poland, Russia, Taiwan and Korea (p. 3). This means to me that as Lunau suggests, we can use this larp technology for education now in our school systems and still reach traditional goals while exposing our youth to critical thinking skills as well.

From this trajectory of the understanding larp and the possibilities of edu-larp I began to seek a way to integrate the Triny Elements Education Model and create a new approach to edu-larp that would include, Immersive Experiential Arts Education, Learning through Play, and, an Inquiry Based Community with Agency. I wanted to address the literacy of larp directly rather than dilute it. I didn't want to take away the possibilities for emotional intelligence and 21st century skills to develop at each turn of the educational process. Rather, I wanted to create a larp model that could embody these subjects within a scaffolding built upon the platform of larp.

Instead of altering the literacy of larp to fit the content, method or the goal of what we are teaching, I wanted to create a larp literacy that can embody educational models and meet our needs and goals. The larp would need to be designed to deliver data on a multisensory platforms. This was the impetus for my thesis project. I wanted to create a new classroom environment for education that can have the flexibility to embody multiple intelligences and multi-cultural

educational methods through integrated arts as well as be able to include the arts, science, technology, engineering, mathematics and history.

The vision began to form this larp classroom. This larp classroom brings transformational self-discovery through immersive narratives and has a guide book that is built upon the scaffolding of integrated Multiple Intelligence, Multicultural, Integrated Arts, Inquiry, DIY and 21st Century Skill educational methodologies. The game structure is designed for curricula to rotate in and out of the structure of the immersive environment as needed. Expeditionary learning becomes a motivating element to this process as does the process itself because it's play and fun. The guide book, community leaders, and mentors hold the container together. The participants have agency but are guided and helped to make reflexive analysis of their experiences, as well as, are guided to put their education to application, so all learning is accomplished by doing and experiencing the results. Over the last fifteen years I developed, researched, tested and modified a curriculum with a community of committed educators through the organization *LARP Adventure Program*.

The origin of this program formed in 2002 from a summer camp I ran called *Dr. Wormholes School of Witchcraft and Wizardry*. This was the invention of a spin-off of my Mad Science character, based on 1985's *Back to the Future*'s movie character Doctor Brown and PBS's *Dr. Who*, that I used to engage youth at school and community gatherings doing science education based performances. The character was called Dr. Wormhole. I took the ideas and methods I developed as Dr. Wormhole and integrated inspirations from the Harry Potter series. In collaboration with my upbringing from my grandmother at Plimoth Plantation and great aunt the mystic, teaching magic seemed like the thing for me. In this setting I was completely inspired as

a teacher and found myself staying up late to work on extra projects and art for the kids. My students would go home and do extra work as well to make the next day in class even more exciting for the community. We learned about tarot cards, medieval alchemy, cryptozoology, how to make magic wands and garments as well as talismans. It was fantastic.

When my Dungeons and Dragons after school students in 2002 showed me my first larp, a Realms boffer larp called *Craiththron*, I was inspired with amazement. I began to teach larp shortly after designing curricula through an integration of martial arts, DIY art building, creative writing and community building to teach at the *Charles River Gym* at the Empowerment class at Boston MA. I called the program *Wizards, Warriors and You* based on a series of choose your own adventure books I had as a youth that I read until the spines of the books fell out. This program later was modified to be in one of my students, and now best friend, backyard after the closing of art activities at the Chares River Gym. At this point I changed the name to LARP Adventure Program, based on my current marital arts schools name *Martial Arts for Personal Development*. I liked how simple and truthful the name of the school expressed and wanted to change my project's name to reflect the qualities and morals of my martial arts school lead by Kenneth Proctor. Sadly as my small body of students grew older and I became more attached to my professional arts life, the dream of LARP Adventure Program began to drift away.

Then came a dark night of my soul, so to speak--the kind of experience that puts into question your value as a human being. The sort of experience that creates a catalyst for transformation. In August of 2005 *Filene's* of downtown Boston closed its doors forever. I lost my job as a visual and window designer. I also lost my dream rock band of six years to a horrible breakup at this time. I was heartbroken, homeless and jobless. I become all too aware of the

crippling behavior patterns of my life and knew I needed radical change. I needed to transform who I was, or at least thought I was. I needed to transform my relationship with my identity.

I ended up finding myself in an after school setting outside of Cambridge, teaching science, art and trying to get my larp curriculum to be accepted by the organization in the winter of 2006. Reluctant as the leadership staff was, once they saw that the kids loved it and were inspired to learn by the narratives of adventures and exploration, the class soon became the focus of the program. Over the next few years the class went from one day a week to every day supporting 85 percent of the student body. We had first year students, second years students, third year students and high school (councilors in training) taking classes on how to run larps and event. In the middle school and high school after school settings we started experimenting with new ways to build community through larp, teaching multiple intelligences and empowerment. We began to utilize community based inquiry to make curricula each year while setting goals for extraordinary adventures at local venues. The classroom was on fire and we all knew something magical was happening but didn't quite know what to think of it.

It was at this time that I began to take classes at *Lesley University* for my masters in community education. The after school program had Lesley interns and was now being run by a Lesley graduate. I began to obtain the skills and perspectives I need to understand what was going on in my classroom. My life had been turned around and had purpose. Working with youth through these literacies and methods in conjunction with the personal work I was doing with East Coast Village, MKP and Lesley University brought me into a deeper understanding of the work I was doing and what it meant.

In 2011 I began to see that this program required weekend events and summer camps to embody expeditionary learning methods and immersive narrative platforms. Through the lens developed in my Lesley classes I began to see that this wasn't just going into the woods and playing pretend with kids, making friends and having fun. We were developing advanced forms of literacies and educational models and I realized that this was a platform for education to change.

It was at this juncture that LARP Adventure Program formed an Entertainment LLC and began booking campgrounds and destinations for events through the academic year and summer. We knew we didn't want to work within the confines of the standard public school system as described by Robinson, and needed to make our organization to stay true the emerging visions of the work we were doing. By fall of 2012 we were up and running, but we were lacking an element that we needed to reach our new found goals.

We needed a rule book for the Lord of the Rings Fantasy world we had created. The origins of the Etheraz world started during my middle school years playing dungeons and dragons and now had come to life through this community. Up till now we had used rule books of other systems. These guide books required players to pick classes and limited the growth of the character and didn't fit the educational models we began to implement. We didn't know it at the time, but it was The trinity elements. We needed a new system that would embody all of our values and beliefs.

Long weekends and late nights were the norm, struggling over whiteboards and post-it notes. Weeks turned into months, and months turned into years. We had failures in balancing the

game, and failures in making the game so curricula could be used within the system. Our main struggle was with finding the balance between the form of education and the function of the game. It began to look like this was not going to work, that this was above our intelligence as a group and I could not lead this project any longer. I was in the middle of the “dark night” on this project but I knew we had something special and we needed to finish it, but I had no idea how. I doubted my ability as a leader and educator. This led to depression and confusion.

However, I recalled Dr. Priscilla Sanville telling me as my advisor at Lesley University in 2011 about what a master's thesis project could be. She showed me a variety of curricula and handbooks. It was in this moment I realized what was happening as worlds collide. This was a community arts project to create a guide book for new education models based on agency and multiple intelligences. As I moved forward from this space and began to utilize my education from Lesley more radically to address the need of the community for a guide book. This was the seed that would later become the The Enchiridion Project. I had found my thesis and purpose for life.

The project would consist of multiple parts and become something of a life work for me. I began running the idea by friends, families, colleges and strangers. I wanted to make sure I did my best to make this thing a reality. I wanted to change education and make the lives of youth, teens and adults exciting and filled with joy and gratitude. I wanted to find solutions to help the challenges of our world. With the advice of all mentioned above the Enchiridion Project began.

*The Enchiridion: A Multi Media Handbook to LARP Critical Literacies, Communities and Educational Methodologies.*

I needed a fresh perspective on understanding larp. I didn't want to make any assumptions about the medium. So I began to conduct interviews about the literacies of larp outside the LARP Adventure Program community. This created *Phase 1 The Literacy of LARP*. I began a continuing interview and experiential process and review. I started with 10, one hour interviews with world leaders in larp, included Bowman, avid players as well as newbies. My connection to the international world of Nordic larpers enabled me to conduct this research. The goal was to explore new ways to look at and define LARP in regards to others methods in and outside the classroom.

To find common themes through my inquiry I turned to the methods of Saldanña's (2011) *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*. Because of the nature of live action role play, qualitative data can give the most insightful reflections of this literacies. This is due to the methods' effectiveness in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (Mack, 2005). As this project developed over the years to come, I continued researching larp literacies with a goal of 100 larpers including international players. What data has been discovered using Saldanña Vivo Coding methods are the following.

One, to find larp culture and the game it seems to require a gateway activity, typically either gaming or a theater group. Players even after hearing about larp won't try it until they have played a game like Dungeons and Dragons or had a theatrical experience with some improvement.

Two, larps once experienced present personal insights to one's own identify. Through the experience of seeing yourself as another person and the act of suspended disbelief, we gain new perspectives on our personality and character.

Three, through the experience of larp, players develop a widened lens of empathy and wisdom. Players begin to understand new emotional intelligences and social skills through interacting with other players, experiences with all different kinds of emotions, as well as the trajectories of these emotional identities. Learning to look at things from multiple perspectives, values and beliefs, enables a more three dimensional perspective of any given situation.

Four, the experience of larp develops a grander sense of community identity and purpose in and outside the game. Through the experience of a shared synthetic narrative world, we learn to trust others and trust ourselves in order to create something we all believe in. Through this opening up process of collaboration and integrated ideas, we learn how to create social change and immediacy. We learn how to speak with one voice yet still have our own voice heard. We essentially learn to sing with others in the song of our existence in the universe.

From these findings, we know the goal of our guide book wasn't that it needed to be the answer to all our educational questions, but to create a setting for new and intrinsic ideas to originate. It was necessary that the guide book create characteristics that our population could easily latch onto and be excited about. It was vital that we discovered aspects that could be intriguing today as well as within the future. We wanted the guide book to provoke a place for self-exploration and the husbandry of consciousness. To create a place where multiple intelligences could arrive through the interactions of a community woven into a common theme.

What our community identified as an answer to the question, what is the setting, was to develop a narrative of the fantasy world for all ages.

From this trajectory I came back to the heart of this project. This marked the beginning of *Phase 2 The Etheraz Role Play Game Players Handbook*. The goal was clear now: create a game rulebooks made through community arts development, aimed at education, empowerment and community agency. The foundation of this game was to be based on creating immersive narrative play through the arts.

Faced with challenges both the staff of LARP Adventure Program and I could not easily overcome, we turned towards our community for answers. We opened up a full investigation by the community lead by the community. Lead with designers, editors and writers in place with a systematic government to address the large and difficult tasks of balancing in game economy, resource systems and advanced skill development. Roadblocks that had perplexed leadership for years were solved in weeks. Trusting the world can be a scary thing for all of us, but then again in the face of miracles life can be scary. It was only by fully embracing our theory and trusting the community did we find solutions and made breakthroughs. It was one of those the students teach the teacher moments.

This guide book now exists and is printed. In the years to come we at LARP Adventure Program hope it publish it. I have put the guide book to the test over the last two months at 4 weeks of residential summer larp camp. I have collected over 100 responses to this guide book and the experience it creates and the data shows it is working. Using Bowman's model, participants are engaged, making complex observations, applying self-directed research and

development, and applying 21st century skills, namely teamwork and leadership, inside the game environment and outside the game environment. It took ten years of research and development but I'm proud to say the community has done it and we have created our own program for the trinity elements to manifest, in middle school, high school and continuing education settings.

The rule book and the content of the game specifically has lenses and scaffolding for verbal, logical, visual, kinesthetic, rhythmic, intrapersonal, interpersonal and naturalistic intelligences throughout the game models. Verbal skills, could before example, explored in acting, presenting new ideas to the community and persuading antagonistic in the game environment. Logical thinking and mathematics can be explored through the economic and resource systems as well as the logistical process of running characters leveling up abilities based on experience points gain from attending classes and events, creative writing, plot planning, historical investigation. Spatial skills are exploring in lighting, props, costuming, stage building and creating an immersive environment. Kinesthetic skills are explored through enactment role play, experiencing and creating emotional experiential environments, somatic expressions, mock combat, martial arts, dance, acrobatics, obstacle courses and performance based feats. Musical and rhythmic skills are developed through experiencing and creating soundscapes, music, disc jockey studies, immersive experiences, auditory puzzles, and narratives of story. Intrapersonal skills are developed through experiential and designed self-reflective immersive narratives, creating space and tools for our emotional intelligence to arise into consciousness. Interpersonal skills are explored by story and immersive narrative experience and design for players. Understanding psychology in order to create dynamic story arch for each participant in the community creates an advanced vocabulary for understanding the self and others. Naturism is

explored through world design and investigation of cultural development. An analysis of geographical sciences are used to create believable worlds and game play environments. Here we can study evolution and natural sciences to make a believable imaginary world. Through this process we become familiar with our own world for it became the creative resource for our world design.

However, this is only looking at the game structure at the portal of the scaffolding without any custom or developed methodologies. The system is designed for anyone to use the rule book as a platform for these educational models. It is designed to be flexible with moving parts so additional scaffolding can be added or removed if need.

In addition to this rule book we have two other is the works. We see the Etheraz Role Play Game Player Rulebook to be ideal for youth. Adults do love it, but we have found that different themes can help support with different archetypes and transitory periods of our lives as Campbell (1988) describes them from Jungian models. The following is an outline of the current model of rule books we are developing and how they relate to each other and service different narratives for specific ages. Etheraz a fantasy adventure: Self-Empowerment and Heroic Design for middle school and high school youth. Infection a dystopian story: Survivalist, Self-Evaluation and Self-Acceptance for young adults 18-30. Legends of the Stars a science fiction odyssey: Philosophy, Morality and Justice for adults 21-50. As our community grows and becomes older so do our needs of our container. We are working hard to support each other not just in our youth and adolescence but throughout our lifetimes together. With that said the Etheraz Role Play

Game Player Rulebook is the primary focus of this project as well as our community. We host Infection events one to two times a year and Legends of the Star events one to two times a year.

Now that this monumental part of this project has been completed I look forward to the future and starting *Phase 3 An Edu-Larp Interdisciplinary Arts Based Curriculum Handbook*. This part of The Enchiridion is under development and requires organization, publication, and most important a year of review now that the Etheraz Role Play Game Player Rulebook is completed.

I look to create, explore and reflect on curricula designed over the last 10 years beginning this fall by myself and LARP Adventure Program staff. We have over 100 original online gradient leveled curriculum courses and guides for middle school and high school youth. These curricula include integrated 21st century skills through enactments, multi-cultural and multiple intelligence lenses. Inquiry Based learning platforms and critical literacies are developed through community leadership with participants. Using the multiple intelligence example provided above we explore new technology and ideas as well as reflect on history and ancient cultural stories. This has created a vast collection of class guides to pick from. This guide book will focus on how to use the Etheraz Role Play Game Player Rulebook as it was designed by LARP Adventure Program with its scaffolding and methods on the platform of educational larp. It will also provide scaffolding to develop a new system from the ground up with a new community. Enabling a guide to building scaffolding to design one's own larp literacy with specific specifications.

In my interview with Bowman (S. Bowman, personal communication, March 2017), she expressed that every larp has its own literacy within itself because of a variety of factors. Many of these factors are not necessarily based on the games designed as George pointed out, but rather the collective goals and vision of the community. This will create a difference in the needs and trajectory of how the game functions but also the language is used at events, values and beliefs. This was a refreshing and illuminating insight that there is no one larp method or even educational method that will work for all of us. We can learn and borrow ideas from each other but in the end we need to take agency in our own destiny. Through this discovery of own needs and wants we can create a space for discovering our own personal legends. I don't expect nor do I want this rule book to be a tool to solve problems. Rather I see it as a new lens that we can make analysis of current methodologies of communication and education and like one does at a buffet--take what you chosen and that which serves you, and leave the rest.

After the Phase 3 An Edu-Larp Interdisciplinary Arts Based Curriculum Handbook has been completed, I will begin *Phase 4 Reflexive Research*. Although this is already under development, it will require further data at once the Rulebook has been paired with the Handbook. I will conduct Qualitative and Quantitative research using Bowman's model, Castel's *Sel* evaluation process and Saldanña methodologies, to name a few.

The goal of *The Enchiridion* is to serve as a platform for creating a container that has community agency and encourages self-mastery through adventure based learning. Outdated educational structures mentioned by Robinson are addressed through the new methodologies of *The Enchiridion*. Students, or participants, as I like to call them, start from scratch and build methods for education together. Participants cooperate with the educational programming

because they are part of it. This enables universal design. Work is now producing a GPS for life, 21st Century Skills, moral compassing, strategic thinking and self-discovery. This GPS is the system for self-education, curriculum and personal development tools. This gives ownership to the student in the learning process. This is all done in a fun and exciting theatrical world of live action role play. The Etheraz Role Play Game Players Rulebook is designed for Multiple Intelligence lenses and Arts Based Education to emerge in a synthesized world . The participant is learning by playing and applying all at the same time, bringing together more complex intersection of data at expeditionary learning ventures.

Rita Berkowitz, my undergraduate painting teacher, once told me ‘the best teachers put themselves out of a job because the student learns how to be their own teacher, radically self-reliant and self-educating. The teacher is there for reference not direction.’ I hope that this Rulebook and the Handbook to follow can help serve in transforming education, how we think of information and how we exchange data--what I like to call refracting light.

In order to begin a larp educational community there are only a few things that I have found that are needed, besides good old adaptability. I cannot stress enough how important it is to be able to move your work area, due to weather, scheduling conflicts, political conflicts or just avoiding environments that don't support the community. The space you are trying to create is to make this education larp method thrive. You can't have students being made fun of or being watched by an audience. Larp is a participatory activity; there is no audience. Youth, especially middle school youth, will ostracize youth who are doing activities that appear to be childish. This is because they're being faced with the beginning steps of growing up and discovering group

identity. This will create fear for student who would otherwise enjoy the education larp environment.

Be ready to move locations as needed to make the container safe for your community. This goes even double for adults. No audience, especially parents if working with youth, or if working with teens or adults or their friends. Invite them to participant. Ann Sousa of Healing the Global Village used to say to me the land holds the house and the households the people. Finding the right space can be the second hardest part of this process. However, if you create a sacred space for education, amazing things will happen. As in the practice of Tao, the dojo is the place of The Way, the place we find flow and become centered in our lives. It requires physical, mental and spiritual hygiene. In short, be mindful of your classroom space.

The other adaptability skills come into place with resources. Unless your program is willing to give you a large amount of resources to support this experimental educational larp, you're going to need to be resourceful. I used to pride myself on how far I could stretch a dollar for classroom elements from Building 19, Goodwill, Yard Sales and Halloween sales. You kind of have to train yourself to be a scavenger of the arts. Doing this allows you to turn your resources into supplies that don't get often recycled in our culture and you will thank yourself for this skill later. With that said, you need the follow up with unrelenting commitment to make a larp community develop.

One, a community that is informed about larp and wants to larp. This includes students and a trained larp instructor, larp guide and a handbook for the community to use as a soundboard and reference point.

Two, you will need a *Classroom Space* for one or more hours a week. I highly recommend a 7 to 1 student to instructor ratio for an ideal match and at most 10 to 1 ratio for maximum capacity. Unless you are a heavily seasoned teacher and larper, you will find student numbers higher than this impossible to manage and reach instructional goals.

Three, you will need an *Indoor Physical Activity Space* for one or more hours a week following the same ratios mentioned above. This is where participants will learn the most. The classroom prepares them for activities in this arena of movement, acting games, and larp games, typical capture the flag style games. Depending on your climate, you may be able to use an outdoor space as a classroom. I have found with students, once they are outside, they are best at application levels of education larp and that skill development happens best inside.

Four, you will need an *Outdoors Adventure Space* for one or more hours a week. This will serve as your expeditionary adventure space. This is where storys take place and the participants get the rewards for all the brave and hard work. In the beginning stage of larp education this could be a small park outside or green area with some trees or other structures that can serve as markers for imaginary settings.

Five, there are some basic materials you will need in order to get participants invested immediately. The construction and DIY process of building boffers creates massive interest and in most cases creates instant student attendance retention. Building art in a community setting makes bounds that will last and helps serve as springboards to create trust and open communication. Material costs vary but are as little as \$25.00 per student to start.

Although this is getting into the content of Phase 3, I wanted to illustrate that this platform for larp education doesn't cost a lot to get together. It is low cost with easy entry. Other than finding a teacher to lead the community and a rulebook to use as a guide, there isn't much more required.

I would like to take the time to share with you what we have accomplished with this Rulebook and community over the last ten years and what a multi leveled education larp program can accomplish. It takes some time to raise a sapling into a tree, but after ten years here are the fruits of our labors. This is where we have and what we call our *Classroom in Action*.

LARP Adventure Program in practice features its classroom and indoor physical space curriculum mentioned above in the after school setting. We currently operate in Arlington, Belmont, Winchester and Lexington MA. We teach the literacy of LARP through a Multi Literacy, Multi Intelligence, Multi Cultural Arts Based Lens. In this process 21st Century and DIY skills emerge. As I understand it, this is the only school of its kind in that we are teaching participants how to larp, create larp literacies, and immersives in native environments. We run a 7-year course based on Maslow's Hierarchy, a theory in psychology arranged by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper *A Theory of Human Motivation*. Maslow coincidentally extended the concept to include his observations of humans' innate curiosity. Our curriculum can be implemented with as little as 1-2 hours a week during the school year but we recommend 4-8 in addition to 2 or more weeks of day summer camp. The Etheraz Role Play Game Player Rulebook Guide book is the core platform for this community. In this setting our community focuses on

developing new literacies through larp and edu-larp platforms and methodologies. The following are the themes for each year of our larp education.

Year 1 participants learn how to play the game. Year 2 participants learn how to work with others in the game. Year 3 participants learn how to work in a community. Year 4 participants learn how to make synthesized realities. Year 5 participants learn how to make narrative experiences. Year 6 participants learn how to run events. Year 7 participants learn how to hold space for transformational experiences in a community setting. This kind of program also naturally produces CIT, Instructors and Community Leaders for our larp community.

In addition to this practice, we host weekly LARP Game days where the entire community from all our locations comes together to participate in an *Outdoors Adventure Space* to apply what they learned throughout the week and celebrate each other. This space is critical to developing the Power of Audience as Levy puts it (p. 75). Here, participants discover the building blocks of equity through game play dynamics. For example, in our *Introduction to Game Play* larps game curriculum students quickly learn that to obtain goals they can work independently but working together achieves goals at a rapid pace. As the game progresses, participants find that without team work and action strategies to create equality that goals cannot be achieved, similar to Outward Bound's philosophies in action. Additionally, there is a rulebook in place to bounce ideas off. The rule book can be changed as the community needs. This creates community action to address government and policies even at this introductory level. This becomes the setting for social and political activism. Youth as young as third grade now understand how to work with government and have a voice. However, our core *Outdoors*

*Adventure Space* as an embodied and expeditionary adventure learning arena is something entirely different.

In addition to the Infection, Legends of the Stars and other varied 18+ events, such as The Abyss, Desponia, Badlands, Faros and others that we run each year, we have been running the seven Etheraz events a year for the past five years that vary from two to four day events. The Etheraz Calendar Year of Events is based on what we call a *Expeditionary Narrative Learning Method*. These events take place at different locations across New England. This is where we highlight our immersive narrative methodologies. It's the amalgamation of all of our communities' efforts and where we take the biggest risks and see the greatest rewards. Although this is not a competitive sport, this would be the equivalent of a competitive spelling bee or soccer game. Resources are devoted to creating these events to be the best possible and all community members are emotionally inserted in the experience. As it is for many larps the events are the paramount experience of the larp community.

In our community setting no one is required to attend the after school program to participate in events. However, there are obvious benefits to being versed in the literacy of the immersive game world and integrated curriculum. These events help keep up interest and serve as a celebratory community marker that develop reference points, trajectories of new ideas and create new literacies from new emerging designs within the community. We are New Englanders at heart and love all four seasons we are provided. These seasons create the backdrop for specific themes in our narratives. In a sense, we design different worlds that are all canon within the fantasy world of etheraz based on the season of the year. This allows us to teach naturism

through a wide spectrum of art based literacy and help with understanding intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

In the fall, we run a series called *Vaults*. The themes are about teamwork and strategy. For example these environments are grandiose Outward Bound type puzzles and courses that require 21st century skills to survive in this puzzle trap world. In this setting we explore the Jungian archetypes of the warrior, how we make boundaries, defend each other and be accountable for our actions.

In the winter, we run the *In The North* series. Here we explore themes of survival skills, cultural and political differences and facing unthinkable obstacles. For example, we have an entity in this setting that represents global warming or climate change as well as look at issues surrounding the politics of refugees and resource shortages. This story is about friendships and enemies. In a Jungian sense we are looking at the archetypes of the lover. We explore loss and connection and what these experiences emerge in our emotional being.

In the spring, we celebrate our younger students through a series based on Campbell's and Jung's discoveries called the *Hero's Journey Series*. First year students go on an event called *The Call*, second year students attend an event called *The Descent*, while third year students participate in an event called *The Return*. Here we celebrate our new community members and help them find the vision that will shape their larp character's identities. What is different about this event from the other ones during the year is it is run not by the leadership staff but by the 4th, 5th and 6th year classes supervised by the 7th year students. This is a true cross generational educational experience, where each membership of the community takes turns holding space for

each other. Thus has been one of our most successful community experiences for developing emotional intelligences and critical skills. In this framework we transverse the Jungian archetype of the magician, the world of transformational experiences. Here the community explores Interpersonal and Intrapersonal skills though the study of Jung, Campbell and modern psychology. We inspect why change occurs and what the catalyst for it is.

We also run a spring vacation week long residential camp embodying themes of historical research and discovering new truths about the past by reexamining the past. This event has called *Fire's Dawn* for the last five years and now is turning over to be call *Ministirum*. Here participants explore how history and our understanding of it shape our thoughts and decisions in the present and change the trajectory of our decision making skills.

In the spring, we run a final event during the academic year before we launch into our summer programming. This event is called *The Faylands* series. At this event, the L.A.P. community explicitly celebrates our female members, the women and girls who contribute so much to the greater community. We choose to do this by extending the invitation to take part as a participant only to the female members of our community, while members of any gender are welcome and encouraged to attend as staff. As a radically inclusive community, we include all those who identify as female, regardless of birth designation, in this invitation.

Every year we are asked why we, as a community, feel the need to hold an event exclusively for our female members. After all, we don't hold a "boys event" during the year, right? Well, actually, we do. To this day, every event that we have run outside of our series of girls events have been "boys events" in that they are dominated by men and boys at every level

of the event, from leadership to volunteers, experienced participants to brand new players. While we hope that every event we host offers a welcoming and inviting space for those of all backgrounds and identities to participate, we also acknowledge the reality of the uneven gender ratio in our events and in our community.

This event opens doors for many discussion about identity, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, etc. It is a catalyst for discussion at the event and inside the classroom about these subjects as well as tolerance, in a safe environment for our community. This opens the door for our community to explore identity and what it means to be, as Maslow put it, self-actualizing and discovering self-mastery. In Jungian terms we are embodying the archetype of the sovereign here. This event concludes with Outdoors Adventure Space for the academic year. From here we open up our summer programing day camps and residential camp experiences.

Our day weekly summer camps run through June, July and August. The day camps reflect the curriculum taught during the school year, and the long days allow for further expansion of the subjects and their literacies. Students are given more time to work on project based learning, work as a community, and provided more leisurely time. This enables advanced reflection and therefore more conclusions can be developed by the participants through this time. In addition, in one day a student explores our Classroom Space, Indoor Physical Activity and Space and Outdoors Adventure Space. This immersion of the entire education process helps bring home the entire scope of the Trinity of Elements educational model. Youth spend 6 hours a day for 5 days in our curriculum compared to the one to two hours a week during the school year. This setting allows for more data to be exchanged and osmosis to develop.

During the summer, we also feature our premier outdoors adventure space event called the *Forlork Fortress Series*. This event has taken place over the last five years at a location in Western MA for the duration of two weeks back to back. The land that the Forlork Fortress Series event takes place on is an old farm and campground that provides a medieval narrative. The site is used for different functions, including larps, renaissance fairs, re-enactments, and receptions. For many larps in the Massachusetts and Boston areas this venue is their larp home. This event is specifically designed for middle school youth but high schooler youth who have been brought up through our programming often attend as CIT's or councilors. This event is an amalgamation of everything our curricula and adventure based learning has to offer. It is a yearly community adventure event. Workshops and classes are taught entirely in game during the day in an immersive environment of the Etheraz world, while nights are filled with dungeon raids, adventures and mystery. Here we raise the scaffolding to embody every element of our program and all of its different modalities. This is community celebration through narratives.

We also offer two events designed for high school youth. These events explore Jungian themes especially those of the Ego, the Personal Unconscious, Complexes, the Collective Unconscious, the Self, Persona, the Shadow, Anima and animus and the Individuation. We work with narrative therapy techniques, playback theater and shadow work. These events are larp meets indigenous literacies. Events commonly have a burn sculpture, fire walks, survival camping, transformational emotional experiences and other feats of naturalism. These events develop from the adolescent's need in our community for rites of passage. These events are *The Dreamlands*, a coastal and island camping expedition, and *Passage of the Ancients*, an off grid camping experience in VT at a retreat center. Both serve as a heavily immersive extremely

transformational narrative expeditionary events. The main difference of the two is Dreamlands focus on a community's shared identity where Passage of the Ancients focus on our individual identities. It is in our vantage point that these events strive to be the precipice of immersive narrative and expeditionary education. As Jung once said, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life, and you will call it fate", through this process we look to discover our personal legend and take voice and agency within it.

As I mentioned before adaptability is one of our core attributes. As this combined platform and culture for new educational literacies grows, so do our methods and applications of it. LARP Adventure Program has been gathering feedback every year for the past five years. Through qualitative and quantitative feedback methods we gather data 4-5 times a year during the academic curriculum, at all events and camp checkouts. We achieve this through, open discussions with community, interviews with staff, interviews with participants, interviews with partners, online feedback forums, mediated social media and chat rooms, yearly reviews and ceremonies. This ongoing feedback process allows the community and its leaders to always make tweaks and adjustments to the rule book, the narrative, the curricula and classroom methodologies. Because there are reflective notes taken at every class and event making, modifications are easily made through cloud access editable docs.

By combining all of these environments of the Classroom Spaces, Indoor Physical Activity and Spaces, Outdoors Adventure Spaces and yearly review within the container of our inquiry based community we create the environment of the *Trinity Elements Educational Methodology* and the ground work for *The Enchiridion*. Although this isn't the only way to achieve this conjunction of educational models and methodologies, it is a convenient place to

start. If one of these elements was removed, the combination of educational strategies and opportunities for critical skills development would be lost. It's a lot of work, but so was the handwritten creation of books before the printing press. Also, the transformation of the self and leading a community involves hard work. After a while, we all learn the literacies that seemed impossible to receive. The world can transform and has in amazing ways. The idea of the fictional Akashic Records (In theosophy and anthroposophy, a compendium of all human events, thoughts, words, emotions and intent ever to have occurred in the past, present or future), is now in my pocket on my cellular device--magic if you ask me. J.R.R. Tolkien, author of the *Lord of the Rings*, once said "Their 'magic' is Art, delivered from many of its human limitations" (2017). In addition Arthur C Clarke said that "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic". This may all sound impossible to transform education with this model but with a little imagination and inspiration the horizon of possibilities come into view.

Kenneth Proctor once told me that 'the secret to life is to be inspired' or what he called "being in spirit". I believe this *Being In-Spirit* as I like to call it, is like the idea of the Greek Muse, the Juno or the Genius--or the beings of the world of imagination, if you will. That this imagination is the very mental, emotional and embodied state that is optimal for human capabilities in all forms of being.

Einstein once said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand". Tolkien told us that "A single dream is more

powerful than 1000 realities”. Where Roosevelt left us with, “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”.

I believe in exploring the human function of inspiration and imagination, understanding the functions of faith outside of religion, and developing new communication platforms and discoveries through human technology. I support the belief that we have not seen the limits of our humanity and what we are capable of. The search inward continues to manifest new and amazing outward realities. Let us come together and foster the joy of life through nurturing community that encourages Self Expression. Let us Promote and preserve the value of imagination and play.

We are capable of outstanding and imaginable things to make this world better. New heroes of legend may and can emerge in our lifetime. I leave you with the question, what brings you into your spirit? What inspires you? How can this become the new platform for your life? Through immersive environmental expeditionary educational platforms, we discovery the natural scaffolding of community arts and multiple intelligence, literacy and cultural methods that enable the emergence of emotional intelligences and transformational identities, perspectives and superior learning.

*“Let Love and Truth Be Thy Breath”* - Eric David Love

### **Annotated Bibliography**

I’m interested and curious about the key essentials of critical literacy through drama, specifically live action role play. What I’m looking for is how to make these new complex

textual descriptions in the most efficient way possible. Through interviews of those exposed to drama and larp with a bit of coding, we may form new methods to understand how data gathering in drama and live action role play, cultivates a third space through personal reflection and developed empathy. From this platform we can then look for community action and change through a narrative that can become context for developed comprehension and creative elaboration.

### References

- ❖ Adomat, D. S. (2012). Drama's Potential for Deepening Young Children's Understandings of Stories. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 40 (6), 343-350.  
doi:10.1007/s10643-012-0519-8
  - Adomat explores how enactments and narratives create space for students to explore emotional intelligences and discover how to use these experiences to create new perspectives and insights. Adomat highlights strategies like hot seating to explore narratives in emotional literacy. Through Adomat we can understand how youth can develop sophisticated comprehension and elaborated meaning from stories enabling a multiple perspectives and viewpoints.
- ❖ Armstrong, T. (1994). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
  - Armstrong presents Gardner's multiple intelligence (MI) theory for the classroom environment in a variety of application methodologies. Armstrong supports the use of MI models and methods for a global application to create social and

governmental change. Armstrong illustrates how critical multiple intelligences are in our educational world today while provided solutions for world conflicts.

Through Armstrong we see a theme that our differences are the very ingredient that can bring us together for new insights and developments of the humanities.

- ❖ Augusto Boal (April 16, 1931 - May 2, 2009). (2009). Retrieved October, 2016, from <http://player.mashpedia.com/player.php?q=HOgv91qOyJc>
  - Boal speaks to us about image theater and the theater of the oppressed. He speaks to us about how we are at all times in our lives in one kind of drama play or another. This drama play is the arc where we can discover who we are through the interaction we have with others and the emotions that emerge in this setting.
- ❖ Balzac, S. R. (n.d.). Seven Steps Ahead. *Using Predictive Scenarios to Explore Ethical Dilemmas*, 291-292. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from <http://www.irma-international.org/viewtitle/41325/>
  - Balzac brings two perspectives together on the subject of larp and what it can offer for education and self development. His analytical and psychological lenses enable him to discover a cross section where mortality arises from larp environments. He raises the question how we teach ethics, as well as how it is a difficult subject to teach. From his observations and research with larp, it appears that larp is a perfect arena for teaching this literacy.
- ❖ Bellanca, J. A., & Brandt, R. S. (2010). *21st century skills: Rethinking how students learn*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

- Bellance describes to us how our education models are out of date and although the world is making radical changes, we have yet to make any real direct changes in our educational system. Bellance also reviews Gardner's multiple intelligences and how these methodologies produce the framework for critical literacies of multiple intelligences. Bellance illustrates that these higher-order intelligences are the qualifications we need as a species to move forward and face the challenges before us.
  
- ❖ Bowman, S. L., & Standiford, A. (2015). Educational Larp in the Middle School Classroom: A Mixed Method Case Study. *International Journal of Role-playing* 5. [http://ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IJRP5\\_BowmanStandiford.pdf](http://ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IJRP5_BowmanStandiford.pdf)
  - Bowman's article explores live action role play, education, as well as qualitative methods. Bowman speaks to the Pygmalion effect. A phenomenon whereby higher expectations lead to an increase in performance. She outlines how an immersive environment can lead to acceleration in developmental skills, social skills, and 21st century skills through mixed methods of a multi-dimensional learning platform.
  
- ❖ *Joseph Campbell and the power of myth* [Motion picture]. (1988). United States: PBS.
  - Based upon Jung's teaching, Campbell takes us through a multiliteracy coding and understanding of why we tell stories and how intrinsic they are to our wellbeing, cultural and basic needs. Campbell takes us through the personal journey, the heroic journey, or monomyth making us familiar with a universal theme and archetypes found in all cultures in all part of the world throughout

history. This is critical to me because the field of live action role play is driven by immersive story.

- ❖ Casel. (n.d.). Casel. Retrieved August 18, 2017, from <http://www.casel.org/>
  - Casel provides us with the Sel evaluation tool for emotional intelligences in the classroom . Through Casel we discover that consciousness and critical thinking comes from emotional intelligence. Through Sle's lens we can find ways to effectively apply the knowledge.
- ❖ Clapper, T. M. (2017, June 21). How I Explored External Validation Through Transformative Role Play at New World Magischola. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from <http://geekinitiative.com/exploring-external-validation-transformative-role-play-new-world-magischola/>
  - Tara Clapper takes us through the lens of society and culture examining her experiences with america nordic larp Magi Schoola, a Harry Potter inspired larp and spin off of College of Wizardry that takes place on a college campus in Richmond Virginia. We gain a personal perspective with interpersonal and interpersonal perspectives. Clapper shares with us her inner most insights and reflections larp cultural and its benefits on identity.
- ❖ Clarke's three laws. (2017, August 10). Retrieved August 19, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarke%27s\\_three\\_laws](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarke%27s_three_laws)
  - Clarke's definition on magic helps us understand that our own imaginations and vision are limited by what we think is conceivable. Just because we cannot

imagine doesn't mean it does not exist. This encourages us to consider what lies beyond the limits of what we conceive as what is known.

- ❖ Czocha Castle. (2017, August 14). Retrieved August 18, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czocha\\_Castle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czocha_Castle)
  - History of Czocha castle. Setting for world famous Nordic Larp College of Wizardry. This history show us that to create stunning larp environment it is critical to have absolute true immersion.
- ❖ George, M. (2015, November 27). Types of LARPs. Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <https://thelarpilife.wordpress.com/2015/06/10/types-of-larps/>
  - George does an excellent job of bring different perspectives of how larps and the building blocks of larp literacies through her explanation of the game and cultural. George brakes the game down into three core game settings while also providing us with an illustration of two axes that encompass the entirety of the craft of larp. This lens helps us identify with the cultures that emerge from different larp settings.
- ❖ Gilsdorf, E. (2010). *Fantasy freaks and gaming geeks: An epic quest for reality among role players, online gamers, and other dwellers of imaginary realms*. Guilford, CT: Lyons Press.
  - Gilsdorf shares his annotated bibliography through what he calls geek culture. This experience shows us his take on gaming and fantasy cultures. Gilsdorf talk in his book about the emotional capabilities of larp and that it is a contains literacies that can access catharsis in addition to a large spectrum of emotional experiences.

- ❖ Girrell, K. (2016, May 7). *"How We've Been Misled by 'Emotional Intelligence"*. Lecture presented at TEDxNatick, Natick. Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <https://youtu.be/6l8yPt8S2gE>emotional intelligence
  - Girrell shares his life experiences, including his dark night of the soul, where he discovered emotional intelligence. He describes why they are important and how they can serve us. In addition, Girrell provides a fantastic definition with examples of emotional intelligence and what it is capable of when coming to emotion, including transforming our identity through the transformation of our emotions.
- ❖ LARP Definition. (2016, March 08). Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <http://www.larping.org/larp-definition/>
  - Here we are presented with a definition of larp. Part of this definition focuses on the comradery of the community of larp participants. This perspective is valuable when considering the use of community and educational platforms that would include larp.
- ❖ LARPing Saved My Life. (n.d.). Retrieved August 14, 2017, from [https://video.vice.com/en\\_us/video/larping-saved-my-life/560d6d735a5bc969192c24e5](https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/larping-saved-my-life/560d6d735a5bc969192c24e5)
  - This Vice video shows us the benefits of larp for a young man named Jon Gallagher, a LARPer with Asperger's syndrome. Here, we see a community practice inclusion and help someone find a voice in community. In addition, we meet people who found it more likely to face challenges in life because of experiences they had as their larp character. In this theme, we discover that the act

of practice charter actual helps build our own identity and ability to be involved in communities.

- ❖ Leavy, P. (2015). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.
  - Patricia Leavy illustrates that neuroscience and literature has implications for why fiction might be a particularly effective pedagogical tool. Leavy further leads us to believe that fiction creates higher brain functions that develop long lasting enriching benefits that can go on for days or weeks. In conjunction with Campbell's theories, we can begin to see how stories create higher brain function and thus higher methods of education and human interactions. Leavy says we are discovering new research tools as educators and need to understand the tools to use them properly. Through this lens I hope to share the perspective that live action role play is a paradigm shift for entertainment, social activities and education. Leavy furthermore speaks to these methods as ways to connect with audiences on a deeper, more emotional levels. This connection may evoke compassion, empathy and sympathy as well as understanding. This is critical to me because we are then looking at methods to create intersection for education, personal development and happiness.
  
- ❖ Leavy, S. (2008, November). Giving Students Ownership of Learning. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov08/vol66/num03/The-Architecture-of-Ownership.aspx>

➤ Leavy explores education from the trajectory of an Outward Bound background focus on adventure based learning. Leavy shares with us the importance of community container. He tells us that the most effective way to engage students is to create a vision of a product that matters to the students. He explains that students need to learn content and develop skills to complete the product. The most efficient way to bring a community like this together is their expeditionary learning processes. Through Leavy we can accept that all students will have different paths to get to the goal and how we can hold a container like this together as educators.

❖ Mack, N., n Woodson, C. (2005). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide*. North Carolina: FLI.

➤ Mack speaks to qualitative research and how it is essentially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Mack shares with us that the strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. Additionally, qualitative methods are effective in identifying intangible factors. The aim of my research is to develop coding for the internal world of the participant. Using Mack's perspective I'm able to make a case about why qualitative methods are the best way to learn about and understand the greater benefits and values of what live action role play can

achieve. What I'm after is improving the human experience and how we see ourselves and the world at large: looking to find ways to make life better for ourselves while still being members of humanity and helping improve life for others. Using Mack's approach I can bring value to the research at hand.

- ❖ Morgan, A. (2002). Beginning to use a narrative approach in therapy. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 1, 85-90. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from [http://www.narrativetherapylibrary.com/media/downloadable/files/links/0/2/021Morgan\\_2.pdf](http://www.narrativetherapylibrary.com/media/downloadable/files/links/0/2/021Morgan_2.pdf)

- Morgan shares with us here reflections on narrative theory and how the way we perceive our own stories creates the intersections that form our identities. Through examination of our story we can begin an authoring process to move our perspectives of oneself and what we are capable of to new vantage points. Morgan's themes of narrative in immersive environments lends a light to the possibilities of larp in the educational setting.

- ❖ Nathan, L., & T. (2013, April 01). Why Art Matters: Dr. Linda F. Nathan at TEDxTheCalhounSchool. Retrieved August 1, 2017, from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Odbcty42MaM>

- Nathan speaks to us about the power of art in our lives as well as the classroom. She shares with us that art enables students to take identity within the educational process. Linda informs us that the best container for education is an interdisciplinary arts method.

- ❖ Newkirk, C. (2011). Applied theater and youth media. Youth Media Reporter.
  - Newkirk tells us that theater is a literacy that creates the ability to record experiences in a method that enshrines them for transgressive safe classroom experiences. These experiences deeply engage the human being because of story. Furthermore, Newkirks specifically outlines that storytelling through applied theatre is a critical tool to recalling physical and emotional memory. This is important to me because this ties together Campbell's ideas with the classroom, as well as brain functions and neurological activity. In Newkirk's model, the method of storytelling and role play enables us to code our memories. We are able to recall accurate memories because the experience was enshrined in a multiple sensory method. The story we tell ourselves and experience is based from the data we collect through our senses and our tools of perception.
  
- ❖ Nordic Larp Wiki. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2017, from [https://nordiclarp.org/wiki/Black\\_Friday](https://nordiclarp.org/wiki/Black_Friday)
  - Here we find a description of the world famous Nordic LArp Black Friday. This article provides the setting, theme and summary of this larp. From the junction of these three descriptions we can begin to see why Black Friday has such a powerful and inflectional message for participants.
  
- ❖ Oikarinen-Jabai, H. (2003). Toward Performative Research: Embodied Listening to the Self/Other. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), 569-579. doi:10.1177/1077800403254227

Helena Oikarinen-Jabai informs us that performative methods can help one find an experience that enable participants to express complex emotional states created from multiple perspectives and intersections of emotional intelligences. This creates an alley for live action role play as an experiential educational method. Helena Oikarinen-Jabai also illustrates methods that create empowerment spaces that exposing contradictions and building empathy. The development of empathy creates the ability for us to connect to each other at a greater rate, as well as create the feelings of belonging. This gives us feelings of self-worth in a community and addressing Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. This, in conjunction with Wilhelm's ideas of Mantle of the Expert, create a platform for experiential learning in it optimal environment for any method. As being reflexive to others is a key ingredient in theatre, it is in live action role play that creates a critical element for the research environment.

- ❖ Pearl, M. (2015, October 7). At This Danish School, LARPing Is the Future of Education. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/yvx4zb/at-this-danish-school-larping-is-the-future-of-education-482](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/yvx4zb/at-this-danish-school-larping-is-the-future-of-education-482)

- This online articles presents a school in Denmark that teaches traditional subject with larp literacies. This provides examples of how edu-larp can form and take place as well as be sustainable. The article speaks to Simulated Experience, a theory and mnemonic device that helps students recall important information.

- ❖ Robinson, K. (2006, February). Transcript of "Do schools kill creativity?" Retrieved August 2, 2017, from [https://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity/transcript?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity/transcript?language=en)
  - Robinson speaks to us about the origins of our educational system in the industrial age birthed from a revolution and that it was more of a reaction to a need than a well thought out solution. Robinson informs us that the very structure of school system will not allow for our higher brain functions to develop, i.e., creativity. Robinson encourages us to look for new solutions and be brave when facing the transformations of our current systems.
- ❖ Rozansky, C. L., & Santos, C., C. L., & Santos, C. (2009). Reading Improvement. *Boal's Image Theater Creates a Space for Critical Literacy in Third Graders.*, 46 (3), 178-183. Retrieved August 17, 2017.
  - We find Boal's research here demonstrating that students of any age will engage in high-level skills by utilizing theater mediated their critical literacy. In addition, Rozansky informs us that through Boal's practice of image theater that logical skills are increased making a cross platform for education developments. We are exposed to new literacy tools that expand what we once thought of as impossible or could not think of at all in Boal's work. Here, we find theater as a means of transforming society.
- ❖ Saldaña, J. (2011). *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

➤ Saldaña outlines the scaffolding for conducting qualitative research as well as the language that accompanies it. This encourages us to approach the world in a method that enables us to discern its patterns. Through Saldaña we can find purpose and outcome of data, as well as methods to reveal the data to others in tangible literacies. Saldaña's methods will be a critical part of developing the research and creating findings of a multi literacy source. Understanding the perspective that coding is a practice of patterning, classifying, and later reorganizing each datum into emerging categories for future analysis, allows for new perspectives to develop and new findings to emerge in this reflexive environment. This is what Saldaña calls essence-capturing. I hope to use methods outlined by Saldaña to discover new and evocative ways to explore education, story and self-development.

❖ School. (n.d.). Retrieved August 17, 2017, from

[http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed\\_in\\_frame=0&search=school](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=school)

➤ Etymology definition of the word school. Describing it as leisure time. Contributing to the theory of play and education.

❖ Sharpton, A. (2007). Keep on the Heathlands. *Five Hidden Benefits of LARP: Social Skills*. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from

<http://keepontheheathlands.com/2017/05/04/five-hidden-benefits-larp-social-skills/>

➤ Sharpton's article on the naturally occurring benefits of larp helps us draw conclusions with emotional intelligence and 21st century skills that emerge in a larp setting. Sharpton explains that social skills can be gained through

role-playing as a character who is more socially adept than you are. You will become more confident and more empathic through your characters. Leading in character at LARP with no out of game risks is great practice for leading in real life. One can learn to cope with losses and be ready to cope with them in real life. Sharpton illustrates how synthesized experience are a powerful platform for developing critical skills.

- ❖ Stark, L. (2012, July 20). Live Action Role Play's Rich Tudor History. Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <http://www.thedailybeast.com/live-action-role-plays-rich-tudor-history>
  - Stark explains the history of larp and how it relates to one of the greatest larps in history held in Queen Elizabeth honor. From this vantage point we can understand that the need and desire for immersive play is not only for youth, but adults as well. Investigating why this need for play exists leads us to questions that prompt us to understand our needs for alternate realities that encompass our identity with new perspectives.
- ❖ Stark, L. (2012). *Leaving mundania: Inside the transformative world of live action role-playing games*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press.
  - Stark defines live action role play, a term that is still being developed for multiple genres and methods around the world, in a decisive accessible method. As there is much discussion about the use of this term and what it means, it can be difficult to reach old and new audiences without some coherent background. This research project hinges upon the medium of live action role play and immersive story

telling. I have found Stark to provide the best lens to date in regards to this art form.

- ❖ Stark, L. (2017, March 31). A Brief, Incomplete History of Blockbuster Larps. Retrieved August 18, 2017, from

<http://leavingmundania.com/2017/03/30/brief-incomplete-history-blockbuster-larps/>

- Stark lists all well know nordic larps starting with 2013 Monitor Celestra. This is a brief list of the recent history of blockbuster larps, illustrating the trend that communities are arising in the US. From this date we can see a trajectory of a global culture developing.

- ❖ Tolkien's views. (n.d.). Retrieved August 19, 2017, from

<http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Magic>

- Here we can find quotes from *Lord of the Rings* author J.R.R. Tolkien, arguably the originator of fantasy genres. From Tolkien's notes we can identify themes around fiction and fantasy and how they can serve as a narrative to understand the human species.

- ❖ Turner, M. (1996). *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA.

- Turner also speaks to how critical the methods of fictional storytelling are to the development of the human mind and neurological networking. Building from Campbell's theories and methods we can find a new linguistic literacy lens here with Turner. Turner speaks to how the elements of storytelling can directly impact areas of the human mind and therefore its development. Through Turner, we can

see new methods for education, experiential learning and personal perspectives. Turner says that story is the base principle of the mind. Most of our experiences, our knowledge, and our thinking is organized as stories. The mental scope of the story is magnified by projection-one, and stories help us make sense of another. The projection of one story onto another is parable. Clearly how we store and recall data is dictated by how we perceive and relate to data on a mental, emotional and physical level. Turner helps support the ideas of Vygotsky, Wilhelm, Newmark, Leavy and Campbell.

- ❖ 21st century skills. (2017, July 28). Retrieved August 17, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/21st\\_century\\_skills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/21st_century_skills)
  - Definition and history of 21st century skills. Provides illustration for frameworks for different setting of these skills. Also highlights the three core areas of where these skill sets develop.
- ❖ Wernick, L. J., Kulick, A., & Woodford, M. R. (2014). How Theater Within A Transformative Organizing Framework Cultivates Individual And Collective Empowerment Among Lgbtqq Youth. *Journal of Community Psychology, 42*(7), 838-853. doi:10.1002/jcop.21656
  - Provides an observation of how theater can transform identity. This journal explores how LGBTQ youth came to know confidence and voice through theater enactments. In addition this article address how self image can form our actions and reactions to our communities.

- ❖ What is Nordic Larp? (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2017, from <https://nordiclarp.org/what-is-nordic-larp/>
  - Provides a definition for what Nordic Larp is. Outlining the three core attributes of the larp, which are immersion, collaboration and artistic vision. Through this definition we can understand how Nordic larp stands out from Theater based Larps.
- ❖ What is SEL? (n.d.). Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <http://www.casel.org/what-is-sel/>
  - Here we take a look at the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning or CASEL, one of the world's leading organization advancing education. CASEL's methodologies, focus on emotional intelligences that form the foundation for building critical thinking. CASEL provides a wheel for Social and Emotional Learning, or SEL, that can be used to evaluate emotional intelligences in the classroom.
- ❖ Wilhelm, J. D. (2012). *Deepening comprehension with action strategies: Role plays, text-structure tableaux, talking statues, and other enactment techniques that engage students with text*. New York: Scholastic.
  - Wilhelm's focus on education and enactment learning develops a platform for multiple literacies, with multiple intelligence learning methods in the classroom and in life. Both Boal's theories and methods, as well as Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, Wilhelm share an intersection of thought, where we can find the new tools that Leavy speaks of in education and personal development. Through

this lens Wilhelm provides the platform for much of this research's vocabulary and reflection.

- ❖ Wilson, D. C. (2009, February 13). LARPing. Retrieved August 17, 2017, from <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=LARPing>

- The definition of larp here serves as a universal term for the medium. We are also given a brief but direct allegory of the game's history. Use for opening discussion on larp based mediums.