Playing with Fire:
Empowerment and Conflict Transformation via Educational Drama

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Abstract

Conflict is an inescapable reality of human interaction. While the vast majority of conflicts are solved quickly and discretely, some affect the lives of millions and persist for decades. The wide-ranging and complex nature of conflict attests to the importance of empowering social actors to transform potentially destructive disputes into opportunities for positive, social change. Furthermore, the persistence of violent conflict demonstrates that there are no definitive methods for empowering individuals to transform them. Instead, conflict transformation requires a variety of innovative approaches initiated by a multiplicity of creative individuals.

The DRACON International project offered one such approach. This program sought to help adolescents mediate personal conflicts via educational drama. Although the results of DRACON were neither definitive nor exhaustive, the project highlighted educational drama as a possible vehicle for understanding and resolving disputes and pointed to an intriguing subject for future study. The following research project sought to address the weaknesses and build upon the strengths of DRACON through the implementation of a school-based, educational drama program in the Israeli occupied West Bank. The study took place over the course of six months of fieldwork in both a large, Palestinian city and small, Palestinian town. The researcher employed the qualitative methods of action research and micro-ethnography to assess the most typical types of conflicts and conflict behaviors among female, Palestinian adolescents as well as the efficacy of educational drama in empowering this target group to transform conflict. Finally, the researcher explored the affects of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the Palestinian educational context on the implementation of the educational drama program.

The results were illuminating. The project illustrated the ways in which core DRACON tenets could be applied in the context of an ongoing, violent conflict. The project also demonstrated profound links between the concepts of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation and pointed to ways in which school-based, educational drama programs may contribute to the development of Lederach's *moral imagination*. Finally, the project highlighted the potential for adolescents to facilitate dramatic, social change and pointed to the limitless opportunities for future research involving this remarkable population.

Key Words: action research, adolescents, conflict transformation, DRACON International, educational drama, empowerment, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, micro-ethnography

Contents

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Abbreviations

AMIDEAST	America-Middle East Educational and Training Services, Inc.
CGS	Christian Girls' School
DCI-Palestine	Defense for Children International- Palestine Section
IPC	Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
MSN	Model Schools Network
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
oPt	occupied Palestinian territories (including the West Bank and Gaza Strip)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	West Bank

Preface

The following project is paradoxical. Although it occurred within a specific context and involved a distinct population, I believe that the project could have occurred anywhere with virtually any group of young people. I say this not only because I hope that the project will have global implications but also because I have reached a valuable conclusion after nearly a decade of working with adolescents in North America, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East: youth have similar needs, goals, and aspirations the world over. In fact, I don't think I would have realized that I was working with Palestinian youth were I not constantly reminded of this by ominous checkpoints, ubiquitous Israeli military personnel, and an 8 meter high concrete wall that separated my target population from the outside world. These jarring realities were impossible to ignore and certainly affected the adolescents with which I worked.

Nonetheless, it is foolhardy to dismiss project findings as limited to the context in which they occurred. I have no doubt that this project will resonate with interested individuals working with youth in the United States, Sweden, and even Israel. After all, despite a young person's background, religious and cultural beliefs, and worldviews, every young person is endowed with hopes and dreams. Every young person can contribute to the society in which he or she lives. Every young person possesses limitless potential.

Of course, youth do not live in a vacuum. They are profoundly influenced by their surroundings and the beliefs and experiences of their caretakers. Palestinian youth, in particular, are thrust into a conflict context at an early age. Thus, I ask the reader to embrace the contradiction that Palestinian youth are simultaneously distinctive and ordinary and entertain the notion that young people everywhere can be empowered to transform conflicts using the methods and ideas employed in this project. I realize this is an intellectual stretch but I am confident that the patient, long-suffering reader will reach a similar conclusion. That being said, it is impossible to understand this project without a cursory introduction to the conflict in which it occurred.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (IPC) is a contemporary dispute of epic proportions. It has persisted for decades, claimed the lives of thousands, and affected millions of people worldwide. Although the origins of the conflict are disputed, many of the key, contemporary issues can be traced back to 1948 and the creation of the state of Israel. The Israeli War of Independence or what is known to Palestinians as *al nakba* or the catastrophe that immediately followed Israeli statehood yielded one of the greatest refugee problems of modern times and set the stage for subsequent clashes over territory, justice, and security.

The IPC is also one of the most well documented disputes in history (See Gelvin, 2005). As a result, I will not enter into a detailed description of the conflict here but I will outline the characteristics that affected the proceeding project. First, the conflict has vacillated between *intermediate armed-conflict* and *war* (See Lederach, 1997: 4, for clarification of these terms) for more than 60 years. This means that conflict-related fatalities have ranged from twenty-five to one thousand every year since 1948. Major interstate military confrontations have occurred approximately once each decade since Israeli statehood and most recently included the *Second Intifada* or uprising (September 2000- circa 2005) and the Gaza War (December 2008- January 2009). The continuous occurrence of armed conflict has involved approximately three generations of Israelis and Palestinians and led to what Lederach calls *generational trauma* (1997: 116). However, this is not to say that either Israelis or Palestinians share similar experiences. Everyone perceives and reacts to conflicts differently and any generalizations about Israeli or Palestinian suffering inevitably exacerbate existing discord.

Second, the IPC is an *identity conflict* (Friberg cited by Lederach, 1997: 8) in which two principle identity groups, Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, have vied for control over the same piece of land for close to a century. This has resulted in the *Somalization* of the conflict in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) as identity becomes more narrowly defined and central authority is questioned (Lederach, 1997: 13). According to Lederach, "the process by which this happens has its roots in long-standing distrust, fear, and paranoia, which are reinforced by the immediate experience of violence, division, and atrocities. This experience, in turn, further exacerbates the hatred and fear that are fueling the conflict" (*Ibid.*). In Palestine, this means that identities have

been increasingly fragmented along political and religious lines, and this fragmentation continues to generate additional avenues for internal conflict among this embattled identity group.

Finally, the IPC is characterized by deeply entrenched notions of *the other* in which perceived enemies do not see each other as humans but faceless, ungodly, barbarians (Keen, 1986). These discordant images are reinforced not only by generations of protracted conflict but physical barriers such the *security wall* which was constructed by Israel to enclose vast tracts of the oPt. This imposing obstacle prevents direct contact between most Israelis and Palestinians and makes it virtually impossible for Palestinians residing in the West Bank (WB) to interact with those living in the Gaza Strip. These divisions have made it difficult for Israelis and Palestinians to see *the other* as anything but an enemy dedicated to their destruction and has led to a palpable deficiency of empathy among virtually all actors.

Despite the seeming intractability of the dispute, it has long been the subject of peace initiatives and interventions. Top-level leaders signed the Camp David Agreement in 1978 and mid-level leaders paved the way for the *Declaration of Principles* in 1993. Grassroots interventions in Israel and Palestine are numerous and range from programs initiated by the United Nations, the European Union, and other international organizations to those established by interested individuals, academics, and practitioners.

It is baffling that despite all of the diplomacy, programming, and research filtering into the region, prospects for peace are illusive at best. Many in Israel have attributed this discrepancy to acts of terrorism and the lack of a genuine partner for peace. Palestinians often point to internal divisions, corruption, and deficient international support. Others blame regional instability, failed United States' diplomacy, and the principal parties' unwillingness to compromise. While all of these reasons shed partial light on a complex, constantly evolving conflict, none touch upon the thoughts, experiences, and actions of a significant population segment in both Israel and Palestine: youth.

Some of the most profoundly affected actors in the IPC are young people (See Ellis, 2004). Images of youthful Israeli soldiers combating stone-throwing Palestinian children are emblematic of young people's involvement in this intractable, violent dispute. In Israel, teenagers are outfitted in military uniforms and prepare for mandatory service while they are still in the 11th grade (Levy and Sasson-Levy, 2008: 6) and the vast majority of Israelis are inducted into the Israeli Defense Forces shortly after high school graduation at the age of eighteen. This, coupled with decades of militarized socialization (Levy and Sasson-Levy, 2008), has produced a population that is both aware of and engaged with the conflict at an early age.

In Palestine, children and young people are socialized in the notions of victimhood and injustice, ideas that are reinforced regularly by lived experiences of combat-related death and injury as well as detention and exploitation. Indeed, the extent of Palestinian youth involvement is staggering. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that 1,475 children were "killed as a result of conflict" in the oPt from September 2000 to January 2009 (2010). Defense for Children International- Palestine Section (DCI- Palestine) reports that there were a total of 221 Palestinian children in Israeli detention in February 2011 (2011a) and the same organization has documented 17 instances of Israeli soldiers using Palestinian children as human shields from April 2004 to the present (2011b). The level and frequency of Palestinian youth involvement in the conflict coupled with a lack of meaningful conflict resolution preparations in school continues to perpetuate high levels of trauma and an ostensibly endless cycle of hostility.

Needless to say, if you overlook the significance of youth involvement in the IPC, you may miss the conflict all together. Unfortunately, academics and activists all over the world have either treated adolescents as powerless victims (Lowicki and Pillsbury, 2000: 6) or disregarded them altogether for far too long. The following thesis seeks to address this gap research and practice and explore the ways in which Palestinian youth not only understand and behave in conflict situations but the possible avenues for empowering this population to become transformative conflict actors for positive, social change.

Chapter 1 Introduction

I will not play at tug o' war.
I'd rather play at hug o' war,
Where everyone hugs
Instead of tugs,
Where everyone giggles
And rolls on the rug,
Where everyone kisses,
And everyone grins,
And everyone cuddles,
And everyone wins.
—Shel Silverstein, Where the Sidewalk Ends, *page 19*

1.1. Overview

The following study employs the qualitative research methods of micro-ethnography and action research to examine the theoretical concepts of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation and the implications of their empirical application in the context of ongoing, violent conflict. The study takes place in the occupied West Bank among female, adolescent Palestinians and utilizes ideas from the DRACON International project as a catalyst for collaborative inquiry among this ostensibly disempowered segment of Palestinian society. The results demonstrated the links between the concepts of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation as well as the potential for similar interventions among youth living in contexts of ongoing, violent conflict.

1.2. Problem Statement

Conflict is a hallmark of human interaction. It is the stuff of histories, pop songs, and even children's poetry because it profoundly affects every person and every society. Conflicts occur between adversaries and allies as well as friends, family members, and neighbors. Although they are usually solved peacefully and amicably, conflicts have the potential to devolve into verbal assaults, physical altercations, and even all out war. The thing is: conflict doesn't necessarily

entail aggression. This is a byproduct of choice, a consequence of human decisions to respond to perceived incompatibility with antagonism. But, as Shel Silverstein so masterfully implies, we all have the capacity to react to conflict constructively and effectively transform situations of potential bloodshed into instances of peace, understanding, and mutual benefit.

Why, then, do we fight? Why don't we choose to hug and play instead of hitting and arguing? Why is it that we hurt each other to such an alarming extent that according to Waller, "60 million men, women, and children…were victims of genocide and mass killing in the past century" (2007)? This is, perhaps, the ultimate question and one that is impossible to answer with certainty. However, it is plausible that we make destructive choices because we simply do not know how to engage with intense conflict constructively. Although most people resolve the majority of their problems nonviolently, something happens when conflict escalates and we are overcome by emotion and enmity. It may be that we are conditioned to perceive conflict as a zero-sum game that we can win or lose, survive or perish. Indeed, we are rarely taught how to embrace conflict as an opportunity for growth. Such lessons are seldom covered in textbooks or prioritized in educational systems. It is no wonder that so many conflicts endure for decades and claim the lives of countless combatants as well as bystanders, civilians, and even children.

But what if conflict transformation was introduced into classrooms? Could school-age youth learn how to embrace conflict as a catalyst for constructive social development? Could learning about and playing with conflict reduce young people's anxiety towards this unavoidable social phenomenon? Research has shown that prejudice (Allport, 1954) and empathy (Hamburg and Hamburg, 2004) are learned social outlooks but what about the skills and understandings associated with conflict transformation? Needless to say, the inevitability of conflict, coupled with its capacity for both development and destruction, necessitates the careful exploration of these questions.

Drama is one promising vehicle for introducing conflict transformation into classrooms. This is due, in part, to the compelling similarities between drama and conflict. Both are derived from discord and the far-reaching consequences—both comic and tragic—of human interaction. Both

are inherently social and predicated upon the exploration and development of relationships and social systems. Finally, both call upon an individual's inner resources and creativity. The parallels between drama and conflict are so forceful that academics and practitioners have long employed different forms of drama from the *Theater of the Oppressed* (Boal, 1992) to *Theatre of Empowerment* (Clifford and Herrmann, 1999) as a means for exploring, understanding, and imagining creative, nonviolent responses to conflict.

DRACON International is, perhaps, the most well documented intervention utilizing school-based, educational drama to address social problems among participating students. This action research project was conducted in Australia, Malaysia, and Sweden beginning in 1994 with the goal of exploring ways in which educational drama programs could help adolescents resolve personal and social conflicts (DRACON, 2005: 13). The innovations of the project were threefold. First, DRACON introduced drama as a viable method for examining and addressing conflict. Second, it tested theoretical concepts in real social situations over an extended period of time. Finally, the project illuminated the remarkable characteristics of adolescents who are not only creative and open-minded but also receptive to learning constructive conflict-handling skills.

However, DRACON International was neither exhaustive nor definitive. The project did not develop the theoretical concept of empowerment. This is problematic because empowerment is a tricky notion that begs examination and refinement. Additionally, the project focused on conflict management through mediation (DRACON, 2005: 22) rather than conflict transformation. Although conflict management offers a useful conceptual framework, conflict transformation is a more appropriate theory for programs targeting adolescents whose very lives are defined by transformation and profound emotional, intellectual, and psychological development (Hamburg and Hamburg, 2004). Finally, DRACON subprojects were conducted in places devoid of ongoing, large-scale, violent conflict. While the participants faced a variety of problems from bullying to peer-pressure, these conflicts were not matters of armed confrontation. This is a deficiency because the unremitting specter of violence not only necessitates empowerment but conditions the ways in which individuals view, interpret, and act in all conflict situations from conflicts with family and friends to internationalized disputes (Lederach, 1997: 55-61).

1.3. Objectives

I built upon the successes and addressed the deficiencies of DRACON by implementing a similar program at Christian Girls' School (CGS) in a small, Palestinian town in the occupied WB. The project took the form of a school-based, educational drama program intended to empower adolescents[1] to transform conflicts. I collected and analyzed data via micro-ethnography and action research, two qualitative methods that allowed me to collaborate with one of the most disempowered parties in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to promote understanding and effect change.

1.4. Research Questions

I spent six months in the WB exploring how educational drama can empower female, Palestinian adolescents to transform conflict. I elected to examine the empirical implications of these theoretical concepts through exploration of the following:

Research Question 1

What are the most common types of conflicts among female, Palestinian adolescents at Christian Girls' School? How do these adolescents perceive their conflicts and how do they behave in typical conflict situations?

Research Question 2

How can educational drama empower female, Palestinian adolescents to transform perceived conflicts?

Research Question 3

What are the effects of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the Palestinian educational context on the design and outcome of an educational drama program?

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[1]Adolescence can be defined chronologically, functionally, and/or socially. I define adolescence chronologically according to the definition provided by the World Health Organization which states that, "adolescents are 10-19 years old" (cited by Lowicki and Pillsbury, 2000: 10). This definition marks adolescence as coinciding approximately with puberty and terminating at the legal age of adulthood in Western societies. Adolescence is thus "a critical transition from childhood to adulthood," (Lowicki and Pillsbury, 2000: 10) and is characterized by intellectual development, increased personal and social responsibility, and preparation for adult roles.

1.5   Limitations

The following project entailed several limitations. First, it was not a study intended to empower female, Palestinian adolescents to transform the IPC. The study occurred within the context of this conflict but it was up to participants to determine the extent to which the conflict was discussed and analyzed during drama sessions. While the IPC certainly came up (See Appendix 1 for student illustrations of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict), the participants tended to concentrate on verbal and relational conflicts occurring in school and at home.

Additionally, this project was limited in time and scope. Although I was able to conduct three research cycles over the course of six months—a lengthy amount of time for a master's thesis—I was unable to measure the effects of my intervention in the long-term. This is problematic since empowerment and conflict transformation are ideally assessed over decades rather than months. However, the successes that occurred within this relatively short period of time attest to the efficacy of the theoretical concepts and empirical practices that I employed as well as the potential for more lengthy interventions.

Finally, the nature of action research as a collaborative process meant that although I could make proposals to participants, it was ultimately up to them to decide the form the project would take. Consequently, the two, parallel drama programs that I facilitated during Research Cycle 3 diverged in content, form, and, ultimately, results. Whereas the 10th grade participants focused on the exploration and analysis of conflict transformation strategies, the boarding girls concentrated on playing games and having fun. While my original vision was not to play games for the sake of entertainment, the choices made by my participants did provide unexpected opportunities for collaboration and team-building as well as empowerment and conflict transformation.

1.6.   Ethical Considerations

The location of the school and age of the participants necessitated serious ethical consideration. Bagshaw and Lepp, DRACON contributors, discuss the issue of informed consent when researching adolescents as well as when and whether a researcher should report illegal and/or dangerous activities that are uncovered in student dramatizations (2005: 381). They assert that all parties must be continuously informed about the research project, that team leaders establish clear

protocols in anticipation of ethical dilemmas, and that the entire process is as open and honest as possible (Bagshaw and Lepp, 2005). I attempted to adhere to these recommendations throughout my research and I did my best to protect participants by discussing the project daily with Sister Martha, the legal guardian of seven of the participating adolescents and principal of CGS.

Since I was interacting with minors, many of whom were traumatized by familial and social conflicts, I was mindful of my own skill-set and limitations throughout the research process. Fortunately, I am a trained and experienced teacher. I earned a teaching credential at the University of California at Los Angeles in upper secondary English education, specializing in social justice and English as a second language in 2006.[2] While earning my credential, I took courses to help me identify and work with students with learning disabilities and emotional disorders. In addition to my academic qualifications, I have more than eight years of experience teaching English, social studies, and drama to adolescents in Japan, the United States, Sweden, and Palestine. In rare cases, when a problem arose that I could not address personally, I consulted with Miss Vicky, the school's social worker and/or Sister Martha.

Furthermore, I elected to make participation in this project voluntary. Thus participants were able to decide the frequency and extent of their participation in each session. No penalties were levied against those who chose to sit out of a single activity or those who decided not to attend an entire session. This was a necessary ethical tenet as it mitigated coercion and provided participants with the opportunity to opt out of uncomfortable activities.

Finally, I took measures to ensure participant privacy and safety in the context of the IPC. It was extremely important that I protected Palestinian participants from being judged, threatened, or hurt by Israeli authorities. As a result, I changed the names of the locations and schools in which the study took place as well as the names of many adult and all adolescent participants. I also coded and password protected my data so that it could not be traced back to project participants if it were intercepted by Israeli authorities.

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[2] I earned my bachelor's degree in political science and rhetoric at the University of California at Berkeley in 2002.

Chapter 2   Theoretical Framework

"How do we transcend *the cycles of violence that bewitch our human
community while still living in them?"*
—*John Paul Lederach,* The Moral Imagination, *page 5*

2.1. Educational Drama

According to DRACON, educational drama "refers to artistic and pedagogical methods in which creative forms of group work are used to stimulate the personal growth of the participants, development of knowledge based on experiences, appropriate styles of communication, as well as joint decision-making" (2005: 21). Educational drama is guided by a trained facilitator and is not, necessarily, performance-based. That is, the efficacy of educational drama activities are neither strengthened nor weakened when performed in front of an audience. Participants may elect to stage productions for family, peers, and communities but this is not integral to the process. The absence of a culminating performance differentiates educational drama from *Theatre for Empowerment* (Clifford and Herrmann, 1999) as well as many traditional theater practices.

However, educational drama practitioners do employ various drama techniques, including the *Theater of the Oppressed* and *Forum Theater*, which were developed by Boal (1992) in an effort to utilize drama as a vehicle for social change. What makes educational drama unique is an explicit attempt to engage with conflict (DRACON, 2005: 21). This occurs through the use of reenactment or role-plays in which participants take on a number of roles in order to explore the thoughts and emotions of conflict participants It is important to note that educational drama is not intended as a form of therapy in which participants reenact actual, lived experiences but a vehicle for creatively imagining the causes and consequences of fictionalized disputes.

The efficacy of educational drama lies in its ability to tap into participants' creative, inner resources and employ those resources to facilitate experiential learning. According to Tiller, this is possible because "drama offers a space in which young people can project themselves into

imagined worlds, worlds where roles can be changed, where new possibilities can appear, where social, political, or personal aspirations can be tested…" (1999: 272). Used in this way, educational drama provides students with the opportunities to produce and alter conflict narratives as well as to better understand the attitudes and perspectives of the parties engaged in and affected by conflict. Most importantly, educational drama relies upon students experiencing conflict as participants, mediators, leaders, victims, and bystanders. Participants do not sit back and passively watch as conflict unfolds; they actively imagine, stage, and analyze conflict and collaborate to envision positive, social outcomes.

Educational drama also focuses on the development of relationships by helping participants understand and relate to others. According to Lederach, relationship-centric approaches are integral to constructive social change because they address the fundamental source of conflict and transformation: complex webs of human interaction (2005). In other words, conflicts arise from failed relationships and thus must be addressed by activities that bring people together in new and meaningful ways. Educational drama does this not only by building and strengthening relationships between participants but challenging participants to look beyond themselves and their perceived allies to critically explore the motivations and emotions of their alleged adversaries. This has the potential to deconstruct conflict-perpetuating images of *the other* (Keen, 1986) and pave the way for meaningful engagement between conflict actors.

Nevertheless, educational drama is not, inherently, a vehicle for positive, social change. Drama has long been employed to prepare troops for battle and future terrorists for insidious attacks. The potential for role-plays and reenactments to incite violence as well as peace underscores its social potency in addition to the need for careful, thoughtful application. Professionals working towards pro-social outcomes such as participant empowerment and conflict transformation are best suited to facilitate educational drama programs.

2.2. Empowerment

Empowerment is a complex concept that was neither sufficiently addressed nor successfully developed in DRACON. According to project authors, empowerment entails giving participants the opportunities to "take responsibility for teaching and learning processes…" (2005: 24). The

authors contend that empowerment for learning is facilitated by participation in educational drama sessions while empowerment for teaching occurs when participants share their newly acquired skills with their peers (*Ibid.*). Unfortunately, peer mediation enjoyed limited success in DRACON subprojects, a phenomenon that confounded project researchers. Malaysian researchers even argued against the use of empowerment in drama projects contending that student empowerment undermined culturally derived hierarchies present within Malaysian schools (DRACON, 2005: 429). Moreover, Swedish researchers and the South Australian team made little reference to the empowerment process while the Brisbane team concluded that empowerment via peer teaching was problematic at best (DRACON, 2005).

However, educational drama does have the potential to empower when facilitators and participants effectively engage with this complex, theoretical concept. Alsop defines empowerment as "a group's or individual's capacity to make effective choices… and then transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes" (2006: 10). Two essential elements of empowerment are *agency* or the ability to make decisions and take action and *opportunity structure* or a context in which actions have the potential to effect change (*Ibid.*). While *agency* is typically associated with empowerment, *opportunity structure* is not. However, opportunity structure is a vitally important component because it necessitates the examination of social systems, cultural beliefs, and dynamic, ongoing conflicts within a given social context. These social dimensions are inextricably linked to the achievement of empowerment in the long term.

Mosedale emphasizes the process of empowerment. She asserts empowerment is "an ongoing process rather than a product" (Mosedale, 2005: 244). This means that empowerment cannot be accessed according to tangible benchmarks but must be viewed as a developing process that responds to dynamic, social events, and evolves over time. This is a potential problem when researchers attempt to identify concrete empowerment outcomes since these outcomes may indicate temporary rather than sustainable empowerment and may disappear once support is withdrawn. Mosedale's theory also points to a time dilemma that complicates the assessment of empowerment during discrete interventions. Since empowerment occurs over decades, if not generations, brief interventions simply cannot encapsulate its long-term evolution. The ongoing, dynamic nature of empowerment processes illustrates the importance of examining the big

picture rather than isolated occurrences and underscores the need to design projects that participants can continue independently once support systems are removed.

To complicate matters further, there is often a disconnection between the concept of empowerment and its application in the field. Chambers contends that, "Empowerment implies power to those who are subordinate and weak, but the usual practice between levels of hierarchy is control from above. Aid agencies impose conditionalities at the same time as they preach empowerment" (2004: 28). This disconnection was present in DRACON where researchers effectively imposed their vision on teachers and teachers imposed their vision on students. This also occurred in the *Theatre of Empowermen*t and *Drama for Empowerment* projects discussed below. The gap between theory and practice points to a need to collaborate with participants as equals and privilege their visions over those of researchers, donors, and practitioners.

2.3.   Conflict Transformation

Before we examine the concept of *conflict transformation*, it is necessary to briefly explore theories of *conflict*. According to Cornelius and Faire, "Conflict exists when two or more people see their needs and values as incompatible" (2006: 1). Galtung asserts that conflict is both a "destroyer" of peace and a "creator" of opportunities (2000: 4) and is perpetuated by adversarial attitudes, behaviors, and contradictions (cited by Ramsbotham *et al.*, 2009: 9). Lederach discusses the trajectories of conflict as correlating with distributions of power, stability of relationships, and conflict awareness (1997: 65). According to Lederach, the somewhat predictable progression of conflict provides unique opportunities for intervention at various stages of conflict escalation. As a result, certain strategies are more apt to diffuse a conflict where conflict awareness is low and relationships are stable while other strategies are best suited to address conflicts where conflict awareness is high and relationships are unstable *(Ibid.)* These conflict definitions and theories point to the importance of understanding conflict behaviors as well as the issues and attitudes that propagate them as well as the necessity of engaging in conflict analysis to determine the most applicable interventions.

Interventions ideally begin with analysis of typical conflict-handling strategies employed by a given population in response to typical conflict stimuli. Conflict analysis is necessary because

conflicts are handled in a variety of ways that are both socially constructive and destructive and point towards the social structures and understandings that perpetuate disputes. The South Australian DRACON team asserts that destructive conflict-handling strategies can be categorized as physical, verbal or relational (2005: 213-214). When a person employs physical conflict, he or she responds to conflict stimuli with violence. When a person employs verbal conflict, he or she responds to conflict stimuli with a raised voice and/or insults. Finally, when a person employs relational conflict, he or she responds to conflict stimuli by manipulating power structures and protocols within a relationship. The employment of these strategies is more likely to escalate rather than de-escalate conflict and necessitates some form of response.

There are various schools of thought on the appropriate ways to respond to conflict. Conflict resolution theorists prioritize the cessation of hostilities while conflict mediators attempt to engage adversarial parties in dialogue. While these approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, neither necessarily addresses the underlying attitudes, behaviors, and contradictions that provoke and perpetuate conflict. The purpose of conflict transformation, however, is to empower adversarial actors to turn conflict catalysts into opportunities for positive, social change. Conflict transformation is the most appropriate theoretical framework for the target population in this study because it helps participants look beyond the most obvious manifestations of conflict to address the underlying assumptions, beliefs, and biases that foster and prolong disputes over incompatible needs and values.

Conflict transformation is predicated on the idea that conflicts are inherently social. Lederach employs Dugan's *nested paradigm* to explain how behaviors, attitudes, and contradictions are derived from and affected by relationships, which in turn affect social systems (1997: 55-59). Thus, it is insufficient to address isolated behaviors, issues, or attitudes since they are *nested* within power structures, social understandings, remembered histories, and visions for the future (*Ibid.*). This insufficiency is perhaps best illustrated by failed peace accords. Peace accords signed by top-level leaders often end *direct violence* but do little to address the *structural violence* that led to violent conflict in the first place (Lederach, 1999: 31). In the case of violent conflict, conflict causes are often linked to systematic injustice, insecurity, and inequality.

Lederach asserts that the goal of conflict transformation is not simply to stop fighting but to address and change conflict-perpetuating social systems (1997).

The Berghof Handbook is an online resource that publishes cutting edge contributions to conflict transformation theory. Reimann, a contributor and theorist, focuses on empowerment in conflict transformation. Much like Lederach, she contends that, "protracted violent conflicts (are) primarily the result of unequal and suppressive social and political structures" (2004: 11) and she goes on to argue that conflict-perpetuating social structures necessitate the empowerment of disempowered actors. This is coherent with my research methods and goals. I worked with some of the most disempowered actors in the IPC so that they may understand and overcome social and political obstacles imposed by age, gender, and national identity.

2.4.   Synthesis: *The Moral Imagination*

The connections between drama and conflict were clearly articulated in DRACON findings. According to project authors, "Drama is the art form that most explicitly mirrors and explicates human conflict. Conflict is part of the basic business of drama, which exists to depict and explore human relationships" (2005: 86). However, the connections between educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation are less obvious. How can educational drama increase participants' capacity to understand and make meaningful choices? How can educational drama promote constructive, social change? How can educational drama programs affect surrounding communities? Lederach sheds light on the synthesis between the theoretical concepts employed in this study in his exploration of the *moral imagination*.

Lederach defines the *moral imagination* as "the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist" (2005: ix). This entails authentic, creative acts that embrace complexity, provoke imagination, require constant innovation, acknowledge the inherent connections between perceived allies and adversaries, integrate the past, present, and future, and necessitate risk. Needless to say, this is a daunting task and Lederach does not provide an empirical formula for its achievement.

Nevertheless, the theoretical concepts employed in this study do elucidate ways in which the *moral imagination* can be fostered in practice. The similarities between educational drama and the *moral imagination* are striking. Both educational drama and the *moral imagination* value "insatiable curiosity, constant innovation, and attentive critique" (Lederach, 2005: 122). Both are predicated upon open-mindedness and exploration and both entail adaptive engagement with complex, dynamic processes. Educational drama fosters the *moral imagination* because it is rooted in relationships. A typical educational drama session not only requires participants to interact with each other, it asks them to step into the shoes of perceived adversaries in an effort to promote understanding and empathy.[3] Additionally, educational drama facilitates the *moral imagination* by placing participants in uncomfortable situations in which they must explore creative strategies to express their ideas and emotions in response to conflict.

The *moral imagination* also entails empowerment because it calls attention to the importance of activating the imagination and creativity of conflict participants rather than the application of donor-centered programming implemented by outsiders. According to Lederach, "catalysts and support can come from the outside" (2005: 94) but empowerment necessarily comes from within. This is not to say that outsiders cannot play a role in empowerment initiatives but that the people who live and breathe the incompatibilities of conflict on a daily basis are best suited to foster authentic change.

In the end, conflicts are not transformed by peace accords or the actions of top-level leaders. Constructive social development is predicated on the development of the creative capacities of affected individuals to live in the present while envisioning a better future. In the proceeding chapter, I will employ the preceding theoretical framework to analyze empirical interventions employing educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation. I will explore the successes and limitations in the application of these complex, theoretical concepts and discuss how I was able to build upon previous research to design and execute my study.

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[3] Allport contends that empathy is synonymous with "social intelligence" and "social sensitivity" and entails the ability to understand another person's "state of mind and adapt to it" (1954: 435-436) which indicates that empathy has cognitive and emotional dimensions. Allport further argues that "emphatic ability" promotes tolerance and successful social relationships while opposing paranoia, fear, and stereotyping (*Ibid.*).

Chapter 3   Literature Review

"Empathy, active listening and appropriate communication are life competencies that one can only achieved through practical training, as they involve not only mental intelligence but also emotional and physical intelligence."
—*DRACON International*, *page 21*

3.1.   School-Based Drama Programs

The interventions discussed below shed light on the ways in which school-based drama programs can help adolescents confront, address, and understand personal problems. While there are far more projects currently being implemented all over the world as well as Palestine, I have only included those interventions subject to academic scrutiny.

DRACON International was an action research project initiated by several research teams composed of educators and academics in the fields of drama and conflict resolution. DRACON projects occurred in Australia, Malaysia, and Sweden from 1994 through 2005. The purpose of the projects was to facilitate school-based drama programs in middle schools to explore, analyze, and mediate conflict. The settings, samples, and procedures varied according to each team but, overall, all teams sought to "develop an integrated programme using conflict management as the theory and practice, and drama as the pedagogy in order to empower students … to manage their own conflict experiences in all aspects of their lives" (DRACON, 2005: 422).

As previously noted, DRACON International was innovative but it also suffered from several limitations. In addition to the theoretical and empirical problems discussed above, DRACON researchers failed to engage with the conflict concepts they were teaching to project participants. As a result, DRACON sub-teams did not engage in conflict analysis and did not determine the efficacy of their interventions for actors engaged in various stages of conflict escalation. This oversight led to one-size-fits-all interventions that did not incorporate participants' unique perspectives and experiences.

Another educational drama program that informed my research was *Dramatising the Hidden Hurt* which was conducted in Brisbane, Australia at a large girls' school with the aim of using "applied theatre techniques developed for the Acting Against Bullying programme to the specific problem of covert or hidden bullying by adolescent girls" (2010: 255). Burton, the project's facilitator, conducted his research over the course of two years and "revealed some significant new information about the nature of covert bullying" and provided "confirmatory evidence of the efficacy of drama in enhancing identification, empathy and self-esteem in adolescent girls" (*Ibid.*). The project was influenced by DRACON to the extent that Burton employed *Enhanced Forum Theatre* and peer teaching to address covert bullying.

Burton's research provided an intellectually stimulating addendum to the DRACON project but contained several shortcomings. First, the project only addressed covert bullying among female adolescents. Although this problem is significant and yields far-reaching consequences, it is but one of many conflicts that adolescents face. It would have been interesting if Burton had also explored the causes and consequences of peer-pressure or negative body images among participants. Second, Burton selected the issue of bullying and designed the project independently of the participants thus missing an excellent opportunity for collaboration. It would have been fascinating if the participants had selected the problems discussed in the program as it would have given insight into their priorities and concerns and helped them to become more invested in the process. Finally, the author did not explore how the educational and cultural contexts of Australia affected the rate and intensity of covert, adolescent bullying. This is problematic because it is impossible to assess the efficacy of Burton's intervention in a specific social context.

3.2. Drama and Empowerment

The proceeding projects explored the ways in which drama programming has been utilized in an attempt to empower participants. While both projects are well intentioned, neither successfully established best practices for empowerment.

Theatre of Empowerment was developed by members of Leap Theatre Workshop located in the United Kingdom in an attempt to empower youth via theatrical performance (Clifford and

Herrmann, 1999). The underlying belief of Leap Theatre's programming is that "everyone has creative potential and it is the realization of this potential that benefits the individual, the community, and the society at large" (Clifford and Herrmann, 1999: 16). The organization translates this philosophy into action by recruiting and working with disempowered young people to develop theater-related skills and stage performances in the public arena (Clifford and Herrmann, 1999: 17). According to project researchers, empowerment occurs as participants learn "to believe in themselves" through the development of "self-esteem and self-confidence" as well as a sense of "their own power and self-worth" (*Ibid.*).

Theatre of Empowerment is a fantastic, low-cost approach to drama and empowerment. However, it does run into several problems. First, performance is mandatory. Clifford and Herrmann assert that the development of theater-related skills "alone, without the focus of the theatre piece to motivate the group, risks becoming therapy" (*Ibid.*). However, the emphasis of a final theatrical production makes *Theatre for Empowerment* outcome-oriented. This is detrimental to the extent that participants focus on and work towards a final goal rather than analyzing and appreciating personal development throughout the process. Furthermore, the requirement that participants stage a final performance is paradoxically disempowering because it takes away participants' abilities to guide the project and design their own outcomes. Furthermore, much like DRACON, *Theatre for Empowerment* suffers from a top-down approach that neither adequately employs participant resources nor sufficiently empowers participants to take control of their lives.

Tiller explores two additional theater projects— *Seeding a Network* and *Branching Out* —in her quest to assess the efficacy of drama in promoting participant empowerment. She argues that drama and empowerment are inextricably linked because drama "provides young people with a safe context in which they can tackle major issues, and allows teachers and students alike to radically reexamine their social and personal relationships" (1999: 271). Tiller defines this form of drama as "an interactive subject where students work with their teacher to create their own dramatic responses to a variety of stimuli" (1999: 274).

The principle problem of Tiller's analysis is a lack of meaningful agency employed by participants. While she maintains that drama facilitates personal, cultural, and political

empowerment, the projects were controlled by trained facilitators and teachers rather than the participants themselves. Participants did engage creatively with problems but they did not guide the content or outcome of the projects. Such limited participant control is fine in therapy sessions but completely contradicts the core concept of empowerment which seeks to help targeted populations take control of their lives through meaningful action. Needless to say, empowerment is not achieved when facilitators design and execute a project.

3.3.   Drama and Conflict Transformation

Both of the following projects are notable in their attempts to help participants constructively approach conflict while living within a conflict context and both helped me to understand and design my action research project.

In *The Power of Theatre in Transforming Conflicts,* Amollo analyzes a drama program for conflict transformation implemented in Kenya. According to Amollo, in 2000 and 2001, Amani Peoples Theater collaborated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) and Caritas Italiana to implement a drama program among adversarial youth in Kakuma Refugee Camp located in northwestern Kenya. Program organizers sought to bring together young Sudanese refugees living in the camp with local Turkana youth in order to promote peace building and reconciliation. There was a pressing need for such an intervention as UNHCR efforts to stem violent conflict between these two cultural groups had more or less failed since the camp's construction in 1992.

Program organizers worked with 200 participants over the course of 2 years to create and stage productions about anything on the participants' minds. Although the assignment was open-ended, participants regularly devised productions that represented a "microcosm of the realities of life at the camp" and thus "reveal(ed) fears, anxieties, aspirations, dreams, and visions" (Amollo, 2008). The result was the creation of a transformative space in which young people could dramatize their lived experiences and explore ideas for conflict transformation in front of audiences who were invited to take part in the collaborative process.

This program shed light on several essential aspects of conflict transformation. First, the program employed and strengthened "socio-cultural resources" rooted in the "people and cultural modalities" of a specific setting (Lederach, 1997: 93-97). Lederach contends that such resources are the most instrumental in building and sustaining peace (1997: 94). Second, the program enhanced relationships between adversaries brought together by the creative process. Lederach argues that relationship building is central to reconciliation and transformation (1997: 150) as it is central to understanding conflict systems (1997: 26). Third, the program was inherently creative and provided participants with opportunities to "imagine their future(s) while still in the midst of crisis" (Lederach, 1997: 117) thus creating avenues for conflict transformation via development of the *moral imagination*. Unfortunately, the program also contained two significant flaws. First, program organizers did not train participants in conflict transformation skills. Thus, any performances that effectively addressed conflict were coincidental rather than a result of a deliberately implemented conflict transformation program. Moreover, the duration of the program was insufficient to generate sustainable results, which, according to Lederach, can take decades if not generations (1997: 77).

Participatory Theatre for Conflict Transformation is another project that sought to employ drama to help participants transform conflict. This project was developed by the non-governmental organization (NGO), *Search for Common Ground* and first implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2005. The project's objective was to "change the way (participants) respond to conflict, replacing an adversarial approach, where one side wins and the other loses, with a collaborative approach, whereby (everyone wins)" (Slachmuijlder and Tshibanda, 2009: 3). Project sponsors attempted to cultivate conflict transformation through participatory theater in which trained actors collaborated with locals to identify a problem and stage that problem in an interactive theatrical production. Project creators contend that this approach worked because it forced the public to become "stakeholders" and "agents of social change" by providing them with the opportunity to "'live' a different future, which could become tomorrow's reality" (*Ibid.*).

The contributions of this project are threefold. First, it demonstrated how target communities can be co-opted as resources rather than recipients, an idea highlighted by Lederach as essential to

building a "peace constituency" capable of promoting and sustaining reconciliation (1997: 94). Second, the project was responsive in the sense that actors worked with a group of people to identify and stage conflicts. This allowed all participants to understand and respond to dynamic and constantly changing conflict realities (Slachmuijlder and Tshibanda, 2009). Finally, the project aimed to bring adversarial parties together in the context of a theatrical performance. This occurred because productions were open to the public and often attracted members of the military as well as refugees, community leaders, and former and current combatants. Since the process was collaborative and derived from the lived experiences of the audience, problems were frequently raised that pitted audience members against each other (*Ibid.*). This gave adversaries the opportunity to develop deeper understandings of *the other* and explore creative solutions to their problems.

However, the project also had several faults. First, the project lacked sustainability since acting troupes staged productions but did not provide locals with training in conflict transformation or participatory theater. This meant that once the troupe left, communities did not have the skills to stage productions in response to emerging conflicts. Furthermore, as discussed in the previous paragraph, this project aimed to stage problems between adversaries located within a given community. While this approach has the potential to increase empathy and understanding, it could also incite additional problems when adversaries do not feel fairly represented in the production. Consequently, once the theater group has left the community, adversaries could use the production to justify continued or even exacerbated hostilities.

3.4. Project Implications

The programs discussed in this chapter have all made great strides in the fields of educational research, empowerment, and conflict. I attempted to utilize the successes and address the weaknesses of these projects in my intervention in the WB. Consequently, I incorporated school-based, educational drama with adolescents as prescribed by DRACON but I also conducted conflict analysis to determine how participants perceived and acted in typical conflicts as well as the trickle down effects of social context on my target population. This helped me to tailor the project to meet participants' needs as well as to make generalizations about the efficacy of the project at various stages of conflict escalation. Moreover, I recognized the significance of covert

conflict as outlined by Burton but I introduced collaborative mechanisms that allowed participants to determine the project's content and trajectory.

Clifford, Herrmann, and Tiller illustrate the limitless theoretical potential for drama and empowerment but their projects also point to the need to treat participants as equal stakeholders in a practical, collaborative process. This problem is highlighted by Chambers (2004) and remains a significant challenge when empowerment theories are translated into actual interventions. I sought to address this issue by including the project participants in every step of the planning process. I also allowed participants to alter the structure and content of drama sessions as well as facilitate and design drama activities. While I remained the researcher who initiated the project, I attempted to act more as an advisor than a facilitator.

Programs in Kakuma Refugee Camp and the Democratic Republic of Congo highlighted important inroads to conflict transformation via drama. Both of these interventions demonstrated the importance of employing socio-cultural resources to promote conflict transformation as well as the role of the creative process in promoting empathy and healing. However, both projects had the potential to exacerbate existing conflicts and ignite new hostilities as productions were inspired by and based upon lived, conflict experiences. I attempted to address this issue by emphasizing fictional distance throughout my project. I did call upon participants in the boarding section to recreate actual, lived events in drama session thirteen as discussed below but once I realized the folly of this assignment, I did not ask participants to recreate actual experiences in subsequent sessions. This fictional distance allowed participants to see their conflicts more objectively and prevented fellow participants from reacting negatively to realistic depictions of authentic disputes.

Chapter 4   Methodology

"Participatory action research does *provide opportunities for co-developing*
processes with *people rather than* for *people."*
—*Alice McIntyre,* Participatory Action Research, *page xii*

4.1.   Research Design

I conducted my research over the course of six months in the WB in both a large city and a small town. I divided my time into three distinct research cycles. In the first cycle, during which I lived, worked, and volunteered at schools in the large city for eight weeks, I collected data via micro-ethnography. The second cycle lasted for six weeks and consisted of additional micro-ethnographic research conducted at CGS. Finally, my third research cycle took place over ten weeks and consisted of both micro-ethnography and action research at CGS. The following is both a description of the methods used during my research cycles and a discussion of the relationship between my research methods and goals.

Bryman describes ethnography as "the relatively prolonged immersion of the observer in a social setting in which he or she seeks to observe the behavior of members of that setting and to elicit the meanings they attribute to their environment and behavior" (2008: 257). A micro-ethnography, however, is a short-term project in which the researcher "focus(es) on a particular topic" (Bryman, 2008: 403). I elected to conduct a micro-ethnography because of the relatively short amount of time that I spent at each field location as well as the nature of my research questions, which necessitated analysis of conflict and conflict-handling styles rather than a comprehensive understanding of the cultures, beliefs, and behaviors of a specific group of people. Throughout my research, I worked overtly in closed settings on an ongoing basis. This allowed me to engage with those around me as a "participant-as-observer" (Bryman, 2008: 410) and meant that I was "a fully functioning member of the social setting" where "members…(were) aware of (my) status as a researcher" (*Ibid.*).

I decided to employ micro-ethnography for three reasons. First, I wanted to remain relatively open-minded to the experiences, people, and ideas that I encountered in the WB. This was especially important during my first research cycle in which I sought to identify problems, trends, and characteristics of the Palestinian educational system in general and in my second research cycle in which I attempted to identify problems, trends, and characteristics at CGS in particular. Second, this research method gave me the opportunity to experience and interpret my data first-hand. Consequently, I not only investigated education in the WB, I worked as a teacher in Palestinian classrooms, attended and facilitated weekly staff meetings, and even represented CGS at two regional gatherings. Third, I employed micro-ethnography in order to evaluate the efficacy of the educational drama program that I implemented in Research Cycle 3. This was extremely important since my participants spoke English as a second or third language and the majority could not adequately describe their experiences in words. Thus, instead of asking the boarding girls, who served as one group of key informants, to keep a journal, I was able to observe how the sessions affected their daily lives.

In addition to micro-ethnography, I engaged in action research throughout Research Cycle 3. Action research is a qualitative method in which the researcher actively collaborates with a research group to identify and address social problems. This method is characterized by the cyclical process of planning, acting, and reflecting (Vinthagen, 2010*a*). On a more theoretical level, action research incorporates "an appreciation of the capacity of humans to reflect, learn, and change" as well as "a commitment to nonviolent social change" (Berg, 2009: 208). Berg contends that "action research is one of the few research approaches that embraces principles of participation, reflection, empowerment, and emancipation of people and groups interested in improving their social situation or condition" (2009: 274).

I employed action research for several reasons. First, action research is conducive to empowerment, one of the primary goals of my study. Action research has this capacity because it is both derived from and promotes the agency of research participants. Moreover, I sought to work with people rather than for people. In other words, I did not want to impose a project upon a group of people or take up a position in an existing organization. Instead, I wanted to collaborate with a group of individuals in order to help those individuals identify and realize a goal. The

importance of collaboration in assisting youth affected by violent conflict is highlighted by Lowicki and Pillsbury who argue that collaboration is a critical "departure point for youth programming because it casts young people as core formulators of their own assistance" (2000: 8). Finally, action research is a flexible research method that entails constant planning, evaluation, and revision. This is perhaps the best research method for working with adolescents and provides the adaptive framework necessary for conducting research in the WB where flexibility is the key to survival.

Both micro-ethnography and action research allowed me to "see through the eyes" (Bryman, 2008: 385-389) of project participants and generate a thick description of their perceptions, experiences, and development over time. While these methods may seem subjective, it is my belief that such detailed, systematic exploration allows the reader to assess qualitative research inter-subjectively (Gubrium and Holstein, 2000: 489-490) by figuratively stepping into the researchers' shoes to determine the validity of research findings. Moreover, these research methods helped me to generalize to theory rather than populations (Bryman, 2008: 391-392). This meant that I did not intend to make generalizations about a small group of female, Palestinian adolescents that are applicable to adolescents worldwide. Instead, my goal was to apply, examine, and refine theories of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation which could be applied to my target population in addition to populations sharing similar characteristics.

4.2. Research Cycle 1

I conducted my first research cycle for eight weeks from June through August 2010 in a large city in the WB. I employed micro-ethnography throughout this cycle in an effort to observe and understand how the Israeli Occupation affected students living there. To this end, I worked as a volunteer with a local NGO for three weeks as well as a teacher at a private school for an additional four weeks. During my time with the NGO, I taught English classes to students from various socio-economic backgrounds in and around the city in which the organization was located. Specifically, I worked in a children's cultural center, a youth center, and a village primary school. After leaving the NGO, I became the summer program coordinator at local private school where I worked with local and international employees.

My overall goal during Research Cycle 1 was to introduce myself to the IPC context and the affects that it has on residents, particularly young people, in the WB. Thus, this was an orienting research cycle in which I experienced many things for the first time. Prior to coming to the WB, I had never seen the separation barrier, I had never interacted with an Israeli soldier or walked through a checkpoint, I had never visited a refugee camp, and I had never taught in a Palestinian classroom. These were all formative experiences that helped me to appreciate the ramifications of occupation and informed the design of future cycles.

Throughout Research Cycle 1, I wrote 46 pages of typed field notes in response to notable events and occurrences. I also did my best to interact with and speak to as many students, teachers, and administrators as possible. However, I learned the most about the Palestinian educational context by working as a teacher at four distinct sites.

4.3. Research Cycle 2

I returned to the WB for six weeks in November 2010 but opted to live in a small, Palestinian town instead of the large, Palestinian city where I had previously resided. I chose to conduct the remainder of my research at the new location after meeting Sister Martha, the principal of CGS. Sister Martha invited me to live and work at her school and offered me unrestricted access to the boarding girls in her care and the students and teachers at the school.

My second field location was notable for its proximity to Israel as well as its religious composition. This town neighbors a large, Israeli settlement and is cut off from the state of Israel by an 8 meter high separation barrier. The population of the town is predominantly Muslim but once boasted a significant Christian population, the majority of whom left during the *Second Intifada* (Rezan, 2011). Today, many Christian churches remain. One of these churches houses and runs a monastery and a girls' school. The school consists of approximately 300 students who pay tuition and live in the local community as well as a boarding section where 7 formerly neglected and abused children and adolescents live full time in the care of nuns and volunteers. None of the boarding girls pay tuition and their care is funded exclusively by donations. In terms of religious composition, all of the boarding girls, nuns, and volunteers who live at the monastery

are Christian while the majority of the teachers and students at CGS are Muslim. Sister Martha serves as the school's principal and the boarding girls' legal guardian.

I conducted two, parallel micro-ethnographies during Research Cycle 2. The first micro-ethnography was designed to explore typical conflicts, conflict perceptions, and conflict behaviors experienced by students and boarders at CGS. Consequently, I lived at the monastery where the boarding girls are housed. I ate, played, observed, and even shared a bedroom wall with these girls. This allowed me to understand their living situation in addition to the ways in which they viewed and interpreted their social context. I interacted with non-boarding students during school hours where I observed classes and served as a substitute teacher and teaching consultant.

I also explored the Palestinian educational context in my second micro-ethnography. I did this by taking responsibility for teacher development and monitoring at CGS. This meant that I facilitated weekly English teacher meetings and regularly conducted teacher training sessions and staff meetings in addition to observing teachers in their classrooms. All told, I facilitated four English teacher meetings from November through December 2010 as well as two general staff meetings and two teaching workshops devoted to student-centered instruction and empathy-building in the classroom. I also taught nine English lessons and observed fourteen lessons taught by teachers in the English, math, Arabic, and religion departments.

Throughout Research Cycle 2, I wrote 51 pages of typed field notes and took 82 pages of hand written notes. I recorded my notes at least once each day and sometimes as often as five times a day in response to notable events and occurrences. I also conducted five formal interviews, which I recorded and transcribed, and eight informal interviews, which I documented in my field notes.

4.4. Research Cycle 3

In my third research cycle, I returned to the WB for ten weeks from January through April 2011. I combined ongoing micro-ethnography with action research in order to implement, study, and reflect upon an educational drama program at CGS. Consequently, I continued to live and work with the boarding girls in the monastery and resumed work on teacher development and

monitoring. To this end, I facilitated six English meetings and seven staff meetings. I spent as much time as possible in the classroom and taught twenty-three English lessons to students in grades 1 through 9. Additionally, I observed nine lessons taught by teachers in grades 1 through 10. I also supervised three field trips and attended two regional meetings in Ramallah as a representative of CGS. I administered Student Surveys to thirteen girls enrolled in grades 9 and 10 (See Appendix 2 for survey results). Finally, I collected eight responses to a teacher questionnaire that I designed to assess the teachers' perceptions of the affects of the Occupation on their teaching practice (See Appendix 3 for questions included in the Teacher Questionnaire).

Moreover, I conducted an action research project throughout Research Cycle 3. To that end, I facilitated twenty-five drama sessions (See Appendix 4 for an outline of drama sessions) with two, parallel groups: the first consisting of 10th grade students and the second consisting of the boarding girls living at the monastery. Each session with the 10th grade students lasted from one to two hours for a total of seven and a half hours. Each session with the boarding girls lasted approximately one hour for a total of twenty hours.

In this ten week period, I wrote 136 pages of typed field notes and took 111 of hand written notes. Again, these notes were written at least once each day and as often as five times per day in response to notable events and incidents. I also conducted seven formal, recorded interviews and focus group sessions as well as eleven informal interviews.

4.5. Data Collection Strategies

I employed the following methods and strategies throughout my time in the field. Some were strategies designed in advance while others were developed in response to critical events and suggestions made by the target population. It is important to note that the vast majority of my findings are derived from interviews, observations, and the drama programs conducted during Research Cycle 3. But this is not to say that Research Cycles 1 and 2 were superfluous. In fact, my first two research cycles were essential to my choice of research site, participants, and even to the ways in which I interpreted and analyzed my data. Consequently, the successes and failures of Research Cycle 3 were directly linked to my previous investigations.

I spent cycles two and three seeking answers to research question one. In an effort to gather valid data as quickly as possible, I employed three methods: student surveys, semi-structured interviews, and micro-ethnography. The student surveys were completed by thirteen, 9th and 10th grade students in English and sought to establish the perceived frequency and intensity of physical, verbal, and relational conflicts at the school site. I also conducted semi-structured interviews, which expanded upon survey questions and provided students with the opportunity to explain and refine their answers. In terms of sampling, I only interviewed students who were both willing and able to answer my questions in English. Finally, I observed student behaviors in various contexts at the school site. In doing so, I attempted to document and understand typical conflicts and conflict-handling strategies. I believe that these methods helped me to triangulate my findings (Bryman, 2008: 397) as well as generate enough preliminary data to initiate the school-based, educational drama program. Furthermore, these methods helped me fill in the gap between inferred behaviors as indicated in surveys and interviews and observed behaviors as determined through structured observation (Bryman, 2008: 254).

I explored research question two through a ten-week, school-based drama program at CGS in which I worked with two separate drama groups. The first group consisted of all six students enrolled in the 10th grade and the second group consisted of all seven girls living in the school's boarding section. I was able to facilitate five themed sessions with the 10th grade students during which they explored personal, social, and national conflicts via dramatized role-plays and improvisations. At the conclusion of each session, I asked students to reflect upon their experiences in journals and I used their insights to refine and improve subsequent sessions. I facilitated twenty sessions with the boarding girls during which participants played games and staged skits and role-plays. At the end of each activity, participants rated the activity on a scale of one to ten and provided brief explanations for their scores. I did not ask students to reflect upon their experiences in a journal because only two had the ability to express themselves adequately in written English or Arabic. As a result, I gathered information about the efficacy of the drama program through observation of the participants at school and in the monastery.

Finally, I explored research question three through participant observation where I attempted to evaluate the efficacy of empowerment strategies and activities in the context of a Palestinian

girls' school in the WB. Unfortunately, this question could not be answered collaboratively with student participants, as they were not privy to diverse educational practices and ontological perspectives. However, I did conduct several interviews with adults who were able to offer insights into the IPC and Palestinian educational contexts as well as how these contexts affected the project. I also employed responses to the Teacher Questionnaire to answer this question.

4.6.   Data Analysis Procedures

Both ethnographic and action research necessitate continuous analysis. Thus, Bryman contends that ethnographic research is a process in which the researcher immerses his or herself in a setting and attempts to develop an understanding of that setting through observation, interviews, interaction, and document collection (2008: 402-403). This requires the researcher to engage in constant scrutiny of his or her data so that the researcher can made knowledgeable decisions about the next steps in the process. McIntyre views action research as "a recursive process that involves a spiral of adaptable steps that include the following: questioning a particular issue, reflecting upon and investigating the issue, developing an action plan, (and) implementing and refining said plan" (2008: 6-7). In other words, analysis is ongoing and undertaken by both the researcher and the participants throughout the study.

Since I combined two, recursive data collection methods, I found it necessary to combine various analysis techniques. In some instances, I engaged in narrative analysis of answers provided to my Teacher Questionnaire and formal interviews. In others cases, I employed thematic analysis of the ideas and trends emerging from drama sessions and classroom observations. Finally, I engaged in collaborative analysis of the drama program with participants and principal stake-holders. These hybrid data analysis procedures helped me to confirm my observations through triangulation and participant confirmation. Thus, I regularly consulted with Sister Martha, Miss Vicky, the 10th grade students, the boarding girls, and outside observers to determine the efficacy of the drama programs as well as their content and structure. I also asked a number of people to confirm my observations and conclusions while in the field. Lastly, I emailed my preliminary conclusions to the majority of my key informants five to ten weeks prior to the submission of my thesis. I then altered my findings according to their suggestions.

Chapter 5   Results

"I think that it is good to solve problems,
but I can't solve any problems. I don't know why; I hate problems."
—Lucy, 10th grade project participant

5.1. Research Question 1

What are the most common types of conflicts among female, Palestinian adolescents at Christian Girls' School? How do these adolescents perceive their conflicts and how do they behave in typical conflict situations?

I answered this research question through administration of a student survey as well as extensive observation of adolescents inside the classroom, outside the classroom, and in two, parallel drama programs. All methods of data collection confirmed that female, Palestinian adolescents at CGS regularly engaged in verbal and relational conflicts with classmates and teachers. These conflicts were derived from asymmetrical power structures and relationships in addition to identification with difference. Most adolescents perceived themselves as powerless in the face of conflict. As a result, students tended to avoid conflict and, when confronted by their perceived adversaries, either exploded with repressed emotion or shut down completely. Conflict avoidance and eruption were perpetuated at the school site by adult modeling and a lack of opportunities to engage with conflict creatively and constructively. However, adolescents did seem receptive to learning about and applying conflict transformation techniques via educational drama and most were grateful for the attention that they received throughout the project. The consequences of these perceptions and behaviors are discussed below.

5.1.1. Student Survey Data

I administered a survey to four participants in the 10th grade drama group and nine, 9th grade students who did not participate in drama sessions. The size of the sample and the relatively uniform age of the participants made the results difficult to generalize to the rest of the school

site. Nevertheless, survey results provided interesting inroads to conflict perceptions and handling styles and indicated areas for further exploration.

I employed the three conflict categories originally developed by the South Australian DRACON team to assess types and frequencies of conflict. These categories included physical, verbal, and relational conflict (DRACON, 2005: 213-214). I assessed the frequency of these conflict types through questions such as:

> Physical Conflict: In the past year, how often has another student hit, kicked, or pushed you?
> Verbal Conflict: In the past year, how often has another student teased you about something?
> Relational Conflict: In the past year, how often has another student avoided or ignored you?

All questions could be answered by checking "never," "sometimes," or "often." I included three sections to assess the frequency of conflict behaviors initiated by various parties. In the first section, respondents answered questions about conflict behaviors perpetrated by a classmate or classmates. In the second section, respondents answered questions about conflict behaviors perpetrated by a teacher or teachers. In the third second, respondents answered questions about conflict behaviors they personally employed. (See Appendix 2)

The results of the survey were consistent among virtually all thirteen respondents. There was little indication of physical conflict in the student surveys but all respondents reported at least occasional experiences of verbal and relational conflict perpetrated by students and teachers. Nine respondents reported that other students "sometimes" or "often" teased them. Nine respondents reported that other students "sometimes" called them names. Eight respondents reported that another student "sometimes" stopped talking to them while eleven reported that they were "sometimes" avoided or ignored by classmates. A significant number of students reported verbal conflict with teachers. Twelve out of thirteen respondents said that a teacher or teachers "sometimes" teased them. Ten respondents said that a teacher or teachers "sometimes" called them names they didn't like. Finally, ten respondents reported that a teacher or teachers

"sometimes" made jokes at their expense. There were few reports of relational conflicts with teachers but four students did report that a teacher "sometimes" avoided or ignored them.

In terms of self-reported conflict behaviors, far more respondents reported using physical violence than receiving it. Three respondents reported "sometimes" deliberately hitting, slapping, kicking, or pushing someone, three students stated that they "sometimes" threw things at someone while one respondent reported "often" throwing things at someone. Nevertheless, the respondents reported relatively infrequent use of physical conflict and relatively frequent use of verbal and relational conflict. Eleven respondents reported "sometimes" teasing someone while eight respondents reported "sometimes" calling someone names. Six respondents said that they "sometimes" stopped talking to someone while one respondent said that she "often" stopped talking to someone. Finally, nine said that they "sometimes" avoided or ignored someone.

I also attempted to assess conflict-handling styles in the student survey. I did this by asking respondents how they felt and responded when confronted with conflict at school over the last year. The results were surprisingly consistent. Twelve out of thirteen respondents stated that they "sometimes" or "often" tried to avoid all conflicts and the same number also stated that they "sometimes" or "often" felt powerless when confronted with conflict. Surprisingly, twelve out of thirteen respondents also reported that they "sometimes" or "often" tried to see the other person's point of view during a conflict. It is plausible that respondents were either trying to provide the socially correct answer or that they were providing a response they thought I wanted to hear. It is also plausible that they envisioned conflicts that had not yet escalated to polarization or violence when answering this question. Whatever the case, I was unable to observe this level of empathy during classroom observations and drama sessions.

Most respondents reported that the biggest problem at school had something to do with. Several students reported biased treatment, with one student writing in the narrative section of the survey, "Some teachers treat some girls not like others." Several students also indicated that teachers facilitated few fun and interesting activities. One respondent stated, "I don't like the school because the lessons are so boring," while another wrote, "We do the same thing every day."

Finally, a significant number of students reported being overlooked by teachers in the classroom. One student wrote, "The teacher ignores me in my class."

The majority of respondents also wrote that they did not know what to do when there was a conflict at school because teachers either had not trained them to deal with conflicts or did not allow them to act independently to address their perceived problems. One student explained, "The teachers don't allow us to solve a problem," while another wrote, "no one listens to me." Both of these statements indicate that the opportunity structure for student empowerment is lacking at CGS and raise questions about the conflict-handling strategies teachers are modeling for their students.

In summary, survey results indicated that students regularly engaged in and were victims of verbal and relational conflict. Most students felt powerless in the face of conflicts and did their utmost to avoid them. Many students felt disempowered by teachers who teased them and made unfair comparisons between students. Ultimately, the majority of students felt troubled and powerless when confronted with conflict and several students asked for my help in dealing with conflicts constructively.

5.1.2. Observational Data

I had many opportunities to observe students and teachers both inside and outside of the classroom throughout my sixteen weeks at CGS. I observed many remarkable and inspiring lessons but I also observed two troubling trends: students did not cooperate as equals and teachers did not give students many opportunities to engage in creative, problem-solving during classroom activities.

I did not observe students at CGS cooperating as equals. When the students worked in groups there was a clear division of power with a single leader and several followers. When the students worked individually, one student would generally call out answers and the other students would record those answers. I was especially troubled when I was teaching an English class and I heard the socially recognized leader call out incorrect answers. I thought another student would point out these errors but no one second-guessed the leader. These behaviors were most evident in

grades 1 through 5 but this clear power dynamic was also obvious in grades 6 through 10 and indicated asymmetrical power structures and conflict avoidance.

I also observed approaches to problem-solving that relied upon memorization and rote learning. I was alerted to this problem early in Research Cycle 2 during a conversation with Sister Martha. After my second day at CGS, Sister Martha and I spoke in her office and she said that she was worried that the teachers were not facilitating critical thinking activities in their classrooms. She mentioned that she was especially distressed about what she called "choir answers," when the teacher asks a question to the class and the class responds in concert, and "teacher echo," when the teacher rephrases and repeats student answers. She expressed concern that these teaching methods were extremely detrimental but she also thought they were deeply ingrained into each teacher's unconscious. As a result, Sister Martha felt it was difficult to change these traditional, teacher-centered methods.

Over the course of the next four months, I observed rote, teacher-centered educational approaches during many of my classroom observations. I eventually realized that students and teachers were capable of creative problem-solving but did not have many opportunities to employ or develop these skills. The teachers attributed this problem to their lack of training. When I asked teachers about this, one teacher lamented, "I am not qualified enough to do this." The majority of teachers I encountered during my research echoed these sentiments. Again, it seemed as though teachers were avoiding conflict by relying upon traditional methods and passively teaching conflict avoidance to their students.

I also made extensive observations of the 7 boarding girls at CGS. In addition to living and playing with these girls for sixteen weeks, I had many candid conversations with them and I observed numerous altercations between the girls as well as the girls and their caretakers. Overall, I found that the boarding girls engaged in verbal, relational, and, occasionally, physical conflict on a daily basis and that several of the girls felt bullied by their peers and caretakers. I also found that none of the girls felt empowered to constructively engage with their caretakers or Sister Martha, their legal guardian.

The extent of daily conflict in the boarding section of CGS was remarkable. I was woken up by shouting children virtually every morning. Girls shouted at each other when they could not find their clothing or when someone had not completed her chores. The girls also engaged in verbal conflict with their adult caretakers, most of who were temporary volunteers at the monastery. I often observed these volunteers yelling at the girls and even observed several instances in which a volunteer made fun of or struck one of the boarding girls.

I also found that when caretakers were not involved, the boarding girls often made fun of each other's mothers and appearances. Teresa, age thirteen, was indisputably bullied most often with other girls teasing her about her glasses, braces, and the shape of her mouth. Teresa often shouted back at the bully and occasionally erupted in physical violence. When this occurred, I observed Sister Martha tell Teresa to complete extra chores or stand in the corner. I never observed Sister Martha discuss the cause of these problems with Teresa or discipline the other girls specifically for their bullying behaviors.

The level and frequency of conflict among the boarding girls has several probable explanations including their unusual living situation and the transience of many of their caretakers. However, the most compelling explanation is previous abuse. As I learned from speaking with Sister Martha and observing the girls, all of the girls suffered violence and mistreatment prior to arriving at the monastery. Most notably, a male cousin sexually assaulted one girl and two girls, who are sisters, were severely abused by their mother's boyfriend. Every girl in the boarding section also suffered some form of neglect while living with parents who ignored them, passed them off to relatives, or remained silent when others abused them. These traumatic experiences certainly affected the girls' development and ability to cope with perceived problems.

5.1.3. Drama Program Data

The frequency of conflict among the boarding girls coupled with the conflict-handling strategies modeled by their caretakers made them a well deserving—if challenging—group for my research. I facilitated twenty drama sessions with the boarding girls over the course of ten weeks during Research Cycle 3. We typically met for one hour after school on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. I facilitated the first, seven sessions by myself and I was pleased to have several

different girls facilitate activities during each session beginning in session eight. Christina, age eleven, facilitated more activities than any other boarding girl and expressed a strong desire to continue the drama program after my departure.

Throughout the drama program with the boarding girls, I noticed three themes emerge. First, the girls displayed a lack of creativity and innovation in problem-solving skills. During the second drama session, I facilitated the activity *Open Up* (based on *Fistorama*, Levy, 2005: 167-168). In this activity, one person holds one of her hands in a fist and the rest of the group takes turns trying to persuade her to open her fist. I was the first person to face the group with a closed fist. Initially, all of the girls simply said, "Open your hand." When that didn't work, they could not think of any other method of persuasion and more or less gave up. I then suggested that they try other tactics.

Unfortunately, the participants were somewhat clueless as to alternative methods of persuasion especially after I told them that they were not allowed to touch me. I suggested that the girls act like animals to persuade me to open my fist. All of the girls took on the personas of violent animals such tigers and crocodiles and threatened to bite me if I didn't open my fist. None of their scare tactics worked so I suggested that they act like a famous and powerful person such as a president, a queen, or a character from a movie. One girl said she was Oprah while another became Prince Caspian from the Narnia series but no matter who they pretended to be, all they did was demand that I open my hand by yelling or using a stern tone of voice. In the end, I opened my fist for Christina who acted like a soldier and convincingly demanded that I open my hand at gunpoint. I had not intended to open my hand in response to a violent threat but Christina was so convincing that I opened my hand instinctively.

I found this activity especially instructive since none of the girls employed nonviolent methods of persuasion. No one tried to negotiate or compromise, no one said, "please," and no one appealed to my emotions. It was as though confrontation and violence were the only conflict resolution methods at their disposal. Given my observations of the girls in their living environment, this lack of creativity was fairly predictable.

The second theme that emerged was an unwillingness to act out conflict scenarios based on personal experience. This was amply illustrated during session thirteen when I asked the girls to share their happiest and saddest memories with a partner or partners. Once the girls had completed this task, I instructed the participants to select one happy and one sad memory to enact on stage. I gave the pairs ten minutes to prepare and I walked around to answer questions and guide each pair in their rehearsal. After ten minutes elapsed, each pair performed their skit, performing their happiest memories first.

I was surprised to find that only one group followed directions and enacted an actual, lived event. The rest just came up with a short skit for the sake of performance. For the happiest memory, Maryam, age twelve, and Hawwa, age fourteen, performed a skit about going to a "disco," eating dinner, and "drinking beer." Sarah, age thirteen, and Christina performed a skit about eating massive quantities of *kasha* or porridge, a food that is universally despised by the boarders. Finally, Jana, age nine, Gabriella, age ten, and Teresa acted out a scene in which a teacher was quizzing her students and none of the students knew the answers. I asked all of the girls why they chose to act out those particular memories and no one could explain their reasoning.

I then instructed the girls to select one of their saddest memories and enact that memory on stage. I was careful to explain that the memories should be actual events. I also suggested concrete examples such as times when they had failed an exam or got into trouble. Hawwa and Maryam were first to perform. Hawwa played Sister Martha and Maryam played herself. In the skit, Maryam was called to Sister Martha's office for pushing Miss Haneen, an English teacher. Sister Martha then grabbed Maryam's ear and hit her on the bottom. The skit ended when Sister Martha sent Maryam to stand in the corner. Sarah and Christina were next and performed a short skit in which Christina fell down and hurt her knee. Finally, Jana, Gabriella, and Teresa performed a skit in which a child hit her mother and the father intervened by shaking the child violently.

After the performances, I asked the girls to sit down in a circle and reflect on what they saw and performed. Maryam and Hawwa said that their skit never actually happened and that they chose to perform it because they misunderstood the directions. Sarah said that her saddest memory was when her friend died after getting hit by a truck outside the monastery gates. I asked Sarah why

she didn't perform a skit based on this memory and she said it was "too sad." The third group revealed that their skit was based on something Teresa had witnessed at home. I asked Teresa how it felt to perform in the skit and she said it made her "sad." Finally, I asked the girls to evaluate the activity on a scale of one to ten. Hawwa, Sarah, Gabriella, Christina, and Teresa all gave the activity a zero explaining that it was boring because all they did was "talk." Maryam and Jana, however, both gave the activity a ten and said it was "very interesting." Nevertheless, this was the least successful activity in any drama session, as the participants reminded me several times, and I did my utmost to promote fictional distance in subsequent sessions.

The third theme that developed over the course of the drama sessions was participant in-fighting and poor behavior. This emerged as a problem early on and I responded to it by instituting a warning system beginning in session three. According to the system, if a girl misbehaved, she would receive up to three warnings. The first warning was a verbal warning and did not result in any penalty. If the girl continued to misbehave, she earned a second warning. Two warnings meant that the girl would not receive a prize at the end of the session.[4] If the girl acted out again, she received a third warning and I instructed her to leave the session. Although the girls were all happy to participate in the drama sessions and often asked if we could have extra sessions, they inevitably received multiple warnings during each session. Sadly, I had to ask Gabriella, Teresa, and Jana to leave a drama session at least once. The participants' poor behavior regularly led to crying, fighting, name-calling, and teasing and put a damper on otherwise enjoyable activities.

Three themes also emerged during the five sessions I facilitated with the 10th grade students. The first theme was powerlessness. All of the girls expressed a sense of powerlessness when faced with conflict either during drama sessions or in their journals. In session four, Lucy wrote in her drama log, "…I can't solve any problems. I don't know why; I hate problems." After session four, Emily wrote, "Some people don't like to know their problem, and if you fix the problem, you will be wrong as always!! So I will not do anything!" After session five, Emily wrote, "I

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[4] Christina first introduced prizes in session four and I carried on the tradition of distributing small amounts of candy to well-behaved participants from sessions five through twenty.

don't like (conflict) very much because I feel like I am controlled by someone and so I am weak" (See Appendix 5).

A second theme was gratitude. All of the girls thanked me regularly for spending time with them. After session two, Angelina wrote, "I'm happy because I spent time with a great lady." After session four, Lucy noted, "Thank you for doing these activities with me," and following the same session, Emily wrote, "Thank you. You are so kind!" These statements coupled with conversations I had with the girls and my observations of their behavior during the drama sessions, led me to believe that the 10th grade students were not engaging in meaningful interactions with their teachers and perhaps not even with their parents and elder relatives. They were starved for adult attention and grateful for the little time I spent with them.

The third theme that emerged was a willingness to try new things. The 10th grade students occasionally expressed trepidation when I asked them to participate in a strange or uncomfortable situation but, overall, they were willing and able to engage in every activity. This willingness to take risks is incredibly important to educational drama since learning most often occurs when participants willingly put themselves in uncomfortable positions. If participants were unwilling to explore difficult feelings and alternative points of view, they would have gotten little out of the drama sessions.

5.2.   Research Question 2

How can educational drama empower female, Palestinian adolescents to transform perceived conflicts?

This project demonstrated that educational drama can initiate empowerment processes among young, disempowered actors involved in an on-going, identity dispute. By engaging in imaginative exercises, participants were able to better understand and relate to each other and empathize with alleged enemies. Moreover, participants were able to cultivate and utilize their capacities to make decisions and act upon them. All of this was made possible by educational drama techniques that enabled participants to experience and explore socially constructive strategies for conflict transformation in a safe and supportive environment.

5.2.1. Empathy

One of the most important outcomes of the drama program was the development of cognitive and emotional empathy for perceived adversaries. All participants were able to put themselves in someone else's shoes during role-plays and several expressed a profound understanding for the feelings of others. The most notable example of cognitive empathetic development occurred with the 10th grade drama group during session two. In this session, participants spontaneously brought up their disappointment that the school would not open an 11th grade class the following year thus forcing them to attend another school. They talked about how they absolutely did not want to change schools and one girl even started crying. Despite the gravity of the situation, this proved an excellent segue way for a conflict-centered role-play.

I asked two girls to perform in a scene in which a student comes to Sister Martha's office to try to convince Sister Martha to open an 11th grade class. The participants took the activity seriously and both the "student" and "Sister Martha" gave compelling performances. After the scene was finished, I asked Emily, who was sitting in the audience, to comment on the performances. Emily said that she thought "Sister Martha" was more "convincing" than "the student." So I asked the girls who participated in the original scene to switch roles and try again. They did and once the second scene was completed we had a lively discussion about the situation and the best ways to approach Sister Martha. I suggested that they stick to their own feelings rather than accusing Sister Martha of going back on her word. I also suggested that they put themselves in Sister Martha's shoes and think about "where she was coming from." They agreed to take all of this under consideration and made plans to speak to Sister Martha the following day.

Ultimately, Sister Martha did not agree to open grade 11 but the girls reported that they were less disturbed by this decision after exploring Sister Martha's position through role-play. The participants recognized that there were not enough students to open grade 11 and acknowledged that Sister Martha wanted to keep the 10th grade students at school the following year. While the participants did not achieve the result they sought, they were able to understand and accept the outcome of their perceived conflict by figuratively stepping into Sister Martha's shoes.

Although the boarding girls did not experience a similar break-through in their relationships with Sister Martha, they did develop emotional empathy for each other by collaborating and playing together in each session. Their empathetic development was best illustrated during session fifteen when they participated in *I like you because…* (Levy, 2005: 179-180). In this activity, participants stand in two, parallel lines facing each other. The participants in line A begin the exercise by saying three things that they like about the person directly across from them in line B. Once the person in line A is finished, the person in line B does the same. When all participants are finished, the line shifts and the activity begins again. This was a fantastic way for the boarding girls to express themselves positively to each other. I could tell that they had difficulty putting their thoughts into words but everyone managed to do it in the end.[5] During the evaluation, everyone gave the activity high marks and, after the session, it was obvious that the girls had grown a bit closer when many of the girls left the session arm in arm.

5.2.2. Agency

Agency was another important outcome of the drama program. As written above, the 10th grade participants were able to engage with and address a deeply disturbing conflict at school during drama session two. While the boarding girls were far less engaged with conflict analysis and the exploration of creative conflict-handling strategies, these participants demonstrated increased self-esteem and higher levels of agency as a result of their participation.

The boarding girls demonstrated increased agency through active collaboration in the planning of drama projects and, eventually, co-facilitation of drama sessions. Christina, age eleven, first approached me with an idea for a drama activity after session three. I gave her my support and asked her if she needed any help. She said no and that she would do everything herself. This was both intriguing and impressive since several of the nuns and caretakers had told me that Christina had extremely low self-esteem and in the words of one volunteer, "was afraid of everything including her own shadow." Of course, I didn't mention my surprise to Christina herself but I did say that I was looking forward to working with her.

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[5] I encouraged the girls to speak to each other in Arabic in this and many other activities. However, the girls seemed reluctant to speak Arabic in front of me and regularly chose to speak English.

During the fourth drama session, Christina facilitated *Dress Up*, an activity in which Christina paired a "young" girl with an "old" girl and instructed the "old" girl in each pair to dress the "young" girl in appropriate clothes, which she had piled in the center of the room. The first pair to successfully dress the "young" girl won. We played the game twice and everyone seemed to have a fantastic time including Christina who had obviously put a lot of thought into the activity. I was a bit surprised by this but embraced the opportunity to turn over some of my tasks to an interested project participant.

After Christina facilitated *Dress Up*, she began to approach me about activities and ideas on a daily basis. She suggested that I give out prizes to well behaved girls at the end of each session, something that I immediately implemented along with a warning system. She also told me which activities were working well and which activities "were not so fun" and she even made several suggestions as to how to improve the unsuccessful activities. Eventually, Christina facilitated multiple activities during drama sessions and even administered an entire drama session on her own. Christina's engagement also prompted Maryam and Hawwa to facilitate subsequent activities.

5.2.3. Experiential Learning

One of the principle reasons why educational drama works is because it facilitates learning by doing or what is known in education as *experiential learning*. Participants do not sit back and relax while the facilitator lectures, nor do they engage in a series of writing or reading activities. Educational drama demands that the participants experience a conflict situation and use all means at their disposal to address it. This process engages the mind, body, and heart through a series of meaningful role-plays and analytical discussions. Although some of the teachers I encountered were wary of experiential learning, the students were extremely grateful for any opportunity to employ and develop personal agency and express themselves creatively.

As previously noted, 10th grade participants did not simply discuss the problem they were having with Sister Martha; they experienced it through fictionalized negotiations. Additionally, both the 10th grade and boarding groups experienced what it feels like to be both powerful and powerless through games such as *Queen for a Minute* (based on *King and Queen*, Levy, 2005: 173-175),

Yes, let's… (Levy, 2005: 208-210), and *Whisper in the Ear* (DRACON, 2005: 434). Both groups also experienced the challenges and rewards of cooperation by participating in *Count Off*, (Levy, 2005: 76-78), *Activity Starter* (Levy, 2005: 93-94), and *Rug Flip* (Levy, 2005: 97-98). Finally, both groups experienced nonviolent persuasion by participating in *Yes/No* (Vinthagen, 2010*b*) and *Don't Think of the Color Black!* (Levy, 2005: 85-87). Consequently, I could immediately perceive the positive effects of experiential learning after each drama session (See Appendix 6 for a description of select drama activities employed in this project).

These experiential exercises allowed participants to meaningfully engage with the attitudes and behaviors that Galtung identifies as key factors in the creation and perpetuation of conflict (See Ramsbotham *et al.*, 2009: 9). Participants explore the attitudes of various parties by imagining what these parties are thinking and figuratively stepping into their shoes to explore possible avenues of action. Likewise, participants try out different behaviors that can be used to diffuse, sustain, and even escalate conflict. This not only provides participants with knowledge of different ways of reacting to problems but allows them to experience how those reactions feel and are perceived by others. Once participants have experienced different attitudes and behaviors they can then apply these insights and practices to actual disputes.

5.3. Research Question 3

What are the effects of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the Palestinian educational context on the design and outcome of an educational drama program?

The IPC and the Palestinian educational context both necessitate school-based, educational drama programs and condition the ways in which such programs function. The trickle-down effects of the IPC including conflict avoidance and eruption as well as disempowerment and devolving identification with difference provide the raw materials for educational drama programs. While these perceptions and conflict-handling styles are deeply engrained and difficult to alter, this project showed that they can be explored during educational drama sessions. Moreover, while the Palestinian educational context does not provide many opportunities for the creative exploration of conflict or the development of pro-social conflict-handling, competencies there is an emerging

willingness on the part of students and teachers to explore innovative educational techniques. All of this provides excellent opportunities for the application and development of future programs.

5.3.1. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

In the following section, I will outline how the IPC affected the design and outcome of my educational research project through examination of the following questions: What does the IPC imply for educational-drama programs? Are such programs feasible in this context? Can drama empower participants to transform conflicts into opportunities for social development?

Throughout my six months in the field, I observed the ways in which conflict behaviors, attitudes, and contradictions stemming from the IPC trickled down into project participants' conflict perceptions and handling styles. This is consistent with the nested paradigm outlined by Lederach (1997) and provides insight into the ways in which individuals transfer their experiences from one conflict to the next. In the Palestinian context, most of the people I encountered were not only exhausted with conflict, they actively avoided them. These behaviors clearly reflected years of active, violent conflict with the state of Israel and conditioned the ways in which Palestinians perceived conflict in all parts of their lives. I asked Rezan, a resident of the small, Palestinian town where I conducted Research Cycles 2 and 3, about her experiences during the *Second Intifada*, specifically if she had witnessed fighting in the surrounding area. She responded, "I remember…our neighbor here got shot and the other one got arrested during the *Intifada*. But…when we see such things happening, we don't, you know, we don't get involved. We try as much as possible to stay away from it" (Rezan, 2011).

Unfortunately, conflict avoidance leads to conflict eruption when an individual feels he or she is pushed over the edge. This may explain why the *First* and *Second Intifadas* seemed to erupt out of nowhere as well as why the boarding girls tended to explode when repeatedly bullied by their peers and caretakers. In these instances, breaking points were breached and emotional, violent conflict behaviors were virtually inevitable. The consequences of suppression and eruption were violently illustrated just before I started Research Cycle 2, when a bakery was burned down near CGS. I asked Rezan what happened and she said that a fight had ensued between two families after a man working in the bakery treated a female customer in an unacceptable fashion. Rezan

remarked, "There was a fight between two families and they tried to solve it among themselves. Of course, someone needs to be killed on both sides" (*Ibid.*). Rezan made this statement in jest but it aptly illustrated the destructive protocols routinely employed by community members to address problems which are, in turn, modeled in front of young people.

Another far-reaching consequence of the IPC that further underscored the need for an educational drama program was a persistent feeling of disempowerment. Many Palestinians, including the majority of teachers at CGS, express their feelings of disempowerment through the recurrent use of a prison metaphor. They point to what is known in Israel as the security barrier that physically divides the WB from the state of Israel and say that the wall effectively imprisons them on a small, economically depressed piece of land.[6] Whenever I asked why they did not try to do something about the wall, which is less than one kilometer away from the school site, they looked at me and either said that I was crazy or asked me why I wanted them dead. Unfortunately, feelings of powerlessness are endemic among Palestinian teachers and the majority of WB residents that I encountered during my research as well as the majority of students at CGS as discussed above.

The IPC has also led to the *Somalization* or fragmentation of identities in Palestine. Consequently, internal divisions between Palestinians create an atmosphere in which identity is not only a reflection of personal beliefs but also a provocative statement of alliances and perceived enemies. Christians are pitted against Muslims. Those who do not possess the necessary identification to leave the WB and enter Israel resent those who do. Members of *Fatah*, the dominant political party in the WB, regard members of *Hamas*, the dominant political party in Gaza, as a threat to their existence. Palestinian Arabs distinguish themselves from Bedouins who live in their community. I asked Rezan about her Bedouin neighbors and she said that while there were plenty living nearby, she never associated with them. In fact, she said, "I would not even consider interacting with them because their mentality and their way of thinking are very much different from mine" (Rezan, 2011). This statement was striking coming from such a perceptive

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[6] 7 out of 8 respondents to the Teacher Questionnaire commented on the negative impact the separation wall has on their lives and the lives of their students.

and open-minded individual but attested to the seemingly unalterable biases and boundaries associated with a psychologically constructed *other*.

Devolving identification with difference not only necessitates intervention, it points to the importance of developing empathy among Palestinians. This was important element of my project where participants were not only encouraged to empathetically understand Israelis but also to appreciate Palestinians who came from different religious, political, and ideological backgrounds. This provided participants with an opportunity to better understand their neighbors and helped them to see the importance of concentrating on similarities rather than differences.

The IPC also had profound effects on the outcomes of my project. First, because participants had grown up in this conflict context, they knew that conflicts have the potential to degenerate into violence and most valued the opportunity to learn and practice constructive conflict-handling skills. Second, despite the negative effects of the IPC on their lives, the participants were open to the idea of approaching their perceived conflicts differently. At times, this open-mindedness seemed odd and even contradictory but the youth and creativity of my participants appeared to override the social tensions and disparities that they faced on a daily basis. This may explain why Sarah, age 13, had an epiphany early in Research Cycle 3. When I asked her how she perceived the dispute between Israel and Palestinian she responded, "I want to tell the Palestinian people to stop fighting and to love Israel and to be good. Then I want to welcome Israel and say the same to them. To say that, 'Palestine loves you'" (Sarah, 2010).[7] While it is impossible to conclude that Sarah's sentiments were directly connected to her participation in drama sessions, they are undeniably unique and an interesting point of departure for future interventions.

Over the course of my study, I found that conflict avoidance and eruption, the constant state of fear, sense of disempowerment, and fractionalization could be addressed through educational drama. By engaging with conflict playfully and creatively, participants began to realize that problems could be addressed before they escalated into violent altercations. The participants also

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[7] This interview was conducted in English and Russian with the help of a translator. This allowed Sarah to express herself in Russian, the language she uses daily to speak with her caretakers.

learned that conflicts were an opportunity to build and improve relationships with perceived adversaries. Finally, participants demonstrated that despite their challenging backgrounds and realities, they were able to engage with conflicts constructively.

5.3.2. The Palestinian Educational Context

I spent six months volunteering, working, and collaborating in several Palestinian schools including one public school, two private schools, and two youth centers. As a result, I was well positioned to explore the effects of the Palestinian educational context on the design and outcome of an educational drama program through micro-ethnography. Below, I discuss the ways that this context necessitates and complicates educational drama programming.

Educational drama programming is necessary in Palestinian for two reasons. First, the Palestinian educational system does not provide conflict training to students. Instead the educational system perpetuates a feeling of victimhood and powerlessness. Lynne Rankin-Clark, Senior Training Advisor for Model Schools Network (MSN),[8] put this succinctly when she said, "I feel that there has to be a way that (Palestinians) can see themselves as stronger. But they don't and the education system could bolster that but it doesn't" (2011).

This lack of conflict preparation has many possible explanations. It may be that employees and administrators at the Palestinian Ministry of Education do not have the autonomy to implement such programs. According to Rankin-Clark, "They are very donor-reliant at the Ministry. And so their challenge is to get the donors to fund things that are most useful whereas the donors want to fund things that are glossy" (2011). Donors pay for the construction of science labs and school buildings but they do not, necessarily, fund projects that are critically needed in the Palestinian context such as educational drama and conflict transformation training. Khalid Massou, founder and chairperson of Inad Theater in Beit Jala, comments, "In Palestine…our situation is not easy and theater isn't the first priority in our daily lives and inside our curriculum" (2011).

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[8] MSN was established in 2007 by the United States Agency for International Development under the auspices of the America-Middle East Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) program to "build institutional capacity in the Palestinian school system" (AMIDEAST, 2011).

Another possible explanation for inadequate conflict-handling preparation is a lack of practical training among teachers. The vast majority of Palestinian teachers have at least some university training in the subjects they teach but few receive training in teaching methods or ways in which to resolve conflicts inside their classrooms. According to Rankin-Clark, "It is not compulsory for people to take an education course if they want to be teachers (in Palestine)" (2011). Sister Martha and I spoke at length about this problem and I frequently observed the effects of lack of teacher training during classroom visits. The teachers seemed extremely knowledgeable in their subjects but less knowledgeable of pedagogical strategies.

Several teachers at CGS addressed this problem in the Teacher Questionnaire. When asked, "Do you feel that your education adequately prepared you for a job as a teacher?" a science teacher with fifteen years of experience responded, "No, my education would be adequate if I worked in a company that synthesizes medicine or shampoos or soaps… I think that I should have studied methods of teaching before I started teaching at school." A math teacher with thirteen years of experience wrote, "Not at all, because I studied engineering and this is not related to teaching… and because of this I started to search knowledge first from colleagues and through teaching girls I gained the experience of what methods are more suitable, and I then use the internet through which I found solutions to many issues and difficulties."

Aside from the lack of conflict transformation training in Palestinian classrooms, another persistent problem is the generation gap between teachers who vividly remember the *First* and *Second Intifadas* and students who were not cognitively aware of these chapters in Palestinian history. According to Rankin-Clark, "There's just a lack of awareness (among adults and teachers) of what it is to be a child today. And I understand that it comes from the Occupation; it comes from their own childhoods because at their time it was very, very difficult… it's less difficult now because kids can have exposure to the outside world and a future with possibilities" (2011).

Rankin-Clark's assessment was largely confirmed by my conversations with and observations of teachers at CGS as well as the data I collected in the Teacher Questionnaire. A math teacher with thirteen years of teaching experience captured these sentiments when she stated:

I grew up under occupation. I was once a student and we suffered a lot especially in the first uprising. My school was in --- and it was closed several times. I was arrested and I spent six days in prison. I was in tawjihi class (grade 12) and it was a critical period of time. I know a classmate who has lost this year because she was arrested for two years. I saw in prison many students who were beaten. I visited the hospital and I saw many students from many places in the West Bank and Gaza. They were injured and some of them had severe injury in the head. It was horrible and it affected me a lot. Too many things are memorized and affected me as a student.

These tragic experiences are a haunting reminder of the difficulties many teachers faced while growing up under Israeli Occupation but it would be unfortunate if any teacher prepared her students for a life of violence and uncertainty rather than one of hope and possibility. It is impossible to conclude that these teachers cannot look beyond their own personal experiences but it is plausible that their lives and outlooks were forever altered and continue to influence the ways in which they interact with people today.

When I asked teachers if they discussed the Occupation with their students 6 out of 8 replied with an emphatic *yes*. An Arabic teacher with fifteen years of experience responded, "There are many subjects in the student's books about the Palestinian situation and about occupation in general. We discuss the negative effects." A second Arabic teacher with fifteen years of experience stated, "The occupation is part of our lives. We can't avoid talking about it because we are all suffering. We ask them to write, draw, say what they are feeling about the killed children, the cut trees, the broken dreams." A third Arabic teacher with ten years of teaching experience commented, "In 6th grade we have a lesson in the book about prison (Israeli prisons). Occupation is related to prisons because they took people who participate in Actions against occupation and they prison them and that affects their children and it's difficult to live without freedom."

While teachers carry their lived experiences with them into the classroom, student perceptions of the Occupation are largely shaped by the narratives of their families, friends, and teachers.[9] Many

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[9] Unfortunately, many adolescents in Palestine have experienced conflict first-hand. As a result, my goal is not to generalize about the experiences of all Palestinian students but to stress the importance of conflict analysis in determining the most appropriate forms of intervention.

students have encountered checkpoints and know someone who was imprisoned or killed by Israeli soldiers but no student I worked with had experienced such horrors personally. When I asked students about their Occupation experiences, most shrugged and gave an ambiguous reply such as, "Israel took many things from Palestine," (Hawwa, 2010) or "Israel soldiers hurt small children and old women" (7th grade student). If I asked for clarification, most students mentioned the Gaza War or a child that had been trapped or hurt by Israeli authorities (Hawwa, 2010) but none spoke of personal experiences. This indicates that students at CGS have reached a different point of conflict escalation than their teachers and thus require different types of conflict intervention. It also points to the problems inherent in programming facilitated by adults whose conflict experiences and awareness may have an unintended effect on participants.

A third problem in the Palestinian educational context is that students are not given many opportunities to creatively imagine a better future via artistic expression. Performing and visual arts are not prioritized in Palestinian education and, while there is a growing willingness to change and develop on the part of teachers and school staff, most do not possess the requisite skills and training to facilitate such programs. Nonetheless, Massou is confident that more teachers will seek training in the arts and more money will be allocated to creative, artistic endeavors at school sites. According to Massou, "When we started theater twenty years ago, schools, they…were thinking that, we don't have time for drama. We don't have space inside the curriculum to have drama workshops. But now there's awareness. Now we can knock on the door of the Ministry of Education and Culture and they are supporting us" (2011). In fact, two drama schools have recently been established in the WB in the cities of Jenin and Ramallah.

Both the IPC and the Palestinian educational context illuminate the potentials and drawbacks of implementing educational drama for empowerment and conflict transformation in Palestinian schools. On the one hand, the conflict has created a situation in which funding, training, and interest are limited to the absolute necessities and constructive conflict-handling is not among them. On the other hand, there is increasing awareness of the importance of the arts in schools as well as an emergent willingness to devote limited resources to such programs. All of this points to a need for further research into the role and efficacy of educational drama programs in the oPt.

Chapter 6   Discussion

"If (your adversary) screams, don't scream,
don't yell, find something creative to help you solve the conflict."
—Adriana, 10th grade project participant

6.1.   Empirical and Theoretical Implications

The following is an exploration of the ways in which project findings may contribute to empirical practices and theoretical understandings of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation as well as opportunities for future research employing these concepts.

6.1.1. Educational Drama

The project demonstrated that educational drama is a viable vehicle for empowerment. As previously noted, the vast majority of students at CGS felt they were unable to confront conflicts constructively. Lucy, a 10th grade project participant, lamented, "…I can't solve any problems. I don't know why; I hate problems." When I asked Hawwa, the eldest boarding girl, whether or not she could stop others from fighting or solve her own problems, she shrugged and gestured no. However, both of these girls as well as the majority of their peers embraced the conflict transformation strategies introduced during drama sessions and regularly expressed the idea that conflicts were not as "scary" as they used to think. In her final journal entry, Lucy even expressed her gratitude for my "help" in teaching her that conflict was an opportunity rather than a catastrophe. Unfortunately, the limited amount of time that I spent with Lucy and the 10th grade students meant that their progress towards empowerment was restricted but Lucy's gratitude coupled with the changes I observed in her behavior were striking.

The project also showed that educational drama is conducive to conflict transformation. Conflict transformation is predicated upon the development of a nonviolent outlook on social interactions in addition to the requisite skills to respond to conflict creatively. Participants are able to explore different approaches to conflict in educational drama via role-play in which they take on the persona of various actors including antagonists, protagonists, and bystanders. The opportunity to

step into the shoes of others encourages participants to think of new and innovative ways to address a problem because participants are less likely to opt for violence or punishment when they are suddenly on the receiving end.

The capacity for educational drama to promote conflict transformation was perhaps most evident in the 10th grade participants' journal entries (See Appendix 5). After session four, Adriana reflected, "I have figured out that conflict may be as small as I imagine and as big as I want and we could misunderstand things about conflicts when we see them wrong, because we don't know what's truly happening." In the same entry, Adriana wrote, "I learnt that conflict can be…fixed by trying to be creative and not reacting the same as the other acts. So if they scream don't scream, don't yell, find something creative to help you solve the conflict." These statements were profound coming from a participant who had recently written, "My biggest problem is that I speak quickly and lots of time I regret what I said especially when I am angry. So I want you to help me to control my feelings because I really hate to hurt someone's feelings or say something that I regret later. Can you help me?!" The rapid evolution of Adriana's attitude towards conflict showed that she was well on her way to acquiring the skills and outlook necessary to transform conflicts from destructive aberrations into opportunities for positive, social change.

Educational drama has the capacity to facilitate empowerment and conflict transformation in a limited time period because it engages participants in entertaining, experiential scenarios. Students are able to learn and understand quickly because they do not passively sit back and listen, they actively engage in drama activities and reflect upon those activities verbally and/or in writing. The interesting thing about experiential learning in Palestine is that it is inconsistent with traditional teaching methods. However, students were quick to embrace experiential learning through educational drama and even asked me to encourage their teachers to employ it during regular lessons.

6.1.2. *Empowerment*
This project also helped elucidate the concept of empowerment in three important ways. First, the project demonstrated that promotion of *agency* is more important than the creation of *opportunity structure*. Alsop implies that both agency and opportunity structure must be in place for

empowerment to occur (2006: 10) but this project has shown that empowerment is possible even if favorable opportunity structures are absent. This was illustrated in the 10th grade sessions when participants put themselves in the shoes of powerful people. The girls may not have been in a position to significantly affect the decisions of their teachers, school administrators, or Israeli soldiers but the process of imagining fruitful interactions with powerful actors helped develop their capacity to interact with these figures. Furthermore, once participants develop personal agency, they are able to confront and alter oppressive social conditions. Again, this was illustrated in 10th grade drama sessions. At the beginning of the project, most participants were conflict averse and felt disempowered to address and solve personal problems. But, by fifth session, most participants realized that conflicts were not inherently destructive and they expressed confidence in dealing with personal problems such as Sister Martha's refusal to open an 11th grade class.

Second, the project demonstrated that participant vision is the foremost resource for empowerment. While empowerment can be facilitated, it cannot be imposed. The key to successful empowerment projects is prioritizing the needs, knowledge, and experiences of participants over the goals and visions of donors and practitioners. The importance of participant vision became clear when Christina, a participant in the boarding girls' drama project, started making suggestions about the content and organization of drama sessions. As an adult researcher with a clear vision for the sessions, I could have easily dismissed Christina's ideas as the whims of an 11-year-old child. In fact, I was tempted to reject her suggestions when a few of those suggestions failed. Luckily, I realized that neither Christina nor any of the participants would benefit from me controlling the project. And I was right; it was when I ceded control to Christina and the other participants that empowerment began to occur. Moreover, my affirmation of the importance of their voices and visions helped the participants become invested in the project.

Third, the project confirmed the importance of viewing empowerment as a long-term process rather than short-term event. This became clear when I contacted Sister Martha one month after leaving Palestine to ask if the boarding girls were still holding drama sessions. Sister Martha replied that the girls had held several sessions after my departure but that the sessions were discontinued when they degenerated into fighting. I was disappointed to hear this but I realized

that this alone did not indicate failure. Sister Martha went on to say that many positive changes had occurred at the monastery and CGS. Most notably, Sister Martha said that she and the caretakers had made positive improvements in the ways they took care of the girls. She also commented that she had not appreciated the importance of the drama project until I left and she enthusiastically invited me to return as soon as possible (Martha, 2011). In addition to my correspondence with Sister Martha, I have also kept in contact with Adriana and several of the teachers with which I worked. After I left, Adriana sent me an email in which she commented that the drama program "helped her gain insight into the complexities" of conflict and that she and her classmates still remembered it fondly (Adriana, 2011). Several teachers have told me that they are still employing the strategies that I presented during teaching workshops and the art teacher confirmed that she has incorporated drama into her curriculum. While these changes in actions and attitudes may not have been the overall goal of the project, they are significant and point to a developing process of empowerment at CGS.

6.1.3. Conflict Transformation

The project also highlighted several additions and modifications to conflict transformation theories and practices. First, the project demonstrated that conflict behaviors and attitudes employed in the IPC are also employed by young people in the occupied WB. This is best evidenced by the *Somalization* of identities in Palestine. Thus the boarding girls found it difficult to see themselves as similar or united and tended to focus on their differences, both real and imagined. The girls divided themselves into "older girls" and "younger girls." Within these age groups, there were "pretty girls" and "ugly girls," "smart girls" and "stupid girls," even "reliable girls" and "useless girls." The boarding girls not only embraced these divisions, which were often assigned and reinforced by their caretakers and teachers, they repeatedly invoked them in daily disagreements.

It is impossible to conclude that the boarding girls were pushed into fragmented identity disputes by the IPC but the parallels between their perceived identity divisions and perceived divisions between Palestinians and Israelis, Christians and Muslims, Bedouins and Palestinian Arabs, etc. are striking. These disputes are founded upon devolving identification with difference rather than appreciation for similarity and must be addressed through systemic efforts of conflict

transformation whereby interested individuals attempt to understand the underlying issues and attitudes that promote conflict. It also shows the importance of implementing conflict transformation programs among Palestinians who need to address stereotypes of the Israeli as well as the Palestinian *other* before they can effectively engage with contradictions stemming from the IPC. This project demonstrated that drama activities such as *Change Seats If…* and *I like you because…* have the capacity to help participants realize their similarities and celebrate rather than demonize their differences.

Furthermore, the project highlighted an important role for third parties in societies in which students and teachers have vastly different understandings of prevalent social conflicts and appropriate methods of conflict-handling. In the Palestinian case, students are not fully conscious of the implications and injustices of the IPC and thus need exposure to constructive, nonviolent approaches to conflict in order to contribute to sustainable peace-building (Lederach, 1997: 64). Palestinian teachers, however, are not only conscious of but scarred by traumas suffered during the *First* and *Second Intifadas*. These teachers are less hopeful of an improved future and more likely to bully those they view as less powerful than themselves. These teachers are not ideally suited to aid their students in dispelling stereotypes and humanizing *the other* because inequality, injustice, and instability are deeply ingrained.

These unfortunate results of generational conflict suggest that outside help is needed. This is interesting since, as Anderson suggests, third party intervention can support peace as well as war. As a result, it is incumbent upon third parties to design and implement interventions that "do no harm" while simultaneously providing critically needed aid (Anderson, 1999). Peace education and conflict transformation training may be the ideal venues for outsiders to intervene and help adolescents develop empathy and agency as well as to humanize *the other*. This is not to say that local teachers are incapable of teaching students nonviolent conflict transformation techniques, nor is it to say that outsiders are innately aware of constructive ways to address unique conflicts. Both of these assumptions are foolish and counter-productive. But it is interesting to explore the ways in which outsiders can effectively contribute to social development in contexts of ongoing conflict.

The project also elucidated the link between conflict transformation and empathy. Lederach maintains that conflict transformation is relationship-centric. The project showed that this idea can be taken a step further and conflict transformation can be seen as empathy-centric. It is not enough for people to have a relationship with each other as relationships can deteriorate into destructive associations. The best means for preventing this is to understand the beliefs, motivations, and unique experiences of *the other* whether they are your caretaker, your friend, your teacher, your cousin, your neighbor, or even your enemy. Empathy shores up the cracks of broken relationships and helps those relationships evolve. The most profound accomplishment of my project was the development of empathetic understandings of *the other*. The 10th grade students did this when figuratively stepped into Sister Martha's shoes and the boarding girls did this when they played games that helped them to appreciate and collaborate with each other.

Likewise, the project showed that the *moral imagination* can be fostered in practice. Lederach is quite persuasive in his contention that the best way to address conflict is by building "the capacity to imagine and generate constructive responses and initiatives that, while rooted in the day-to-day challenges of violent settings, transcend and ultimately break the grips of those destructive patterns and cycles" (2005: 182). However, he does not provide a formula for the social development of the *moral imagination*. This is problematic since a population must be prepared to engage in conflict transformation before conflicts deteriorate into violence. These preparations take a significant amount of time and require concerted effort.

The preceding project indicated that an effective venue for such preparation is school. School is one of the few social forums to which the vast majority of the members of many societies devote years, if not decades, of their lives. School is a place where students not only learn about core subjects such as language, mathematics, and history, but where they develop social skills and competencies through repetitive interactions with peers, teachers, and administrators. Therefore, school is an ideal location for the introduction of conflict transformation theory and practice and one in which the *moral imagination* can flourish.

In the Palestinian context, the systemic development of the *moral imagination* in schools is especially important. If students are not adequately prepared to confront conflicts constructively,

there is a palpable risk that conflicts will not only devolve into violence but also continue to incapacitate Palestinian society for the foreseeable future. Currently, educational achievement is relatively high in Palestine but opportunities to employ university degrees are limited. The ongoing conflict has derailed the Palestinian economy and will continue to do so as long as the WB remains occupied and Palestinians remain ill prepared to confront conflict constructively.

6.2. Recommendations for Future Research

DRACON provided an excellent springboard for academic inquiry into the fields of pro-social conflict-handling, empowerment, and drama. I sincerely hope this project will inspire additional research in these fields. If I could design future projects, I would investigate the following:

6.2.1. Bilingual and Collaborative Programming

I embarked upon this journey as a novice researcher with limited funds, experience, knowledge, and contacts. Consequently, it was simply not feasible to collaborate with existing Palestinian organizations to facilitate a bilingual program. This was problematic since I was unable to interact with program participants in Arabic, their native language. While I did encourage participants to express themselves in Arabic whenever possible, most participants elected to speak English in my presence. This undoubtedly limited the participants' abilities to express themselves clearly and completely during drama sessions.

If I had the opportunity to return to Palestine, I would collaborate with native Arabic speakers and/or existing Palestinian organizations to facilitate a bilingual program and investigate the following: How does the dynamic of an educational drama program change when it is facilitated in the participants' native language? What are the costs and benefits of a bilingual program facilitated by a third party in collaboration with a native speaker? Are empowerment opportunities limited when participants feel obligated to express themselves in a non-native language? Are conflict transformation skills such as empathy and agency more effectively learned when introduced and explored in the native language of program participants? What are the benefits of participating in a program in a non-native language? Can participation in such programs cultivate skills and competencies such as cooperation and empathy?

6.2.2. Joint Israeli-Palestinian Programs

Given additional resources, contacts, and time, it would also be interesting to explore the efficacy of educational drama programs involving both Palestinian and Israeli youth. Specifically, could joint Israeli-Palestinian programs increase empathy and agency through experiential learning? Would participants feel more empowered to transform conflicts into opportunities for positive, social change after interacting with their perceived adversaries? Could participants disregard negative social images of *the other* and create meaningful relationships? Schulz has demonstrated the value of a joint Israeli-Palestinian program among university students (2008) but can researchers replicate these successes among younger populations? Finally, how would such programs be effected by and influence the IPC context? In other words, would checkpoints and Israeli regulations make such programs impossible? If Israeli and Palestinian participants are able to come together to explore constructive conflict-handling strategies via educational drama could participants then become advocates for peace within their respective communities?

6.2.3. Conflict Transformation and Educational Systems

Most action researchers come to a point in which they develop a list of ideas and actions they would realize if they ran the world. The top of my list is the implementation of conflict transformation programs in all school systems. This, of course, is a pipedream partly because peace education is neither an educational nor a financial priority and partly because government leaders seem to feel threatened by the democratic and humanitarian values inherent in educating students to transform conflicts. However, if Lederach teaches us anything it is to dream the impossible dream.

Perhaps, it is feasible to introduce and study educational drama for conflict transformation in every school in a discrete location such as the WB. It would be fascinating to investigate the affects of such a systemic program on Palestinian society in general and the IPC in particular. Specifically, could a large group of children and youth effectively develop their *moral imaginations* inside the classroom? Would such programs confirm Lederach's nested paradigm and demonstrate that individuals transfer knowledge, skills, and experiences from one context to another? Would a program facilitated by teachers who may have been traumatized by earlier conflict experiences negatively impact participants and program outcomes? Can teachers be

trained to utilize negative conflict experiences to help students understand the importance of conflict transformation? Is it possible or desirable to introduce conflict transformation as a mandatory school subject? Furthermore, can the introduction of conflict transformation in schools promote positive, social development and decrease devolving identification with difference? If yes, what factors and interest groups are preventing the introduction of conflict transformation programs throughout educational systems? Do government leaders feel threatened by the liberating effects of peace education? If yes, what might persuade government leaders to embrace conflict transformation programming?

6.3. Conclusion

The preceding project made three empirical and theoretical contributions to the fields of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation. First, it demonstrated the efficacy of ideas taken from DRACON in the context of an ongoing, violent conflict. While the participants were profoundly affected by the conflict context in which they lived, this context neither invalidated nor unduly complicated the facilitation of a successful school-based, educational drama program. In fact, the project demonstrated that Palestinian adolescents were not only willing to learn about conflict transformation strategies, they felt a palpable need for the application of such strategies in their daily lives.

Second, the project confirmed the profound links between the concepts of educational drama, empowerment, and conflict transformation and the ways in which these theories contribute to the development of Lederach's *moral imagination*. This is because effective educational drama programs are inherently empowering and utilize the lived experiences and knowledge of participants. Moreover, conflict transformation entails creativity and relies upon the ability of affected parties to take control of their own lives to imagine a better future. This is the essence of the *moral imagination* and the project showed that such ideas and skills could be effectively cultivated among young people via a school-based, educational drama program.

Third, the project highlighted the undeniable potential for adolescents to facilitate dramatic, social change. This critical segment of every population is not only energetic and creative, they are at an important crossroads in their lives in which they can become proactive leaders, members

of a disinterested public, or even destructive actors. It is incumbent upon educators, researchers, and practitioners to steer adolescents in a pro-social direction. If not, we run the risk of neglecting a critical population capable of promoting peace—and war—in every global conflict.

Suffice it to say, participants in this project were neither definitively empowered nor categorically transformed via educational drama. But that wasn't the point. The project sought to help the participants gain a sense that conflicts can be approached creatively and constructively, where everyone might not, necessarily, cuddle and grin but where everyone does have the opportunity to win. This invaluable insight may not radically alter their lives or produce a new batch of nonviolent, Palestinian leaders but it will initiate a process of understanding and exploration in which participants are more likely to chose hug o' war over tug o' war when confronted with conflict. Imagine what would happen if every Palestinian youth were exposed to nonviolent, conflict transformation strategies in the classroom. Neither the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict nor the world would ever be the same again.

Appendix 1   Illustrations of Conflict

The proceeding pictures were drawn by 12 and 13-year-old students enrolled in the 7th grade at Christian Girls' School in February 2011. The students produced these drawings in response to the following prompt:

Write about or illustrate the conflict or conflicts that affect you the most. You may write your answers in English or Arabic.

I gave the students this assignment in an effort to determine the types of conflicts they were thinking about at the time. While 19 out of 24 students wrote about problems in school and at home, 5 students wrote about conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians. In addition to the drawings below, other students wrote, "Israel killed my uncle," "Israel soldiers hurt small children and old women!" and "Israel puts 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 year olds in jail for no reason."
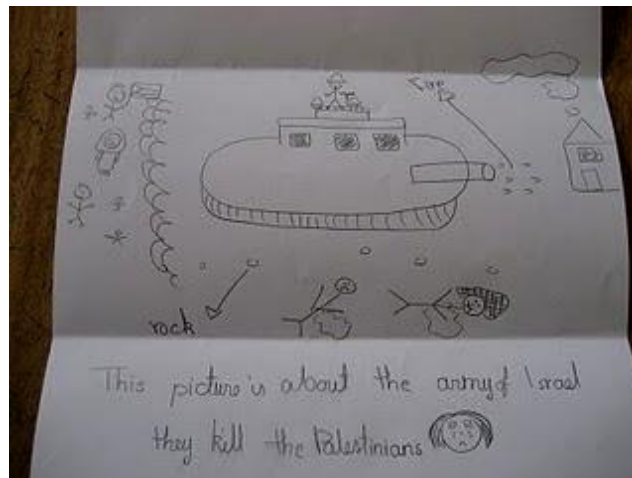
Drawing 1- "This picture is about the army of Israel they kill the Palestinians"
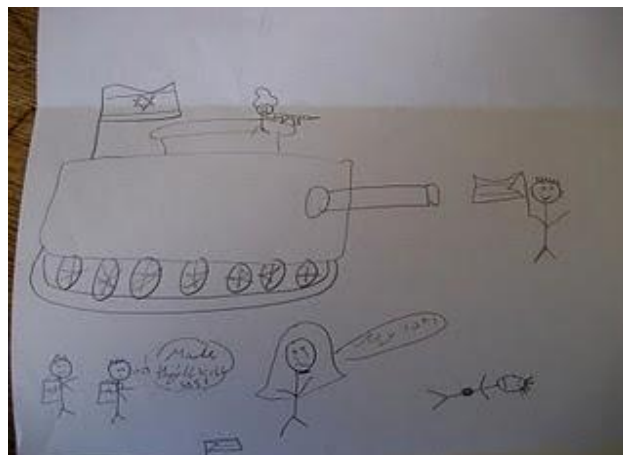
Drawing 2- "Mom they'll kill us! My son!"

Appendix 2   Student Survey Results

The following is an abbreviated^ summary of the results of the voluntary,# anonymousᴵ student survey that I administered to thirteen, 9th and 10th grade students at Christian Girls' School in February 2011.

Physical Conflict

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Another student deliberately hit, slapped, kicked, or pushed me.Δ	77.8%* (7/9)†	11.1% (1/9)	11.1% (1/9)
Another student threw things at me.	66.7% (8/12)	25.0% (3/12)	8.3% (1/12)
A teacher threw things at me.	76.9% (10/13)	15.3% (2/13)	7.7% (1/13)
A teacher threatened me with harm.	92.3% (12/13)	7.7% (1/13)	0.0% (0/13)
I deliberately hit, slapped, kicked, or pushed someone.	76.9% (10/13)	23.1% (3/13)	0.0% (0/13)
I threw things at someone.	69.3% (9/13)	23.1% (3/13)	7.7% (1/13)

Verbal Conflict

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Another student teased me about something.	25.0% (3/12)	58.3% (7/12)	16.7% (2/12)
Another student called me names I didn't like.	30.7% (4/13)	69.3% (9/13)	0.0% (0/13)
Another student made jokes at my expense.	55.5% (5/9)	22.3% (2/9)	22.3% (2/9)
A teacher teased me about something.	7.7% (1/13)	92.3% (12/13)	0.0% (0/13)
A teacher called me names I didn't like.	23.1% (3/13)	76.9% (10/13)	0.0% (0/13)
A teacher made jokes at my expense.	23.1% (3/13)	76.9% (10/13)	0.0% (0/13)
I teased someone.	15.3% (2/13)	84.6% (11/13)	0.0% (0/13)
I called someone names.	38.5% (5/13)	61.5% (8/13)	0.0% (0/13)
I made jokes about someone.	38.5% (5/13)	61.5% (8/13)	0.0% (0/13)

Relational Conflict

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Another student stopped talking to me.	**38.5%** (5/13)	**61.5%** (8/13)	**0.0%** (0/13)
Another student avoided or ignored me.	**15.3%** (2/13)	**84.6%** (11/13)	**0.0%** (0/13)
A teacher stopped talking to me.	**92.3%** (12/13)	**7.7%** (1/13)	**0.0%** (0/13)
A teacher avoided or ignored me.	**69.3%** (9/13)	**30.7%** (4/13)	**0.0%** (0/13)
I stopped talking to someone.	**46.2%** (6/13)	**46.2%** (6/13)	**7.7%** (1/13)
I avoided or ignored someone.	**30.7%** (4/13)	**69.3%** (9/13)	**0.0%** (0/13)

Conflict Perceptions and Handling

	Never	Sometimes	Often
When there was a conflict, I tried to see the other person's point of view.	**7.7%** (1/13)	**76.9%** (10/13)	**15.3%** (2/13)
I tried to avoid all conflicts.	**7.7%** (1/13)	**76.9%** (10/13)	**15.3%** (2/13)
When there was a conflict, I felt powerless.	**7.7%** (1/13)	**76.9%** (10/13)	**15.3%** (2/13)

^ Questions that did not yield statistical significance have been deleted.

I informed all students about the purpose of my research prior to distributing the survey. I explained that I wanted to determine the type and frequency of the conflicts occurring at school. I also informed students that they did not have to complete the survey if they chose not to. However, every student present elected to complete the survey.

Ɪ I informed students not to write their names on their surveys and that their answers would remain anonymous to the extent that no one's name or personal details would be associated with her survey results in my final analysis.

Δ All survey questions were written in English. I did attempt to get the survey translated into Arabic but did not receive the translation prior to the survey's administration. I tried to mitigate this issue by only administering the survey to 9th and 10th grade students who were most likely to understand the content. I also remained in the room to answer language questions while the students completed the survey.

* All percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.

† Some students did not answer questions about their classmates. While there are several possible explanations for this, I believe that students left these questions blank because they were surrounded by classmates while completing the survey and feared negative social repercussions if a classmate saw their answers. Students were probably less fearful of answering questions about themselves, as they may have felt guilty about their actions, or their teachers who were absent when the survey was administered.

Appendix 3   Teacher Questionnaire

I designed, wrote, and administered the following Teacher Questionnaire at Christian Girls' School in March 2011. The questionnaire included fifteen, open-ended questions written in English and intended to assess how the IPC has affected the teachers' lives and teaching practices. I distributed surveys to all twenty-three teachers at the site three weeks prior to my departure and was able to collect eight completed surveys. I asked several teachers why they did not complete their surveys and they said that they did not have time to complete it. Nevertheless, I believe that some teachers decided not to complete the survey because they had difficulty writing their answers in English. I tried to pre-empt this problem by telling teachers that they could write their answers in Arabic and I would have them translated but only one teacher did this. Teachers may also have been afraid of the ramifications if their answers were intercepted by Israeli authorities.

Part 1- Demographic Information
1. What subject(s) do you teach?
2. How long have you been a teacher?
3. How long have you taught at Christian Girls' School?
4. Do you work full time or part time?

Part 2- Education and Training
5. What is your educational background? In other words, did you attend university? If yes, what is the highest degree that you have attained?
6. Did you study abroad? If yes, where did you study and for how long?
7. Do you feel that your education adequately prepared you for a job as a teacher? Please explain.

Part 3- Reflections on Your Teaching Practice
8. Why did you become a teacher? Please explain.
9. What are the biggest obstacles that you face as a teacher? Please explain.
10. If you could change anything about your job, what would you change? Please explain.

Part 4- Teaching under Occupation
11. Have you ever taught in a school outside of the West Bank? If yes, where and for how long?
12. How do you think the Israeli Occupation has effected education in the West Bank?
13. If the Occupation ended, how do you think your job would change?
14. Do you ever discuss the Occupation in your classroom? If yes, how is it discussed?
15. Is there anything you would like to add? If yes, please explain.

Appendix 4   Drama Session Outline

All twenty-five drama sessions that I facilitated in this study adhered to following the structure:

I. Warm-Up
   a. <u>Explanation</u>: Each drama session begins with a warm-up activity designed to stimulate creativity and reduce inhibitions. These activities are intentionally simple and do not require participants to perform demanding tasks.
   b. <u>Examples</u>: *Activity Starter, Change Seats If…*

II. Discussion of Theme
   a. <u>Explanation</u>: Each drama session has a theme that is introduced and discussed after the warm-up activity. Ideally, the warm-up activity incorporates the theme and provides a stimulus for discussion. The discussion is also guided by open-ended questions such as, "How did it feel to work together in this activity?" or "What problems do you typically encounter when you have to follow someone else's rules?" After the discussion is complete, all subsequent activities relate to and build upon the theme.
   b. <u>Examples</u>: asymmetric conflict, non-verbal communication, teamwork

III. Activity One
   a. <u>Explanation</u>: This activity is more challenging than the warm-up but less challenging than activity two and stimulates deeper understanding of the session's theme. Preferably, activity one is fun, creative, and thought-provoking. After the activity is complete, participants engage in a brief evaluation either by stating what they liked and disliked about the activity or by rating the activity on a scale of one to ten and explaining their score.
   b. <u>Examples</u>: *Conflict Sculpture, Count Off, Queen for a Minute, Whisper in the Ear*

IV. Activity Two
   a. <u>Explanation</u>: This activity is the most challenging of the session and is designed to help participants re-evaluate existing presumptions and biases. Once again, after the activity is complete, participants engage in some form of activity evaluation.
   b. <u>Examples</u>: *Foreign Movie, Don't Think of the Color Black!, Role-play*

V. Closure
   a. <u>Explanation</u>: Participants end the session with a final discussion and evaluation. The facilitator asks the participants to discuss what they enjoyed most, what they enjoyed least, and what they learned about constructive conflict-handling. The facilitator also solicits suggestions for future sessions. Finally, the facilitator either asks participants to record their thoughts in their journals or gather together in the center of the room to perform a chant and/or bow. The same closing activity is employed at the end of each session.
   b. <u>Examples</u>: journaling, chanting, choreographed movement

Appendix 5   Drama Journals

The following journal entries were written by the 10th grade drama participants at the conclusion of each session. All entries were written in English and are reproduced verbatim below.

Session #1, February 4, 2011, 10:30-12:00
Theme- Project Overview, Student Survey,
Participants- Adriana, Angelina, Emily

I introduced the drama project and administered the Student Survey during this session. As a result, did not write in their journals.

Session #2, February 11, 2011, 10:00-12:00
Theme- Creative Conflict-Handling
Participants- Adriana, Angelina, Emily

Adriana→ "Be who you want to be not what the others want to see. Stand up for what you want. Today we did 5 activities and the most thing that I like is "Whisper in your Ear" because I like to see someone obeying my orders and I also liked "Role Play" because now I knew what the other partner is going to say before talking to them/him/her so you will be well prepared till you talk to them. & I liked what you said that we should put ourselves in the others place to know what they feel, you know this is my biggest problem that I speak quickly and lots of time I regret what I said specially when I am angry. So I want you to help me to control my feelings because I really hate to hurt someone's feelings or say something that I regret later. Can you help me?! And I also liked "Simon Says," I think its aim is to listen before we do anything. "Yes/No," I liked it too but I have this thing as you said that I can't just say yes or no alone but also as you said sometimes we have too. "Open Up," I adored because I like to convince someone and I like to success in convincing someone, using the emotions and the body language is very good trick to convince anyone. So I like (on scale): Open Up 9.5/10, Yes/No 8/10, Whisper in your Ear 9/10, Role Play 8.5/10, Simon Says 8/10."

Angelina→ "The most thing that I really liked is "Whisper in your Ear" Because I felt that I can force people to do what I want, and also I liked "Simon Says" Because it teachs us how to pay attention in something and being focus in it, and also I liked Role Play Because I really expressed How I feel about something and also predicted what the other person would do or say if I put myself in his/her place, and also being prepared for what I want to tell that person. The thing I liked least is "Yes/No" game it was really hard Because you can't force the other person to do what you want from him to do because he/she has their personlty. But ingenirel I liked all the games and I'm also happy because I spent my time with a great lady <3"

Emily→ "The best thing I like it in Drama, that we express our feeling, and we had much fun, because we have to do something like this. The best games are: 1. Yes/No. 2. Role Play, Student

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and Sister Martha. I dislike "Simon Says game. I hope next time that we will have something 'games' like this, cause I had much fun."

Session #3, March 8, 2011, 9:00-10:00
Theme- Teamwork
Participants- Lucy, Adriana

Note: Several girls chose not to participate as one of their friends had been hit by a truck and killed in front of the school the previous afternoon.

Adriana→ "Today we did 4 activities, which are: Rug Flip, Count Off, One Word Story, Activity Starter

I didn't like rug flip that much, I thought that it was silly, even though it has a great meaning behind which is 'teamwork solves problems' because we couldn't flip the rug without each others help.

Count Off, first I thought that it will be easy but then I realized that it is not as it seems, I liked it but it wasn't my favorite.

One Word Story, I loved it and I wish we can repeat it but with more people.

Activity Starter, it was also going better if there were more people.

On a scale:
1. Rug Flip-   6.5/10
2. Count Off-   7/10
3. One Word Story-   9/10
4. Activity Starter-   8/10"

Lucy→"I think the best activity are count off and the one word story. I think the worst is Rug Flip cause I couldn't do it like the game it is and I'm thinking to have more activity in Get up and play some exirsiase about muisic the less worst was the Activity starter cause I actually can't act good I think that I made something against my behavior and also I'm always being afraid about what they saying about me…"

Session #4, March 15, 2011, 9:00-10:00
Theme- Conflict Analysis
Participants- Adriana, Angelina, Lucy, Emily, Haneen, Safa

Adrianna→ "Today we did 3 activities which were:
1. Change Chairs If
2. Conflict Sculpture
3. Foreign Movie

I liked *Foreign Movie* the most because I found it very useful and fun. I have figured out that conflict may be as small as I imagine and as big as I want, and we could misunderstand things about conflicts when we see them wrong, because we don't know what's truly happening.

I like *Change Chairs If* the least not because I didn't like it but because I preferred the other activities more.

I learnt that conflict can be changed or fixed by trying to be creative and not reacting the same as the other acts. So if they scream don't scream, don't yell, find something creative to help you solve the conflict.

On a scale:
1. Change Chairs If: 94/100
2. Conflict Sculpture: 97/100
3. Foreign Movie: 100/100"

Angelina→ "Dear Elizabeth,
The best activity I actually liked the first one "Change Chairs If." I don't know exactly why but maybe we can know the others more and how they think. The less one I liked is "Foreign Movie" because we can't know everything that others think about and we can't put reasons about something we don't know the root of it. I learned about conflict that no one can tell exactly what's the reason of the problem but maybe we can imagine from the way others behave or express itself."

Emily→ "The best activity was Foreign Movie because it's really good sometimes to act without talking because if you talk you will seem bad! So, it's good and very important to control our feelings.

The least activity was Conflict Sculpture, because some people don't like to know their problem, and if you fix the problem, you will be wrong as always!! So I will not do anything!

I learn about conflict that it is important and we have to know how we must use it in our life. By the way thank you! You are so kind!"

Haneen→ "The best one is Change Chairs If because I was feeling happy with my friends and we move a lot to change our chair so we will be fit. The least one is Conflict Sculpture. I feel it was boring. I don't know why. Anyway thank you a lot for spending your time with us. I learn that we have to control on our feelings and to not be always angry and express our feeling in a good way and in good words."

Lucy→"The best thing was the change chairs if… I like it that's the first time I play it, it was nice for me and the Least one was the Foreign Movie that actually I don't know what they mean about that act I not good enough in express any body's feelings in words. I just feel it. About the conflict, I think that it should be good to solve problems, but I can't solve any problems. I don't know why; I hate problems. Thank you to give me like these activities and also to reply to my letter."

Safa→ "1. Best? Why? Foreign movie because I will not be fire in any thing.
2. Least? Why? Change Chairs if because I will be angry.
3. What did you learn about conflict? It is not nice."

Session #5, March 29, 2011
Theme- Asymmetric Conflict
Participants- Adriana Angelina*, Emily, Lucy, Haneen, Safa
*Angelina did not return her drama journal after the session.

Adriana (Adriana took her journal home and returned it to me the next day. According to her notes, she wrote the following at 8:16pm on March 29.) → "Today we had 3 activities, they were all about "mind control" or about "How to control the others mind?"

Don't think of the color red, it was hard not to think about it at first and then after 2 minutes I was able not to think of it. How? By thinking of something else, anything which is not related to red in that way I was able to block your order.

Queen for a minute, being the one that has the power gives a good feeling and everyone really wants to be in that place. It is fantastic to let everyone listen and obey and if they won't, they will pay back by going to jail.

Yesterday I went to Tel Aviv, you were right I got 2 answers correct by accident because seriously I didn't get any idea of what this was about. I thought it was about continuing your sentence with the proper word but it was about acting the same as you act. It was my least favorite activity. =(

On scale:
1. Don't think of the color red   8/10
2. Queen for a minute   9/10
3. Yesterday I went to Tel Aviv   5/10
   I put five even though I should put zero because it feels good that I got two correct even if it was by accident.

Emily→ "Dear Elizabeth: My favorite activity was "Queen for a Minute." I liked it very much. The least favorite was "Yesterday, I went to Tel Aviv." I learned that we have to understand the people by their eyes and their behaviors. But I don't like this very much because I feel like I am controlled by someone and so I am weak. So thank you!"

Haneen→ My favorite one is Queen for a Minute because it made me laugh and we had a lot of fun. I learned to be a good person and I shouldn't hit someone. Thanks a lot."

Lucy→ "The best thing was don't think of the color red. The thing I liked least was yesterday I went to Tel Aviv. I learned that conflict is bad and also that I hate when someone dominates another. Thank you a lot for the things you give us. I hope we have more time together…"

Safa→ "The favorite? Queen for a Minute/ Least favorite? Yesterday I went to Tel Aviv/ I learned nobody can conflict me and I don't like domination because it is bad."

Appendix 6   Select Drama Activities

Activity	Procedures and Purposes
Activity Starter (Levy, 2005: 93-94)	In this activity, one person gets on stage and mimes a repetitive action such as painting a fence. Audience members watch the action and once they understand it, one at a time, each audience member is supposed to join the original actor and mime a complimentary action. For example, if the original actor is painting a fence then the next actor can bring them a can of paint. This activity is designed to show the way actions complement each other and help participants develop observational and collaborative skills.
Change seats if… (based on *All who…*, DRACON, 2005: 437)	The facilitator instructs the participants to put their chairs in a large circle with one chair in the middle. The facilitator then asks one participant to sit in the middle and say something like, "Change seats if you're wearing red." In this case, all of the participants wearing red as well as the participant in the center get up and change seats as quickly as possible. The new participant sitting in the middle chair then states a new sentence beginning with the words, "Change seats if…" This activity helps participants get to know each other as well as recognize the similarities they share with others in the group.
Conflict Sculpture (based on *Freezes/ Sculpturing*, DRACON, 2005: 437)	The facilitator instructs three or four participants to stand in front of the group in a conflict tableaux. The facilitator then asks each audience member to approach the tableaux and make one physical change to the scene with the goal of resolving the displayed conflict. The activity fosters creative conflict analysis and resolution.
Count Off (Levy, 2005: 76-78)	The facilitator begins the activity by telling participants that they are about to find out how high they can count. The facilitator then complicates the task by explaining that participants must randomly shout out consecutive numbers one at a time. If the participants shout out a number at the same time, they must start over with the number one. This activity is designed to foster cooperation and non-verbal communication.

Don't Think of the Color Black! (Levy, 2005: 85-87)	The facilitator instructs the participants to sit in a circle in the middle of the room. The facilitator then tells the participants to close their eyes and not to think of the color black. The facilitator repeats the latter instruction several times and even suggests that they should not think of objects that are typically black such as coal. The facilitator then instructs the participants to open their eyes and report whether or not they managed to not think of the color black. The facilitator then instructs the participants to close their eyes and not think of puppies, ice cream, etc. After several rounds, the facilitator asks the participants to discuss their experiences. The activity is designed to illustrate the power of negative suggestion and becomes a springboard for analysis of effective and ineffective communication strategies.
Foreign Movie (DRACON, 2005: 438)	The facilitator instructs two to three participants to act out a conflict scene in front of the group. The scene can be about anything but the twist is the actors must move their lips but cannot say a word. One audience member is paired with an actor and must dub their performance. The activity is intended to help participants develop observational and conflict analysis skills.
Queen for a Minute (based on *King and Queen*, Levy, 2005: 173-175)	The facilitator selects one participant to sever as the King or Queen. That participant then stands in front of the rest of the group and issues commands such as stand on one foot or kiss my hand. Those who disobey the King/Queen are sent to "prison" or a corner of the room and made to stay there until the activity is over. Everyone is given the opportunity to play the King/Queen for approximately one minute. This activity is designed to place participants in situations of asymmetric conflict and stimulate discussion on the benevolent use of power and creative methods for addressing the abuse of power.
Rug Flip (Levy, 2005: 97-98)	The facilitator puts a large towel or small rug on the floor and instructs three to four participants to stand on the towel. The facilitator tells the participants standing on the towel that the towel is on fire and the only way they can put out the fire is by turning the towel over. The only problem is no one can step off the towel. The activity is designed to develop participant capacities to solve a problem by cooperating with others.

Whisper in the Ear (DRACON, 2005: 434)	The facilitator instructs the participants to get into pairs and labels one person in each pair A and the other person B. The facilitator then instructs participant A to whisper commands into participant B's ear. Participant B must follow these commands to the best of his or her ability. After participant A has whispered 3-4 commands, participants switch roles. This activity is designed to place participants in situations of asymmetric conflict and stimulate discussion on the benevolent use of power and the creative methods for addressing the abuse of power.
Yes, let's… (Levy, 2005: 208-210)	In this activity, the facilitator instructs the participants to stand in a large circle. The facilitator then mimes an action. When one of the participants recognizes the action, that participant says, "Yes, let's…" and the action. Once the action is correctly announced, all participants mime it. After a brief interval, the participant who called out the action mimes a new action. This activity is designed to help participants develop observational and non-verbal communication skills. It is also a fun warm-up activity.
Yes/No (Vinthagen, 2010*b*)	The facilitator instructs the participants to get into pairs and tells one participant in each pair to say "yes" while the other participant says "no." Each pair says their designated word and that word only in a variety of ways for one minute. After one minute, the participants switch roles. This activity is designed to help participants explore and develop non-verbal persuasion techniques. Since the participants can only say one word, the effectiveness of their persuasion relies on their ability to communicate using other methods such body language.
Yesterday, I went to Tel Aviv (based on *Charring Cross*, Levy, 2005: 229-231)	The facilitator begins the activity by making a statement such, "Yesterday, I went to Tel Aviv," and simultaneously making a gesture such as crossing his or her legs. The facilitator then tells the next participant that it is his or her turn but does not provide directions. The idea is that the participant can say anything but he or she must make the original gesture while saying it. The facilitator tells each participant if he or she is right or wrong before the next participant takes a turn. The activity is intended to encourage observational skills and creative problem-solving.

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