

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE EXISTING CHILD DRAMA PROGRAM IN
WICHITA, KANSAS, WITH A PROJECTED OUTLINE FOR
ITS MODEL GROWTH

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CHAPTER I

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED, THE PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Although child drama has become recognized in almost every part of the United States, there is still some confusion about the various terms used to describe a program. The following definitions have been agreed upon by the Committee on Basic Concepts of the Children's Theatre Conference. These definitions will be used throughout this study.

The term child drama involves two separate concepts:

Children's Theatre, in which plays, written by playwrights, are presented by living actors for child audiences. . . . Lines are memorized, action is directed, scenery and costumes are used. . . .

Creative Dramatics, in which children with the guidance of an imaginative teacher or leader create scenes or plays and perform them with improvised dialogue and action. Personal development of players is the goal, rather than the satisfaction of a child audience.¹

The primary purpose of those involved in children's theatre is to present a finished product for the public entertainment of the child. The director uses the best

¹Ann Viola, "Clarification of Terms," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics. Edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 8-10.

creative talents he can find and molds them into a unified production. Creative dramatics has quite a different purpose. The development of the person is sought rather than the finished production. Creative dramatics may give informal drama in the form of a demonstration but scenery and costumes are rarely used.

There are three basic activities found in creative dramatics. Dramatic play consists of acting out familiar situations, pantomimes, and interpretation of musical moods. This activity is spontaneous and has little structure or plot. The second activity is story dramatization, consisting of improvised plays based on a story that is original or drawn from literature. The third activity involves creative plays developed to the point where they approach formal plays. The children learn the story but memorize no lines, and the characters are so well known by the children that a very smooth performance is obtained. Some costuming and scenery may be used.

Creative dramatics may also be used in the formal plan. The mood may be set in tryouts through the use of musical and script improvisations, formal scenes may use improvisation to help achieve naturalness, or improvised dialogue may be used in crowd scenes.²

²Ibid.

BRIEF HISTORY OF CHILD DRAMA

Child drama in America is a relatively new institution. Programs of child drama began in the late nineteenth century. "First to recognize the need for child drama were the social settlements. In about 1892 they began to present simple versions of nursery tales with child players and child audiences."³ Between 1900 and 1915 commercial theatres in New York produced children's plays such as Peter Pan and Alice in Wonderland, and even went so far as to build the Children's Playhouse atop the Century Theatre. However, due to the limited accessibility of the child audience and the financial strain of the poorly attended houses, children's theatre by 1915 passed into the hands of amateur producers.

In 1903 on New York's Lower East Side the Children's Educational Theatre was formed and guided by Alice Minnie Herts Heniger. The organization in connection with the parent organization, the Educational Alliance, produced two plays a year and conducted dramatic classes for the local children. It is to this venture that most children's theatre of today owes its origin. After the Children's

³Winifred Ward, Theatre for Children (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1939), p. 21, citing Mackay, How to Produce Children's Plays, Holt, 1915.

Educational Theatre ended in 1908, variations of the program began appearing in municipal recreation centers. Cleveland and San Francisco were leaders in this trend, and settlement houses in Chicago and New York followed. As these programs grew, other organizations gave their support to children's theatre. As the community theatre movement gained force in the United States, children's shows were included as part of their regular bills. By 1919 Emerson College at Boston had established the first program of children's theatre activities, both curricular and extracurricular, under the leadership of Imogene Hogel.

In 1921 the Association of Junior Leagues of America began its children's theatre program, which continues to the present day. Another pioneer, Clare Tree Major, in 1922 assumed management of the Children's Theatre of the Heckscher Foundation in New York. The project combined both amateur and professional in its use of paid actors and settlement house children. In 1928 the Clare Tree Major's touring companies brought theatre to children across the country. Except for this touring company, children's theatre in the early nineteen-twenties was dominated by municipal recreation and community theatre organizations.

The year 1925 was a milestone in the development of child drama. Winifred Ward at Northwestern University began a project with the cooperation of the Evanston,

Illinois, Public Schools that became one of the most successful in the United States. The techniques used in Miss Ward's system have been the basis for most of the present-day programs of child drama. In the same year the Goodman School of Theatre in Chicago began giving its first children's performances. Charlotte Barrows Chorpenning assumed directorship in 1931 and began a series of productions noted for their contributions to children's theatre. Mrs. Chorpenning, a prolific playwright, contributed a vast number of scripts to the children's theatre repertoire. She is also the author of several fine works concerning the production of children's theatre.

Commercial theatre again came to the aid of the children's theatre movement with two separate programs started in the 1930's: Junior Programs, Incorporated, and the Federal Theatre. The former became an intermediary between professional entertainers and children's theatre sponsors. Under the leadership of Dorothy L. McFadden, this group sent out tours to child audiences to help meet the demand for entertainment. Junior Programs soon spread from its start in the New Jersey area and became active throughout the country. Junior Programs still maintains an active interest in children's theatre today. In 1935 the Federal Theatre of the Works Progress Administration was established.

Part of its program included plays for children presented in local parks, schools, or available buildings. This program was discontinued in 1939.

The Children's Theatre Conference was established in 1950 and today continues its association with its parent organization, The American Educational Theatre Association. The Children's Theatre Conference is the strongest influence on children's theatre today and has a membership of over one thousand.⁴ Child drama is active in every state in the Union, and in 1966 more than three hundred thirty colleges and universities offered training in child drama activities.⁵ In 1968 more than seven hundred different children's theatre organizations were tallied, with many more waiting confirmation.⁶ Accurate tabulation of child drama activities in the United States becomes available upon regular revision of the directory.

⁴Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins, Children's Theatre, Play Production for the Child Audience (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1960), pp. 5-14.

⁵Geraldine Brain Siks and Barbara Salisbury, Directory of American Colleges and Universities Offering Training in Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics (New York: American Educational Theatre Association, Inc., Children's Theatre Conference, 1963-1966), n.p.

⁶Jed H. Davis (ed.), A Directory of Children's Theatres in the United States (New York: American Educational Theatre Association, Inc., 1968), p. 3.

JUSTIFICATION OF CHILD DRAMA

Even as the child drama movement grows, there are still some to whom the program must be justified. Perhaps no better endorsement of a major portion of that program can be found than that of Mark Twain's:

It is my conviction that the children's theatre is one of the very, very great inventions of the twentieth century. . .and that its vast educational value--now but dimly perceived and but vaguely understood--will presently come to be recognized. . . .

It is much the most effective teacher of morals and promoter of good conduct that the ingenuity of man has yet devised, for the reason that its lessons are not taught wearily by book and dreary homily, but by visible and enthusing action; and they go straight to the heart, which is the rightest of right places for them. Book-morals often get no further than the intellect, if they even get that far on their spectral and shadowy pilgrimage; but when they travel from a children's theatre they do not stop permanently at that halfway house, but go on home.⁷

Children's theatre, because of its potential for instruction, can be one of the great molding forces of our young people. It can instill in them ideals and morals that will help them survive the sometimes less than loving world which they inhabit. Children's theatre also releases the emotions children hold inside them. The "delicious fear" the child feels when viewing a character's misdeeds is replaced by relief when the wrongs are righted and just punishment is received. The child can delight in being an

⁷Ward, op. cit., p. 33, citing Mark Twain, in a personal letter published in a Chicago newspaper.

accomplice to wrong acts while not having to fear any punishment. He is, to some extent, purged of the drive to do wrong.⁸

Child drama also reaches the child's emotions through its creative dramatics activities. Perhaps the most important idea the child learns in this program is that all the emotions he feels are quite normal and that everyone has them. The child is taught that it is not wrong to experience these emotions, but that there are right and wrong ways of expressing them. The child is shown useful, productive ways of tapping this emotional energy and using it to create rather than destroy. Deep within each soul is the desire to create. This craving must be satisfied or the person cannot develop into a healthy being. Often, when the desire to create is consistently frustrated, the desire to destroy is fulfilled, for this energy cannot be denied.⁹

PLANNING OF CHILD DRAMA PROGRAMS

To meet basic needs of youth, child drama programs have been instituted in communities around the country.

⁸Davis and Watkins, op. cit., pp. 27, 37-40.

⁹James M. Sawrey and Charles W. Telford, Psychology of Adjustment (second edition; Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1967), pp. 100-120.

Wichita, Kansas, has recognized this need of the child and has also been influenced by the child drama movement. Before adequate planning of a child drama program is begun, certain facts about the city or community must be known. Each group of people forming a community has its own methods of expression, leadership and relation to new ideas and people. The factors of population, racial background, education, employment and socio-economic classes will have a direct influence on these methods and the demands of the community. If it can be discerned what is needed by the community to satisfy its creative desires, to give them entertainment, and to educate them, and if it is also known what the people will accept and support enthusiastically, then a child drama program can be developed that will have a reasonable chance of success.¹⁰

Wichita is a Midwestern city with a population of about 255,000. The population is predominantly white; only 7 1/2 per cent are Negro. Twenty-five per cent of the population is of German stock. The median age of the people is twenty-seven, with over 37 per cent under the age of eighteen. In the part of the population over twenty-five years old the

¹⁰Kenneth L. Graham, "Values to Children from Good Theatre," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, Edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 27-30.

median number of school years completed is twelve, and more than 54 per cent completed high school or more. The 66,500 families in Wichita are living on a median income of 6,121 dollars per year.¹¹

These facts should be considered when planning the type of child drama program to be offered to the community. With the ever-spreading child drama movement and the unceasing creative demands of the people, developing an effective model program of child drama for Wichita, Kansas, should prove to be a productive and rewarding study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Even though child drama has spread throughout the United States and has reached almost every community, there is rarely any uniform method of development. Each community works out a program that hopefully will become effective. Unfortunately, many of these programs fail for a variety of reasons. One of the basic reasons for failure is that child drama programs do not meet the basic needs and demands of a community.

Wichita has a child drama program nationally recognized by the Children's Theatre Conference, but there has been no

¹¹ United States Bureau of the Census, County and City Data Book: 1967. A Statistical Abstract Supplement (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 494-503. The income figure is from 1959.

complete analysis made of the program and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the community. This study will attempt to analyze the Wichita child drama program in three ways: (1) What is a model child drama program for Wichita? (2) What is the existing child drama program in Wichita? and (3) What measures should Wichita take to reach the proposed model program? Each question will be studied in each of the areas listed below.

- (1) What is a model child drama program for Wichita?
 - (a) How will the factors of population, education, racial background, social class, and employment affect the planning of the program?
 - (b) What are the goals of the program?
 - (c) What are the various specific areas of child drama which the program should offer to the community?
 - (d) What type of personnel is needed to carry the program to maximum efficiency and what training is required?
 - (e) What type of facilities and resource materials are needed to maintain a model program?
 - (f) What is the most effective division of a budget to support all parts of the child drama program?
 - (g) What determines the selection of literature to be presented to the child?
 - (h) What is the most effective way of integrating the proposed child drama program with existing related local systems and leaders?

- (1) What type of association is needed with related programs on state and national levels to achieve maximum effectiveness?
- (2) What is the existing child drama program in Wichita?
 - (a) What are the goals of the program?
 - (b) What are the specific areas of child drama offered to the community?
 - (c) What is the type and training of personnel now being used?
 - (d) What type of facilities and resource materials are now being used?
 - (e) What is the structure of the budget now being used?
 - (f) What method is now being used to determine the selection of literature presented to the child?
 - (g) What is the relationship between other related organizations and the existing child drama program?
 - (h) What connection does the program have with state and national associations?
- (3) What measures should Wichita take to reach the proposed model program?
 - (a) Should the goals of the program be expanded or changed?
 - (b) Should the program be expanded to include a greater variety of activities?
 - (c) Should the type and training of the personnel be changed?
 - (d) Are more or different facilities and resource materials needed?
 - (e) Should a revision of the existing budget be undertaken?

- (f) Should the literature presented to the children be changed?
- (g) Should the relationship between the child drama program and other related systems be changed?
- (h) Should the program maintain active membership in state and national associations?

SOURCES OF MATERIAL

An investigation of Auer's Doctoral Dissertations, Work in Progress¹² and Knower's Index of Graduate Work in Speech¹³ failed to reveal any studies of child drama in Wichita, Kansas. A review of the masters thesis completed at Wichita State University shows no study undertaken in this area.

The data for this study falls into two main categories: (1) material used to determine a model program in Wichita, and (2) evidence used to discover the child drama program existing in Wichita.

Testimony used to determine the model program was derived mainly from a questionnaire sent to qualified leaders in the field of child drama. The questionnaire

¹²J. Jeffery Auer, "Doctoral Dissertations, Work in Progress," Speech Monographs, XVIII-XXXI (1951-1964), n.p.

¹³Franklin H. Knower, "An Index of Graduate Work in Speech," Speech Monographs, II-XXI (1902-1964), n.p.

may be found in Appendix A of this thesis. The people were chosen on the basis of national prominence and geographical location. These experienced leaders are college and university instructors in child drama, leaders of community programs, or sponsors of child drama activities. The questionnaire strove to find answers to the questions listed in the preceding section by discovering what is being successfully used in other communities, and what is ideal for each community. The answers of the returned questionnaires were compiled and a model child drama program built from these answers. Additional material useful for the construction of a child drama program can be found in various reports published by foundations, the Kansas Cultural Arts Commission, the 1960 White House Conference on Youth,¹⁴ Arts at the Grass Roots,¹⁵ books written by leaders in child drama, and professional publications such as the Educational Theatre Journal and the Children's Theatre Conference Review.

Data used to discover the existing child drama program in Wichita came from interviews with the various

¹⁴L. V. Singer, "White House Conference Ferment: Suggested action on Recommendations," National Educational Association Journal, XLIX (October, 1960), p. 38.

¹⁵B. Cutler, (ed.), Arts at the Grass Roots (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press), 1968.

leaders of the program, a review of the records of the child drama organizations in Wichita, articles in The Wichita Eagle, and an article in Children's Theatre Review of February, 1968.

CHAPTER II

USE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PURPOSE OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Child drama in America has had no uniform system of development. Its nation-wide advancement has come not in graduated stages of a centralized program, but from individuals working to develop a program for their own locale. It was only after a number of these local programs had been developed that a national organization, the Children's Theatre Conference, was formed to encourage the child drama movement.¹ Even with the development of the Children's Theatre Conference, child drama is for the most part sponsored by local citizens who are working in local programs. Each community develops its own unique program that hopefully will become successful for it.

Yet, even without a systematic national program, child drama continues to grow and flourish. No two programs are exactly alike, yet all have some common ground. The purpose of this questionnaire was to find that common ground which could be a starting place for development of a child drama program.

¹Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins, Children's Theatre, Play Production for the Child Audience (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1960), p. 13.

The answers gleaned from the returns of the questionnaire were compiled to form the basis of a model program for Wichita.

CONSTRUCTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire had four basic parts: (1) an introductory sheet from Kansas State Teachers College, (2) an instruction sheet, (3) Section I containing questions concerning the program in which the respondent was currently working, and (4) Section II containing questions concerning proposals for a model program. A sample questionnaire and letter can be found in Appendix A of this thesis.

The first part, the introductory sheet from the college, contained a letter from Dr. Kenneth Lee Jones, head of the child drama program at Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas. He explained that the questionnaire was being developed under his supervision, and he urged the prompt return of the completed form. The letter was sent on official Kansas State Teachers College letterhead stationery with the consent of officials of the college.

The second part of the questionnaire contained instructions for the completion of the form. It was explained that there were two separate groups of questions to be answered in the form. The first group concerned the program with which the person was currently involved. The

answers were to be completed on the basis of the preceding twelve-month program. This request was included to insure consistent and accurate reporting concerning the program involved. The second group contained questions soliciting ideas for a model child drama program. The purpose of this section was to gain responses that would be used to develop the possible program for a city having specific characteristics. The characteristics stated in the questionnaire matched those of Wichita, Kansas, but this fact was not known by those answering the questionnaire to avoid any preconceived opinions. However, care was taken to see that enough information about the project was given to enable the respondents to direct their answers toward a child drama program of this scope.

The descriptive information about the city was given in five different areas: geography, population, age, education and employment. The information was the same as that found in Chapter I under the section entitled Planning of Child Drama Programs.

The third part of the questionnaire contained a group of twenty-six questions designed to determine the content of the current program of child drama of the respondent. The answers to these questions gave some idea of the nature, scope and extent of the child drama programs that had been tried. The following information about the respondent's program was solicited through these questions:

How long has the program been operating? Who sponsors the program? What are the goals of the program? What activities does the program include, and what type of facilities are used? How is the program funded? What type of leadership does the program have? How many children's theatre productions and creative dramatics classes are offered each year? How is the program publicized? What are the program's main problems? How is success evaluated? What plans for expansion does the program have?

The answers to these questions would assist the respondent in answering some of the questions in part IV.

The last part of the questionnaire contained the questions concerning the plans, ideas and activities suggested for a model child drama program. The thirty-six questions asked for information about sponsorship of the model program, fund raising and budgeting, activities to be included, leadership, selection of children's theatre plays and number of productions, creative dramatics class content and size, and resource materials used to build a child drama program. These questions were to be answered with the consideration of the characteristics given for the city for which the model program was designed. Three additional questions were asked:

1. How should the various characteristics listed for the community on page one affect the child drama program being developed?
2. How does the given community differ from the one in which your program is located?
3. If the given facts about the community are ignored when the child drama program is planned, when or where will it first begin to affect the program?

These questions were necessary to learn how the various individual characteristics of a city, in the opinion of the respondent, would affect the planning of a child drama program.

The questionnaire was printed on the front and back sides of eight and one-half by eleven inch paper. The entire questionnaire took five pages or three sheets of paper.

SELECTION OF PERSONS RECEIVING QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire plus the letter from Dr. Jones was sent with a self-addressed, stamped return envelope to one hundred people. The one hundred people were chosen on the basis of three factors: geographic location, prominence in child drama, and type of involvement in child drama programs. The list contained people in every part of the continental United States, governors of Children's Theatre Conference regions, authors of child drama textbooks, and child drama workers in education, community and private programs. The diversity of the respondents was desired to obtain a balanced view in the development of a model child drama program. A complete list of the people receiving the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B of this thesis. The addresses of these people were taken from three sources: (1) the list of participants in the 1968 Children's Theatre Conference held

in Los Angeles, California, (2) addresses given in recent copies of the Children's Theatre Review, and (3) A Directory of Children's Theatres in the United States, edited by Jed H. Davis, published in 1968.²

The results of the questionnaire and the development of a model child drama program are discussed in Chapter III.

²Jed H. Davis (ed.) A Directory of Children's Theatres in the United States (New York: American Educational Theatre Association, Inc., 1968), n.p.

CHAPTER III

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND INSURING MODEL

CHILD DRAMA PROGRAM

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the results of the questionnaire, and from these results build a model child drama program for any city having similar characteristics as Wichita. The framework for the model program will be outlined at the conclusion of this chapter. The answers to the questions found in Chapter I of the thesis, in the section entitled, "Purpose of the Study," constitute the framework of the model child drama program.

One hundred questionnaires were sent to people who were engaged in child drama activities. Four weeks later post cards urging the return of the questionnaire were sent to some child drama authorities who had not returned the completed form. Appendix B designates those returning the questionnaire. Thirty-nine questionnaires were returned. Twenty-two of these questionnaires were completed and contained information useful to the construction of the model program. Ten returns were not completed sufficiently to derive information useful to this study. Six returned questionnaires had been sent to persons who had moved and left no forwarding address.

Because of the background and experience of those people answering the questionnaire, a model child drama program was built based on these replies. A few of the respondents were working in programs of outstanding merit and, therefore, were qualified to suggest solutions to problems particular to child drama. Some of those people answering the questionnaire included: Jed Davis, Ann Thurman, Mrs. Donald E. Phillips, Nancy Ebsen and John Donahue.

The answers from the questionnaires were tabulated by listing the responses and then discovering trends of opinion or thought and determining percentages. The relationship between the respondent's current program and that which he suggested as a model program was checked for the degree of correlation. The respondents suggested activities for the model program and those contained in his own program agreed closely. However, the size of the respondents program was often smaller than that he suggested for the model.

As the results of the questionnaire were being compiled, the weaker parts of the questionnaire became apparent. The length was one of the major drawbacks of the questionnaire. The number of questions in Section I concerning the respondents own program could have been shortened without loss of vital information. More emphasis should have been given to questions concerning an in-service training program. The

questions in Section II, Part C, concerning the creative dramatics class numbers and sections led to confusion because of poor wording. The information wanted was the suggested length in minutes of each class meeting, the number of class meetings in each session and the number of sessions to be held during each year. If these changes had been made in the questionnaire the valid information derived from it would have been of greater use.

EFFECT OF COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS ON PROGRAM

The factors of population, education, racial background, social class and employment and their effect on the planning of the program was the first consideration dealt with by the respondents. Over 50 per cent of the respondents indicated that the inherent offerings of the child drama program would be unaltered by these factors of the community.*

The responses do not agree with Kenneth Graham. The majority of the respondents felt the factors of population, education, racial background, social class and employment will, however, have a strong affect on the people

*The percentages used throughout the reporting of the questionnaire returns are based on the number of people answering each particular question.

of the community. The environment of the community shapes the peoples' methods of expression, choice of leaders, and acceptance of new ideas and people. A child drama program is developed through a community for use by individual people. Therefore, contact with the program is on a personal basis, and environment determines the type of contact.

Community characteristics do have an affect on the degree of acceptance by an individual in the child drama program. The respondents noted this point in almost 50 per cent of the answers. They felt that if the participant in the child drama program felt that the program was meeting his personal needs and specifications, the program tended to be received with a greater amount of enthusiasm and support. The child drama program's selling point should be the participant's gains, rather than the idealistic but sometimes impersonal community benefits. The community advantages are often as valid and important as the personal ones, but do little to stimulate individual participation. Some of the community advantages could be the lowering of juvenile delinquency rates, enticement for new business, and greater opportunity for public education and entertainment. Personal gains could include artistic and creative growth, social activity or personal entertainment. The basic needs of human beings remain the same in any community; environment determines what is

available to satisfy those needs. Each person will choose that activity within a child drama program which best satisfies his own needs. Therefore, a child drama program in any community should contain the same essential ingredients. If that activity is not available then the child drama program has been poorly planned. The respondents felt the characteristics of the community might directly determine the individual's relationship to the child drama program, but it should not alter the basic offerings of the program, nor its striving for artistic merit.

GOALS OF THE MODEL PROGRAM

The goals listed by the respondents were of two kinds. The first area was to provide entertaining, educational, and aesthetic experiences for the child and to build his natural creative abilities. The second area covered was a specific detailing of the program offerings; this area included such things as to provide children's theatre, or provide classes in dramatic activities.

The two types of goals listed above agree closely with those listed by writers of child drama textbooks. Winifred Ward, in her book, Playmaking With Children, lists the objectives of playmaking or creative dramatics. Playmaking can give the child a controlled emotional outlet, an avenue of self expression, encourage creative imagination, stimulate

growth in social understanding and cooperation, and aid the ability to think on one's feet and express ideas fearlessly.¹ In addition, Kenneth L. Graham lists the following points as goals for children's theatre: learning, entertainment, aesthetic appreciation, filling of psychological needs and building future audiences.²

RELATIONSHIP OF CHILD DRAMA TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The relationship of a local child drama program to other institutions and organizations is one that should be considered carefully. When asked in what state and national organizations a child drama program should participate, 70 per cent of the respondents listed the Children's Theatre Conference of the American Educational Theatre Association. The gains from the pursuit of knowledge, the exchange of ideas, and the encouragement of child drama activities by this organization through its literature and conferences cannot be overemphasized. The responses also contained a wide

¹ Winifred Ward, Playmaking With Children, Second edition (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), pp. 3-8.

² Kenneth L. Graham, "Values to Children from Good Theatre," in Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington, Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1961, pp. 27-30.

variety of other organizations desirable for membership. Some of these organizations included Thespians, American Childhood Educational Association, International, and The Speech Association of America.

The respondents were asked if the child drama program should work through the schools, recreation departments or independently. Two-thirds of the answers indicated that the child drama program should work through the school systems. The rest preferred working independently or through the recreation systems or a combination of all three. The independent groups would function within their own framework and would have no connection to any activities sponsored by the schools or recreation departments. Perhaps the greater preference for the schools stems from the easier means of access to the children and the availability of facilities.

The participation of the child drama program in a unified arts system brought divided responses. Half of the respondents felt a unified arts program could definitely be advantageous, while the other half were not strongly in favor of such a plan. The participation in a unified arts program was listed by some of the respondents as "desirable," or "a possibility" and by others as "not necessary." The answers suggested that the child drama program could function without unified arts; however, a sound unified arts program

could be of great benefit. Before membership is undertaken by a child drama program in any institution or organization, the benefits of such a membership to the child drama program should be considered. A child drama program should only become actively involved in other systems when the goals of the child drama program will be enhanced.

At times the staff of a child drama program will wish to have a sponsoring organization to give aid in drawing audiences or lend financial support. These sponsoring organizations are normally used for external support rather than filling internal staff and supervisory positions. All of the respondents' answers listed organizations noted for their social-cultural work. The organizations listed most often were Junior Leagues, men's business clubs, parent-teacher associations, and the American Association of University Women.

Child drama programs many times have difficulty determining the amount of support to enlist from parents. About 60 per cent of the respondents indicated that the greatest aid parents could give the program was to provide transportation, assist in technical aspects, and encourage their children and the community to participate in such a program. Each child drama program will soon find those people in the community whose time and assistance provide valuable service.

The remainder of the responses indicated parents were not to be enlisted in any part of the child drama program. These respondents did not give any reasons for their strong rejection of parental aid. Perhaps they felt a higher quality of instruction or creativity could be achieved if only professional staff members were used, or perhaps the objectives of the program had been misunderstood by the parents. However, if a child drama program is to develop to the fullest extent, the parents' role in the program should be clearly understood.

SPECIALIZED AREAS AND EXTENT OF CHILD DRAMA PROGRAM

Child drama was previously defined as including both children's theatre and creative dramatics. The responses to the question, concerning the areas to be included in a child drama program, endorsed this definition by their almost unanimous inclusion of these two activities. Children's theatre and creative dramatics were ranked as equal, integrated, and mutually beneficial. Dance was mentioned in approximately 40 per cent of the replies and technical theatre instruction was also recommended. The responses also listed puppetry and acting classes twice. Playwriting was only listed once as an activity to be offered. The reasons for the lack of this activity

can only be guessed at, but perhaps it is due to lack of qualified teachers. Stronger emphasis in this area could lead to a greater amassing of good children's theatre scripts. New scripts would be of vast benefit to the children's theatre; the dearth of good scripts is now a strong factor in limiting productions.

To most effectively fulfill the goals and activities of the child drama program, an in-service training program for volunteers offered on a regular basis was recommended. An activity of this type can provide a higher quality and more uniformly sound program. The in-service training may be designed to instruct future professional child drama staff members or it may be used to train volunteers to assume roles of leadership.

Children's theatre was the first activity considered by respondents. The recommended number of total productions a year ranged from two to nine, but the majority of answers advocated either four or five. Performance time during the school hours was listed in about one-third of the answers. School time performances would have to be arranged with the cooperation of the school authorities. The remainder of the respondents recommended weekend performances. An admission fee of fifty cents to one dollar was listed by 80 per cent of the respondents as

being desirable. Winifred Ward also feels an admission should be charged, but that it should be kept at a minimum.³ The admission charge suggested by the respondents depended largely upon the funding of the program. If the productions were being funded by box office receipts a high admission was considered necessary. One respondent's statement of "all the traffic will bear" emphasized the need for admission charges. The poorer members of the community, however, must not be eliminated. Publicity of the children's theatre productions through the press, radio and television was suggested by all the respondents. Parental aid and support were also listed as valuable publicity factors. Almost one-half also recommended personal appearances by the cast and special displays through the schools. The school class attendance and season ticket sales in conjunction with a good publicity program were endorsed by the majority of the respondents as the best way to attract houses.

³

Winifred Ward, Theatre for Children, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1939, p. 237.

The desirability of a touring company was recommended only when there was no adequately equipped home theatre that was centrally located. Touring could also be used when playing to such special types of audiences as welfare homes or physically handicapped children. The majority of the respondents were not too enthusiastic about the advantages of touring. They preferred to work in a home theatre and transport the children to it. A specially equipped truck or show wagon can be successful if carefully planned and not stretched beyond its capacities.

The answers of the respondents indicated that children should be used as actors only when the role called for a child. About 60 per cent of the respondents felt this way, and Winifred Ward says that only those children over the age of eleven should be considered for casting in a production.⁴

A wide variety of replies were received regarding the content of a creative dramatics course. The majority of the respondents wanted the class to

⁴ Ibid., p. 152.

contain as many different experiences as possible.

These experiences included pleasure, concept learning, rhythm, and emotional control. Perhaps the majority of responses to the questionnaire can be seen to conform to Winifred Ward's summary in her book Theatre for Children. She feels that there are several attitudes toward the use of playmaking and creative dramatics. They can be employed as tools for learning, as recreation, as therapy, and as art forms.⁵ Those involved in a child drama program would probably use the creative dramatics to less extent as an instrument of therapy, however, this possibility should not be overlooked. According to Ward, the content of a creative dramatics class depends a great deal upon the age of the participants. The activities of the young child, six, seven and eight years old, should consist of rhythm exercise, training in movement and voice control and development of the senses. Creative dramatics for the eight-, nine-, and ten-year-olds should contain more training in sense impressions, pantomimes, beginning characterizations and some creative dance. Eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-year-olds should work

⁵ Ward, Theatre for Children, op. cit, pp. 15-16.

on pantomime that was emotionally motivated, characterization, dialogue and beginning improvisations.⁶ Two respondents suggested the creative dramatics classes should be divided by ability, and one suggested dividing by sex.

Only one respondent felt the creative dramatics class should culminate in a performance. The rest felt the class should not be geared to performing and that a performance should be given only after the participant had several years experience in the class.

The replies to the problem of evaluating the success of a child in a creative dramatics class indicated that this was a difficult area of child drama. Over half the respondents replied that they did not know what determined the success of the child. The rest indicated the child's success could only be measured in terms of his interest and his growth. Some of these methods of measuring included, control, communication and movement patterns. Each child will gain something different from the creative dramatics situation. What the child gains may not be visible to the eye, and therefore difficult to measure; but it is still a valid gain and should not be ignored. Most of the respondents agree with Geraldine Brain Siks when she suggests these criteria for evaluating the child: rhythmic movement of the

⁶Ibid., 37-73.

body, ability to "see things" when presenting a pantomime, the ability to "feel" a character both inside and out, the ability to develop natural dialogue for the character, the ability to work in a group, and a feeling for continuity and tempo.⁷

The replies to the questions concerning the meeting time and place of the creative dramatics class indicated the respondents involvement of the child with the school system. Over 50 per cent of the respondents wanted the classes held during school time. The remainder preferred holding them immediately after school or on Saturday mornings. The only requirement the respondents had concerning the meeting place was that it have space free of distractions and room for the students to move easily and yet remain under the guidance of the instructor. The length and frequency of the class meetings brought numerous different replies from the respondents. The variety of replies was greatly increased by the confusion resulting from the wording of the questions. All felt the class should meet at least once a week; one-third of the respondents felt that meetings twice or three times weekly were more desirable. The suggested length of each class session was around sixty minutes. The number of class meetings for each course ranged

⁷Geraldine Brain Siks, Creative Dramatics, New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1958, pp. 231-235.

from twelve to twenty with fifteen being the means. The respondents felt the classes should be offered year round. During the summer session, a majority of the responses indicated that the program could be varied to offer a great number of classes to the child because of his increased amount of time. The summer program could also include the same classes taught on a more intense basis or special experimental classes when taught for the purpose of testing untried theories or ideas. These experimental classes could be built around the instructor's ideas or could be designed by the suggestions of the students. Successful activities could then be incorporated into the winter program and ideas shared with other child drama programs. Other suggestions included a greater emphasis on the body movements since the child was able to be outside for greater lengths of time. About one-third of the replies indicated the summer programs should be planned with an awareness of the vacations of both the students and the volunteer staff. All should be encouraged to take their vacations, but the programs should be flexible enough to allow for this factor. One of the suggestions offered was a series of courses taught on an intense basis to be offered several times during the summer. Because each course is only two or three weeks in length, the child could attend without interruption by a vacation. The answers given by the respondents indicated that 70 per cent of them

felt the classes should be divided by age group. The suggested divisions were by grade level or seven- to nine-year-olds together, and the ten- to twelve-year-olds. The classes were generally divided to keep within the framework of the course content of a creative dramatics class suggested by Ward and Siks.

When a group of youngsters is particularly talented, or a large number of students wish to repeat a course, then advanced classes should be offered. When children of widely different age groups are placed in the same class the different levels of interest may conflict. Older children may treat the younger as "babies," and the younger often withdraw under the "bossing" of the older children. A child usually should not be placed in an advanced class until he has had some exposure to the beginning course work. A small number of respondents indicated the classes could be divided by sex, but this theory was not endorsed by the majority of the replies. The recommended class size ranged from four students per instructor to twenty. The majority of replies, however, seemed to indicate the class size was most effective at a ratio of fifteen students per instructor.

The responses to the questionnaire showed that any additional classes to the creative dramatics and theatre arts curriculum, such as dance, art and technical theatre classes, should be offered on demand and only when the facilities and instructors were available.

STAFF AND TRAINING

The majority of responses agreed that the ideal staff for a child drama program would consist of a director, designer-technical director, a costumer and a creative dramatics specialist. Winifred Ward agrees with this list, but she would add a person to handle the business and publicity of the program.⁸ The respondents were almost unanimous in their feeling that all of the members of a child drama program should have college or university degrees in their specialized areas and have experience. Almost one-third of the replies indicated that a masters degree was preferred for the director and the creative dramatics specialist and that the additional training be done in the child drama area, rather than general theatre course work. The responses also suggested a broad general background in psychology, the behavioral sciences, and literature was desirable. Frank M. Whiting lists the following points as necessary for the training of a children's theatre instructor. In general education, the person should have a broad liberal arts background with special emphasis in psychology and child welfare, the arts, and literature. The person should participate and become skilled in all phases of the theatre. For specialized

⁸Ward, Theatre for Children, op. cit., p. 58.

training, the person should take all of the course work he possibly can in the area of directing. In addition, the person should develop an awareness of the special phases and demands of children's theatre production.⁹

Agnes Haaga recommends this special preparation and training for a person wishing to become a creative dramatics leader. The student should first read, observe and talk with persons who are trained in creative dramatics. The student should then be allowed to act as leader of a creative dramatics session with the "students" consisting of his own classmates. The teaching should be done under a qualified instructor who can give helpful critiques of the student's work. The student would then teach a class of children which will be visited several times by the qualified instructor for purposes of critique. The student should then take additional course work in literature, theatre and creative dramatics to develop his own background. Additional sessions of practice teaching may also be desirable.¹⁰ It is clear that those

⁹ Frank M. Whiting, "Recommended Training for Children's Theatre Director," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics. Edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington, (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press), 1961 pp. 104-112.

¹⁰ Agnes Haaga, "Recommended Training for Creative Dramatic Leader," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics. Edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press), 1961, pp. 198-207.

involved in a child drama program should have a broad liberal arts background, training in child drama, and a sincere interest in children.

FACILITIES

To fully discuss the materials necessary for staging a children's theatre production and equipping a stage is beyond the scope of this study. There are many excellent books on the subject written by experts in the field of technical theatre which are available to the reader. In addition, a book entitled, Children's Theatre: An Art for Children, by Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins, is very helpful.

The facilities necessary for a class in creative dramatics are small. As was indicated earlier, a comfortable room with ample space for movement was preferred. Almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that access to a record player or tape recorder was desirable. Other suggestions included colored lights, rhythm instruments, geometric forms or blocks, old properties and simple costumes.

SELECTION OF LITERATURE

The questionnaire asked what determined the selection of literature presented to the child. All of the respondents said that the director of the children's theatre production

and the instructors of the individual creative dramatics classes should be the people to choose the material presented to the child. The method of choosing the literature brought a great variety of responses including the artistic concepts of the staff, the literary value of the material, and previous material presented. These responses generally conform to the methods suggested by Winifred Ward. The selection of literature in a creative dramatics class should be suited to the age and taste of the child. The literature should be challenging, worthy of the time spent on it, and achieve more effectiveness by being acted out rather than read. The individual class experiences, mood and environment will further determine the special literature selection for each class. Each age group has its own preference for types of literature. Ward suggests for five- and six-year-olds stories and poems with an ample amount of action, lovable animals and Mother Goose characters. Seven- and eight-year-olds like fairy tales, while nine-, ten-, and eleven-year-olds prefer realistic stories of adventure with a strong hero. Exciting mysteries and stories containing idealistic ideas and romance, such as Robin Hood and some of Shakespeare's plays, are suitable for twelve-, thirteen-, and fourteen-year-olds.¹¹

¹¹Ward, Playmaking With Children, op. cit., pp. 89-111.

The respondents answers concerning the selection of a play for production are again best summarized by citing Ward. Play selection involves two areas: the practical aspects of production and the literary quality of the play being considered. Ward lists the practical aspects for choosing a play as: a variety of types during a season, a mixing of the children's favorite plays with those less known, appeal to the child and the various age groups, and the cost of production.¹²

The literary quality of the play can be judged by these criteria: a worthy central idea or motive, economy in the number of incidents, a strong climax that does not appeal to any one emotion, a quick and satisfying ending, characterization that seems real, and natural dialogue.¹³ Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins agree with the criteria set forth by Ward.

Almost half of the respondents sent bibliographies of textbooks, stories and poems that they had found useful. These closely matched those recommended by Siks, Ward, Davis, and Watkins and other authorities in the field of child drama. It is recommended that the reader consult these authors for listings of useful books and articles.

¹²Ward, Theatre for Children, op. cit., p. 139

¹³Ward, Playmaking With Children, op. cit., p. 90.

BUDGET

The respondents listed three separate ways of acquiring funds for a child drama program. The first consisted of money gained from the admission charge to the children's theatre productions and the tuition from the creative dramatics classes. No set fee was recommended for the tuition of the classes. This was left to the decision of the local program. The fee should not be so high that it prohibits participation of a child who wishes to join. Severely disadvantaged children could be enrolled under special arrangements. The second method of funding was through donations of individuals or local groups interested in child drama. The third method of raising funds was through application for grants on a federal or state level. Money may also be granted from budgets of local departments of education or recreation. The respondents all felt that any one, or a combination of these ways, would be acceptable means of fund raising.

The division of the budget among the various parts of the child drama program brought such a variety of responses that it was impossible to pick one as being ideal. The replies ranged from 10 per cent to creative dramatics and 90 per cent to children's theatre to the opposite. At times the emphasis was placed on hiring qualified staff and at

others to procure supplies and facilities. The only conclusion drawn from these replies was that each area of the child drama program should be allowed to expand to its fullest capacities without causing sacrifice to any other area of the program.

SUMMARY

From the compiling of the answers of the questionnaires and consulting the works of authorities, a summary of a child drama program for any community having the listed characteristics would be found to have this framework. The child drama program would be composed of children's theatre, creative dramatics, and classes in related areas of the theatre. The extent of a child drama program is difficult to express numerically, but ideally the program would be available to all who wish to participate. Personality differences would enable some to benefit more from a program of the nature of child drama than others. Each person must find his own outlet of creative expression. Ideally, enough classes should be offered in each specialized area to accommodate all who wish to participate. The Wichita model child drama program would maintain active membership in the Children's Theatre Conference of the American Educational Theatre Association. The program would work through the recreation department and the school system. An arrangement of this type would give

additional funds, facilities and personnel to the child drama program. The children's theatre would operate in a well-equipped home theatre. If this was not available, or circumstances warranted it, touring theatre facilities would be developed. The creative dramatics classes would be held in spacious, inviting areas provided by the schools, recreation department, or other available facilities. Each class would average around fifteen students per instructor. The related theatre classes would be held in facilities suitable to the needs of the class. The staff would consist of a children's theatre director, a designer-technical director, a costumer, a creative dramatics specialist, and a publicity-business manager. Each staff member would be responsible for his area of the child drama program and would conduct classes appropriate to his field. The staff would also conduct an in-service training program for volunteers. An attempt should be made to draw at least two volunteers from each elementary school. These volunteers would, after training, conduct the creative dramatics classes for the children throughout the city. Because of the large population of the community it is impractical to attempt to have paid creative dramatic specialists in each school. An in-service training program, if properly conducted, would insure high standards of leadership and a systematic spread of creative dramatics throughout the city. The literature

chosen for presentation to the child would be selected with both the practical and literary qualities weighed. The program would be financed through state and national grants, donations from local groups and individuals, class tuitions and box office receipts, and local city departmental budget allocations. Each area of the program would be budgeted to encourage fullest development without straining any other area.

CHAPTER IV

EXISTING CHILD DRAMA

IN WICHITA, KANSAS

THE WICHITA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the child drama program in existence in Wichita during the year 1968. The discussion covers the questions posed in the section discussing the purpose of the study of this thesis found in Chapter I. The first part will concern the child drama organization called the Wichita Children's Theatre. The second part will concern other organizations producing child drama in Wichita.

The Wichita Children's Theatre was organized in 1946 by Irene Vickers Baker at the request of Maude Gowen Schollenberger, then president of the Wichita Art Association. Incorporated into the Wichita Art Association in 1947, the Wichita Children's Theatre has its headquarters at the Wichita Art Association Cultural Center, 9112 East Central, Wichita, Kansas.¹ "Children's Theatre is a part of the

¹ "Short History of Wichita Children's Theatre," Children's Theatre Review, XVII (February, 1968), p. 7.

Wichita Art Association, but its organization, operation and finances are separate."² The purpose of the organization is to provide children's theatre for Wichita.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Wichita Children's Theatre works with the cooperation of the Wichita Board of Education to present the Troupers productions. It maintains an affiliation with the Wichita Art Association and is a member of American Educational Theatre Association, the Children's Theatre Conference and the American National Theatre and Academy.

ACTIVITIES OFFERED IN WICHITA

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

The Wichita Children's Theatre program contains four basic activities: the children's theatre, the School of the Performing Arts, the Children's Theatre Guild and the Troupers. The children's theatre gives four productions per year and three performances on Saturday of each production. The productions are given in East High School Auditorium to about 1,800 people at each performance. Four orphanages or children's homes are invited free of charge to the morning

²"Wichita Children's Theatre" (Wichita, Kansas: Copy for Cultural Edition, Wichita Children's Theatre, 1968), n.p. (mimeographed.)

performance. Admission to the performance is one dollar; a season ticket may be purchased at two dollars for children or one dollar for adults.

The School of the Performing Arts offers classes in creative dance, ballet, dramatics and theatre arts. The classes are held on the main stage of the theatre located in the Wichita Art Association complex. Classes, taught by Osythe Dearsmith Moore, are offered to both boys and girls between the ages of four and fifteen. Fifteen lessons are held between September and January on a weekly basis. Each lesson is between an hour and an hour and a half in length. The tuition is twenty-five dollars per student for beginning classes and thirty-five dollars per student for advanced classes. The classes are limited to around twelve students. The entire school enrollment is around 150 students.³

The third activity is the Wichita Children's Theatre Guild. The purpose of this organization is to provide permanent financial support for the children's theatre program by a patrons' plan and to broaden the public's understanding of children's theatre as a cultural and educational activity. Any interested person is eligible for membership at a cost of five dollars for a single membership, ten dollars for a family membership, or one dollar for a student membership.

³School 1968-69 (School Calendar, Wichita, Kansas: Wichita Art Association, 1968), pp. 4-5.

The last activity is a group called the "Troupers." The Troupers are composed of young matrons who present a play at a different elementary school each Friday morning during the school year. The Troupers play to about 40,000 youngsters a year.⁴ Entrance into this group is only by recommendation of one of the group members.⁵

PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

There are only two paid staff positions in the Wichita Children's Theatre. The Managing Director is the head of the Wichita Children's Theatre and works in cooperation with an advisory committee of twelve members. This position is now held by Irene Vickers Baker. The second position, filled presently by Osythe Dearsmith Moore, is the instructor of the classes offered for children in the School of the Performing Arts.

Mrs. Baker holds a B.S. degree from Boston University and is a graduate of Leland Powers School of Theatre and Phidaleh-Rice School of Spoken Word. She has also done travel-study in Europe and survey studies of theatres abroad. She was head of the Friends University Theatre and Speech Department for thirteen years.⁶ Mrs. Baker has had no formal

⁴"Wichita Children's Theatre," loc. cit.

⁵Statement by Irene Vickers Baker, personal interview.

⁶School, op. cit., p. 7.

course work in children's theatre or creative dramatics. She has attended some of the national Children's Theatre Conferences and also local and regional children's theatre conferences. In preparation for organizing the Wichita Children's Theatre, Mrs. Baker stated that she attended conferences, read available books on the subject, and held several discussions with Isabel Burger to familiarize herself with the subject of child drama.⁷

Mrs. Moore has a B.A. degree in Education from Wichita State University, has studied at Pasadena Community Playhouse, Chicago Civic Opera Company and the Perry Mansfield School in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and has been a private instructor in dance and drama in Wichita for thirty years.⁸ Most of Mrs. Moore's work has been in dance, although she has attended conferences in children's theatre and creative dramatics.

These two staff personnel give direction and leadership to the Wichita Children's Theatre. All other work is done by volunteers recruited from the area or drawn from the classes in the School of the Performing Arts. Wichita has no in-service training program at this time.⁹

⁷Statement by Irene Vickers Baker, personal interview.

⁸School, loc. cit.

⁹Statement by Osythe Dearsmith Moore, personal interview.

FACILITIES

Until the completion of the theatre, the Wichita Children's Theatre productions continue to be held in East High School Auditorium. Presently, the rehearsals, except for dress rehearsals, are held on the stage of the partially completed theatre. All of the classes for the School of the Performing Arts are held on the main stage of the new theatre. The stage has a depth of forty-eight feet, a width of one hundred feet, a proscenium opening of forty-five feet, and ten feet of apron space. There are to be twelve battens located behind the proscenium operated by a counterweight system. There is no fly gallery. Immediately adjacent to the backstage area are dressing and make-up rooms, costume and property storage space, office areas, and a workshop for the construction of scenery. The lighting, sound and projection area is located in a booth at the back of the auditorium.¹⁰ The stage area was designed to the specifications prescribed by Mrs. Baker.¹¹ The consulting architect was Arthur Risser, associate professor of engineering graphics at

¹⁰ Dolores Hills, "Children's Theatre Now in New Home," The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon Sunday Magazine, October 20, 1968, 1D.

¹¹ Statement by Irene Vickers Baker, personal interview.

Wichita State University and chairman of the architecture project of the American Educational Theatre Association.¹²

The decor of the auditorium is to be completed in blue and grays. The house will seat 499 people. The seating arrangement is to be continental, and the sightlines are designed for children.¹³

The Troupers carry their own set, costumes and properties as they tour to the individual schools which provide playing space and storage between performances.¹⁴

SELECTION OF LITERATURE

The selection of literature used in the children's theatre productions is determined by the Managing Director. This director stated that she tries to have a well-rounded program including classical literature, a fantasy, and an adventure story. The Managing Director directs the first play of each season. The second production is a performance of the Reed Marionettes and is usually drawn from classical literature. The third show may be handled by a guest director and cast. The final performance of the season is basically a dance program. The cast is drawn from the advanced

¹²Hills, loc. cit.

¹³Children's Theatre Review, loc. cit.

¹⁴Statement by Irene Vickers Baker, personal interview.

students in the creative dance and ballet classes taught by Mrs. Moore. The literature used in the creative dramatics classes is under the direction of Mrs. Moore and consists of children's stories and poems used for dramatization.

PUBLICITY OF PROGRAM

The Wichita Children's Theatre publicizes its program mainly through the schools. The individual school P.T.A.'s handle advanced ticket sales. Sixty thousand flyers are given to the children through the schools. Brochures are also available for interested persons. The School of the Performing Arts is publicized through its school catalogue of classes. The entire program receives frequent coverage by The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon, and local television and radio stations also give coverage in newscasts and spot announcements.¹⁵

FUNDING AND BUDGETING OF PROGRAM

The Wichita Children's Theatre is funded from several sources. The first is through box office receipts from each production. This money is used to present the productions. The scripts, scenery, costumes, and rental of East High

¹⁵ Ibid.

School Auditorium must come from these receipts. Each production has a maximum budget of five hundred dollars.

Additional money comes from tuition paid by the student in the School of the Performing Arts. This tuition money is used to pay expenses incurred in the teaching of the classes. Mrs. Moore receives a commission from the classes. Mrs. Baker receives no regular salary.

The bulk of financial support comes from private donations which have been used largely to build a theatre adjacent to the Wichita Art Association Galleries. The shell of the building was made possible by the gift of a single donor. The stage and its housings were purchased with 110,000 dollars raised by the Wichita Children's Theatre solicitations. A chair fund of 50,000 dollars is being reserved pending the completion of the auditorium. The stage equipment and the individual prices of each piece have been listed in the descriptive literature for the convenience of the donor. A donor may buy a piece of equipment, donate to the auditorium completion fund, or donate to the general children's theatre fund.¹⁶

¹⁶"An Invitation from the Wichita Children's Theatre" Wichita, Kansas: Wichita Children's Theatre Guild, 1968), n.p. (mimeographed.)

OTHER CHILD DRAMA PROGRAMS
EXISTING IN WICHITA

The Wichita Recreation Department is the only other organization in Wichita that has any type of child drama program. In the summer the Recreation Department sponsors the Show Wagon, a children's talent show drawn from the local playgrounds. The Show Wagon has brief rehearsals before presenting a program to various local playgrounds. The Recreation Department also sponsored a creative dramatics class for ten weeks in the fall of 1968. The class was taught by Suzanne Umphrey at the recreation center, and was composed of students in the fourth through sixth grades.

The Wichita school system offers classes in acting at the high school level and also sponsors drama clubs at both the high school and junior high school levels. In both of these activities, the emphasis is on acting techniques rather than child drama.

Friends University has produced one original children's theatre production, Marlin the Magnificent, in 1966. This show has been presented eight times to audiences in Wichita and also to the 1969 Children's Theatre Festival at Marymount College in Salina, Kansas. Friends University has undertaken no other child drama activities.

Wichita State University teachers mention child drama in some of the speech courses but the small amount of

material presented is not discussed or given any great emphasis. The University has no child drama classes or productions.

There were no other notable child drama activities existing in Wichita, Kansas, in 1968.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS FOR WICHITA, KANSAS

CHILD DRAMA PROGRAM AND

SUMMARY OF STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusion of the study and to suggest measures which Wichita Kansas, may take to develop a model program.

When the leaders of any city or community are planning a child drama program, there are several concepts to be considered. The determination of a program's goals are vital to the beginning of any planning session. The leaders must know their direction of growth before any concrete steps can be taken. Growing out of the evidence of this study is the desirability of planning at least one unified child drama program in the community. To ignore one phase of a child drama program in preference for another or operate under the assumption that another group is sponsoring that type of activity results in a poorly balanced program. Each child drama program should strive to develop every phase of each activity to the fullest. This insures the child a rounded program that develops all aspects of his creativity. An operation of this type does not eliminate the possibility of more than one program functioning in the same locale, or even of specialized classes being offered by individual groups. It does mean, however, that at least one

program in the area should offer a complete, balanced child drama program to the entire community.

The third factor to be kept in mind when developing a child drama program is the need for strong and equally emphasized programs of creative dramatics and children's theatre. These two activities are complimentary; they serve to strengthen one another. The vast majority of child drama experts agree creative dramatics can be put to good use in children's theatre activities. They feel they are excellent for preparation for acting, tryouts and casting, development of a scene in a formal play, and for the building of future audiences.¹ The experts also agree that there is no conflict between creative dramatics and children's theatre. Creative dramatics gives the child a means of expressing himself; an emotional outlet. Children's theatre stirs the world and gives him food for thought. One activity without the balancing effects of the other only develops half the child.

The fourth point to consider when planning a child drama program is the need for an in-service training program. Such ongoing education is basic to a growing and vital operation. The colleges and universities are providing training

¹Isabel B. Burger, "Creative Dramatics: An Approach to Children's Theatre," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics. Edited by Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington. (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 185-191.

for those who plan a career in child drama activities. However, to see that the goals and methods of a child drama program are developed to capacity, the knowledge should be passed from the trained staff members to the volunteers, teachers and recreation leaders and then on to the parents and the community. It would not be necessary for the entire community to take a training course in child drama, but if the goals are understood by the community, the program has a greater probability of success. All who serve in voluntary positions should have some training; if high standards and uniformly sound practices are to be achieved, an in-service training program can serve not only to strengthen the existing child drama program but to further the development of child drama.

The fifth point to be considered when planning a child drama program is its relationship to other organized activities that are concerned with the development of the child. No one person or group is completely responsible for the development of a child; this growth comes from exposure to a large variety of people and situations. A great many of the situations a child encounters are presented in a formal organized manner through the activities of the departments of education and recreation. A child drama program should augment the efforts of these organizations. Each activity is

attempting to develop a facet of the child; working together a well-rounded, emotionally healthy, socially adjusted, aesthetically aware individual can result.

Winifred Ward and others write about the usefulness of playmaking and creative dramatics in the classroom. Education is preparing the child for the future, but it is also necessary that the child live richly now. If the teacher can find the natural interests of the child and discover what experiences have meaning for him, then a creative playmaking session can be planned. The child is given a chance to plan part of his own education through the playmaking. The experience gained from these situations brings increased knowledge and a sense of adequacy based on self-confidence. The child must be educated to live in a democracy that is rapidly changing. Creative playmaking gives the child a chance to experience situations in which change is involved and through the involvement of teamwork, the effects of democracy are seen at close range. The child is given a chance to express and develop attitudes and appreciations in addition to learning facts.²

Ward also feels that playmaking is a valuable aid to the recreation programs. The playgrounds can use the activities of creative dramatics to great advantage under the

² Winifred Ward, Playmaking With Children. Second edition (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), p. 17.

direction of a skilled leader. Playmaking can also be used in camps and for development of entertainment presented by the children in local parks. Ward says, "Play is voluntary; it is refreshing. It re-creates us."³ Creative dramatics and playmaking are excellent for use by the recreational people to refresh and re-create us.

Children's theatre also is a great aid in the formal educational and recreational systems. Ideas, facts and concepts that oftentimes are difficult to grasp can be shown through children's theatre. The child gains impressions from children's theatre in a formal educational or recreational situation; from creative dramatics activities the child can express the impressions he receives.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE EXISTING

WICHITA PROGRAM

There are several steps necessary for Wichita, Kansas, to instigate if it is to attain the suggested model program. First it must have a definite set of goals that are to be achieved. The goals of the Wichita Child Drama Program should be:

- (1) To provide a balanced, integrated child drama program for all who wish to participate.

³ Ibid., p. 213.

- (2) To stimulate active cultural participation and growth in the people of Wichita, Kansas.
- (3) To serve as an example and aid to other communities wishing to start a program of child drama.

The first consideration of the Wichita leaders is to organize a Child Drama Program. A Wichita Child Drama Development Committee should be formed to promote and coordinate the activities of the program. This committee would consist of people representing The Wichita Children's Theatre, The Wichita Art Association, The Board of Education, Wichita State University, Friends University, Sacred Heart College, The Wichita City Public Library, The Wichita Recreation Department, The Wichita Community Theatre, The Wichita Cultural Arts Development Program working through Century II and the Wichita Council of Churches. This committee would come into existence under the guidance of the Kansas Cultural Arts Commission. These organizations would be represented to insure a child drama program, integrated with all other major organizations, concerned with the development and well-being of a child, and dedicated to increase and use the total resources available in Wichita, Kansas. The program the Wichita Child Drama Development Committee would undertake should be structured in the following manner.

The organization now existing in Wichita called the Wichita Children's Theatre should be reorganized under the following name: Wichita Children's Drama. Through this

organization the total child drama program could be developed. The Wichita Children's Drama would consist of children's theatre, creative dramatics, interpretive dance, and technical theatre instruction. Classes in puppetry and playwriting would be offered in the summer and in the fall and spring as demanded. To conduct the program, a staff of ten people would be hired. The staff would consist of children's theatre directors, creative dramatics specialists, technical directors, costumers, a business and publicity manager and one secretary.

The Children's Theatre would be offered on three levels: elementary, junior high and high school. It would consist of adult actors presenting productions to child audiences. Each level would offer four productions a year. The elementary productions would be presented on the stage of the children's theatre adjacent to the Wichita Art Association complex. Each of the four productions would be presented to the elementary schools in Wichita. The productions would be presented on school afternoons, Saturdays and Sundays. Each production would be double cast to allow a greater number of actors to participate. The houses would be drawn from each elementary school. The Board of Education would make arrangements for the absence from class. The parents, PTA's, and recreation departments would be responsible for transportation to and from the school. The admission charge would be fifty cents per person.

Tickets would be sold through the individual PTA's. The junior high and high school children's theatre would be composed of touring companies which would present productions on the stages of the individual schools. Admission to the performances would be seventy-five cents. There are sixteen junior high schools and six high schools. The size of each school would require two performances. The Board of Education would arrange the time missed from classes. The high school productions would be presented in the morning and the junior high school in the afternoon. To conduct these programs two children's theatre directors would be hired, one for the elementary level and one for the junior high and high school level. Each director would be responsible for the casting, rehearsals and performance of each production. The selection of plays for production would be the choice of the individual director. The directors choice would be based on the literary quality of the script, the age group of the audience, the availability of actors, production mounting qualifications and cost. The director would also consider the total season and try to present a variety of subject matter. The shows would be arranged to present some of the audience "favorites" as well as new or less well known scripts. Twelve separate scripts would be presented each year. The tryouts would be open to any adult wishing to participate. Publicity for each production would be handled through a publicity-business manager.

This area is discussed later in the chapter. To mount each of these productions two technical directors and two costumers would be hired. One technical director and one costumer would be responsible for the elementary school productions and one technical director and one costumer would be responsible for the junior high and the high school productions. The technical directors and costumers would also conduct classes in stagecraft, costuming, make-up and stage lighting. On the junior high level these classes would be conducted in the individual schools and would be called technical theatre instruction. The basic aspects of each area of instruction would be offered in one course. On the high school level each area would be offered in a separate class to each individual school. The classes would be held on the stage of the children's theatre. The technical theatre staff would either teach these classes themselves or conduct an in-service training program for voluntary instructors. The classes would be held once a week, after school or on Saturdays, for fifteen weeks and the tuition would be five dollars per session. The classes would be offered regularly in two sessions a year, fall and spring. Technical theatre instructions would also be conducted in the summer. The summer program will be discussed later in this chapter.

The creative dramatics classes would be conducted under the direction of two staff members. These two staff

members would be specialists in creative dramatics and one would have a strong background in dance. These two people would conduct an in-service training program for volunteers and supervise the creative dramatics program. The volunteers would be drawn from parents, recreational and educational personnel and assigned to each school district. At least three creative dramatics-interpretive dance classes would be held in each elementary school. The classes would be divided by age levels and held once a week. There would be around fifteen students per instructor and the class would meet fifteen times per session. The session would be held in the fall and spring. There could be advanced classes also offered as a demand developed and volunteers were available. The classes would be held after school or on Saturdays in school classrooms, churches, or recreation facilities. The tuition charges of each session would be three dollars per student. The junior high creative dramatics class would be conducted in the same manner as the elementary schools. There would be one class in each junior high, and these classes would be called Teen Drama. The older or more advanced students in these classes could work for a more polished performance with the possibility of presentation to younger creative dramatics students. On the high school level students would be urged to participate in drama and speech classes currently offered. The creative dramatics specialists would also be responsible for

working with the board of education and recreation departments to build a program for instruction of teachers in the use of creative dramatics in the classrooms, camps, playgrounds, and for the handicapped.

Wichita State University, Friends University, and Sacred Heart College would be encouraged to develop child drama programs for the purpose of training professional child drama specialists. Arrangement would be made for the college student to receive classroom credit for student teaching and practical experience through the Wichita Children's Drama program. The college and universities would also be encouraged to present their own child drama activities to the Wichita community.

The Wichita public library would be encouraged to purchase books concerning child drama and children's theatre scripts. Story-hours could also be presented by the library staff using the best in children's stories and poems. The library staff could also arrange displays and programs built around the script selections chosen for production in the children's theatre.

The summer program would offer all of the classes available in the winter on a more intensive basis. The classes would be three weeks in length, meeting five days a week for one hour daily. Each session of classes would be offered three times during the summer. The class sizes and

tuition would remain the same. In addition, experimental classes can be held. Classes in puppetry and playwriting will also be offered to junior high and high school students. A show wagon with a variety show format would be sponsored by the recreation department. The acts would be drawn from local children's tryouts and be supervised by the children's theatre directors. The productions would be presented free in local playgrounds, parks, and recreation facilities. Summer students would also be able to participate in any unified arts programs available.

The publicity and business of the Wichita Children's Drama would be handled by one staff member. The publicity of the program would be conducted through the schools, recreation departments, radio and television announcements and The Wichita Eagle. The publicity-business manager would pay all bills contracted by the organization and be in charge of fund raising. This person should be trained in business management and have experience in publicity for theatre programs. A secretary would also be hired to handle the correspondence and serve as a telephone receptionist.

The Wichita Children's Drama program would have an annual income of around 205,700 dollars per year. The income would be derived from the following sources. The children's theatre box office receipts would total 125,000 dollars per year. A total of 50,000 children would be reached on three levels. Four productions would be given per year on each level with an admission charge of fifty cents per person at the

elementary level and seventy-five cents at the junior high and high school level. An income of 62,100 dollars would come from the elementary school creative dramatics classes. Each student would pay three dollars a session. There would be five sessions a year with 45 students in each of the ninety-two elementary schools. The Teen Drama tuitions would bring 3,600 dollars per year. There are five sessions of Teen Drama a year, 15 students in each of the sixteen junior high schools. The junior high technical theatre instruction class tuition would total 6,000 dollars per year. There are 15 students per class in sixteen junior high schools, with five sessions per year. The high school technical theatre instruction would bring 9,000 dollars per year. There are five sessions a year and four classes in each session. Each class has fifteen students and there are six high schools.

The expenses of the Wichita Children's Drama program would be around 185,000 dollars per year. Each of the staff members would be paid 10,000 dollars per year with the exception of the secretary who would be paid 5,000 dollars per year. The salaries total 98,000 dollars per year. Each children's theatre production would be allowed a budget of 2,000 dollars per year. The total production costs amount to 24,000 dollars per year. General technical equipment and touring costs would have an expense of 50,000 dollars per year. Creative dramatics would have expenses of 6,000 dollars

annually and the child drama program publicity would amount to 7,000 dollars per year. Surplus money in the budget could be used to rent facilities, pay actors in leading roles, purchase equipment, hire additional staff, and pay staff expenses to professional meetings and conferences.

To complete the children's theatre building 135,000 dollars is needed. This money would be raised through grants, allocations from educational and recreational budgets, and donations from local organizations. The Kansas Cultural Arts Commission could be instrumental in obtaining these grants and donations.

If such a child drama program is developed in Wichita a greater awareness of cultural activities would develop. Children would be exposed to the arts at an early age and would expect it to be a part of their everyday lives. As adults they would demand that an arts program of high quality be available to them. A program of this type could serve as an example to other communities wishing to start child drama programs. The ideas, resources and creative genius of the Wichita program could be shared through the Children's Theatre Conference. Wichita, with the support of the Kansas Cultural Arts Commission, could help establish and advise child drama programs in other communities. By sharing ideas and lending aid to other programs, child drama would be strengthened not only in Wichita, but across the country.

Wichita, Kansas is now ready to develop such a child drama program. With the development of a great number of cultural activities in Wichita, such as Century II, the community is aware of the needs of the people and are eager to undertake programs of this type.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that Wichita, Kansas, will take the steps suggested in this study. The child drama program now existing in Wichita is a fine example of the work of a few concerned citizens. The time has come for Wichita to consider expansion of its program to involve greater numbers of people and facilities. If this expansion can be undertaken, perhaps Wichita can indeed have a model child drama program.

In following the suggested methods outlined in this study, for the development of a model child drama program it is felt that the achievement of such a program was possible. The model program built from the replies to the questionnaire and from the consulting of authorities in child drama has been outlined and explained. It is hoped that this study will prove useful to all those wishing aid in the planning and development of child drama programs across the country.

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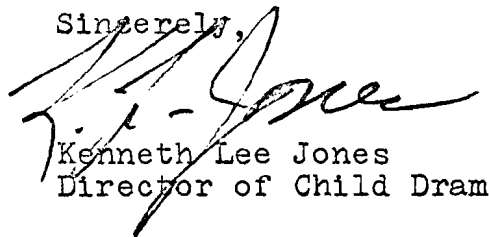
APPENDIX

Kansas State Teachers College

APPENDIX A

Judith D. Page is a graduate student at this college and is working under my supervision on the study outlined herein. It is our hope that one result accruing from the compiled information will be greater documentation of the nature of "ideal" child drama programs. We would appreciate your cooperation in filling out the enclosed questionnaire as soon as possible and returning it to us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'K. Lee Jones', written over the typed name and title.

Kenneth Lee Jones
Director of Child Drama

CHILD DRAMA QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find answers to problems that arise when organizing a child drama program. It is being used by Judy Page in conjunction with work on a thesis for a master of science degree at Kansas State Teachers College in Emporia, Kansas. This questionnaire is being sent to outstanding leaders of child drama programs in America for the purpose of developing a model child drama program for a city having certain specific attributes. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section contains questions concerning the child drama program now existing in your community. Please answer questions on the basis of last year's twelve-month program. The second section contains questions concerning plans, theories, and programs you think should be included in a model child drama program that reaches maximum community service.

The community for which the child drama program is being developed has these characteristics:

- I. Geography
 - A. Midwestern city
 - B. City covers 51 square miles

- II. Population
 - A. 255,000 people
 - B. 23 per cent from German stock
 - C. 8 per cent Negro

- III. Age
 - A. Median age is 27
 - B. 37 per cent under the age of 18

IV. Education

- A. Age 25 or more
 - 1. Median number of school years completed is 12
 - 2. 54 per cent completed high school or more
- B. Age 5-34
 - 1. 62,762 enrolled in school

V. Employment

- A. 98,395 employed
- B. 31 per cent in manufacturing
- C. 19 per cent in retail or wholesale
- D. 51 per cent white collar
- E. Median income \$6,121 per year

These facts should be kept in mind when answering the questions in Section II.

Results of this questionnaire will be sent to you upon written request. Thank you for your time and effort spent in answering this questionnaire.

SECTION I

1. What is your official capacity in the child drama program?
2. How long has your child drama program been operating?
3. What are the goals of your program?

Key for below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <u>A</u> children's theatre | <u>E</u> technical theatre instruction |
| <u>B</u> creative dramatics | <u>F</u> playwriting |
| <u>C</u> puppetry | <u>G</u> dance, music, or art classes |
| <u>D</u> acting classes | |

1. Which of the above does your child drama program contain?

2. How many people does each activity reach?
3. How many people did your program reach last year?
4. Who sponsors your program?
5. Which activity is most popular with the children?
6. What type of facilities do you use to conduct your program (classroom, homes, offices, churches, auditoriums)?
7. Does your program work through the schools, recreation departments, other organizations, a combination of these, or independently?
8. How is your program funded?
9. What permanent staff positions does your program maintain?
10. What is the average number of volunteers in leadership?
11. What memberships does your program maintain with state and national organizations?
12. How many conferences have representatives from your organization attended in the last year?
13. How many children's theatre productions does your program give per year?
14. How many performances are given of each production?
15. How many sessions of creative dramatics do you have per year?
16. How many creative dramatics classes do you have per session?
17. What is the length of each creative dramatics class?
18. How many classes do you have in the other areas listed?
19. Do you have a regular in-service program for leadership training?
20. How do you publicize your program?

21. What are your program's main problems?
22. By what means do you evaluate the success of your program?
23. What plans do you have for expansion of your program?

SECTION II

A. General Program

1. How should the various characteristics listed for the community on page one affect the child drama program being developed?
2. How does the given community differ from the one in which your program is located?
3. If the given facts about the community are ignored when the child drama program is planned, when or where will it first begin to affect the program?
4. What activities should a child drama program include?
5. Should the ideal program work through the schools, recreation department, or independently?
6. How should the program be funded?
7. How should the budget be divided to give adequate support to all areas of the program?
8. What staff positions are necessary to run the program efficiently?
9. What type of training should the staff have?
10. What type of involvement should be enlisted from parents?
11. What organizations are good sponsors for a child drama program?

12. In what state and national organizations should the program be active?
13. Is child drama most effective as part of a unified arts program?
14. In what ways should the program vary from the school year to the summer months?

B. Children's Theatre

1. What determines selection of plays?
2. What is the ideal number of productions per year?
3. What is the best way to draw houses (school classes, individual ticket purchase, other)?
4. What is the best time of the week to schedule performances?
5. Should a fee be charged for performance, how much?
6. How should the productions be publicized?
7. Under what circumstances are touring companies more effective than bringing the children in for a performance?
8. Under what circumstances should the casts include child actors?
9. What books or other resource materials are useful in developing a children's theatre?

C. Creative Dramatics

1. What is the most effective pupil-teacher ratio?
2. What is the best time to have meetings?
3. Where is the best place to meet?
4. How many sessions should be held per year?
5. How many classes should be held per session?

6. Should the classes be divided by age group, sex, or ability?
7. What type of experiences should the class include?
8. Should the class culminate in a performance?
9. What type of equipment is necessary for a creative dramatics class?
10. What determines the selection of materials presented to the class?
11. What books or other resource materials are helpful in developing a creative dramatics class?
12. What are the ideal means of evaluating success?

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire Mailing List

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Reed Marionettes
Box 189
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Roland Reed
1415 S. Twenty-sixth Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68502

Genevieve Richardson
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and Theatre
University of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois

William S. Robinson*
Mesa College
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

Elsi Roland
859 Albany Street
Boston 19, Massachusetts

Mary Jane Roth
155 Warwich Street
Park Forest, Illinois

William G. Roundey
Concordia State Teachers
College
Seward, Nebraska

Barbara Salisbury
School of Drama
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

Rick Schiller
Midland Community Theatre
Box 4847
Midland, Texas

Leona Scott*
 Department of Speech
 Arkansas State Teachers
 College
 Conway, Arkansas

Ann Shaw
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 University of the City
 of New York
 New York, New York

Geraldine Brain Siks
 School of Drama
 University of Washington
 Seattle, Washington

Paula Silberstein
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 New York Board of Education
 131 Livingston Street
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Sister Marie Carol*
 Barry College
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Mrs. Gladys Six
 1732 Mississippi Street
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Marian A. Smith
 310 Irving Place
 Greensboro, North Carolina

Winnie Smith
 South 630 Monta Villa Drive
 Spokane, Washington

Mrs. Ruston Strong III
 Orono
 Wayzata, Minnesota

Mrs. Eugene Sturgill
 567 Polk Street
 Twin Falls, Idaho 83301

Ann Thurmar*
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Ann Viola
 Speech Department
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Jack Vrieze
 Whitewater State College
 Whitewater, Wisconsin

Jeannine Wagner
 Trinity University
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Winnifred Ward*
 1600 Hinman
 Evanston, Illinois

John R. Watts
 Department of Theatre
 Education
 Boston University
 Boston, Massachusetts

Annetta Yeager*
 D. C. Recreation Department
 3149 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C.

Eleanor Chase York*
 Western Michigan University
 Kalamazoo, Michigan

APPENDIX C

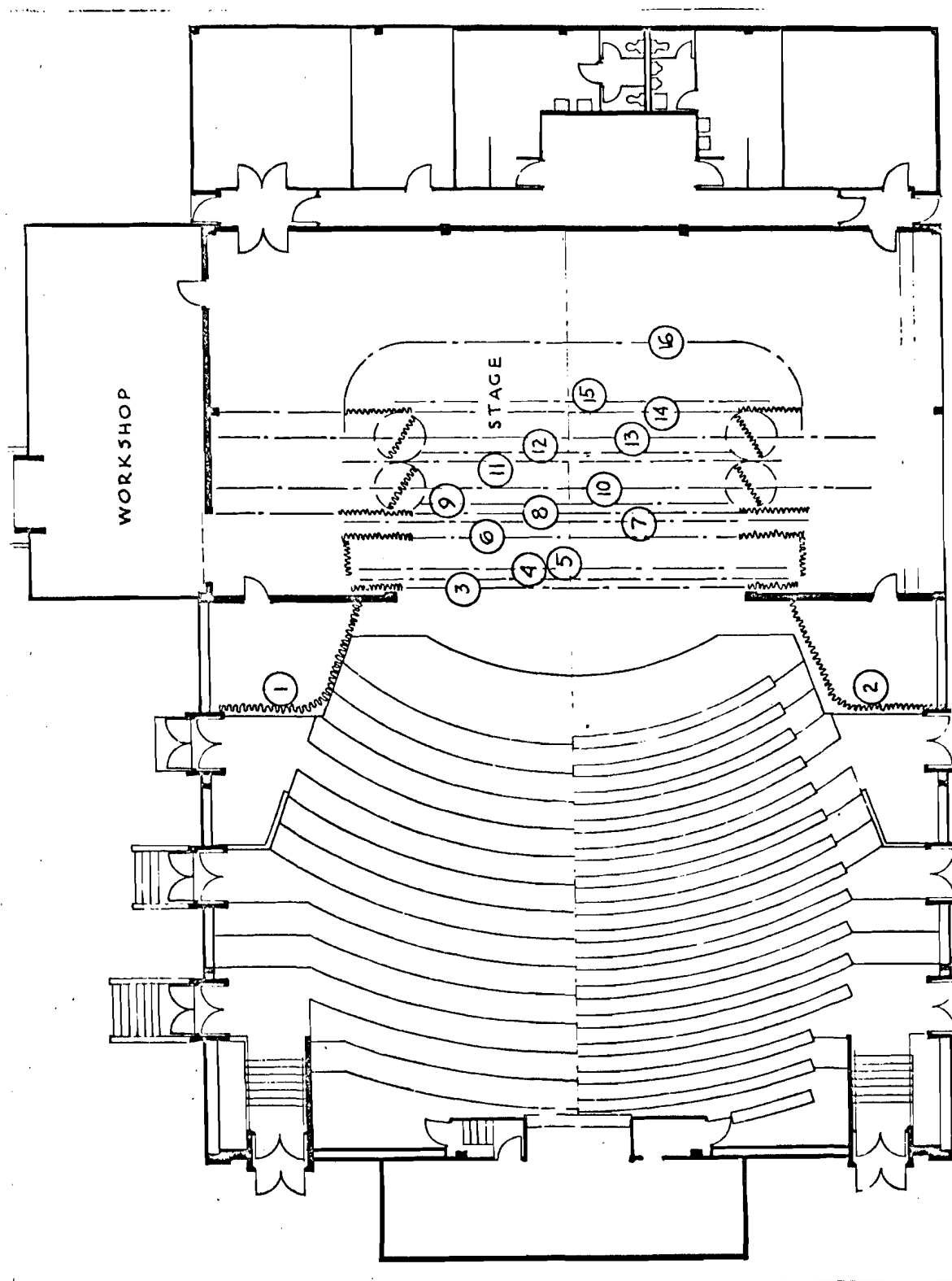
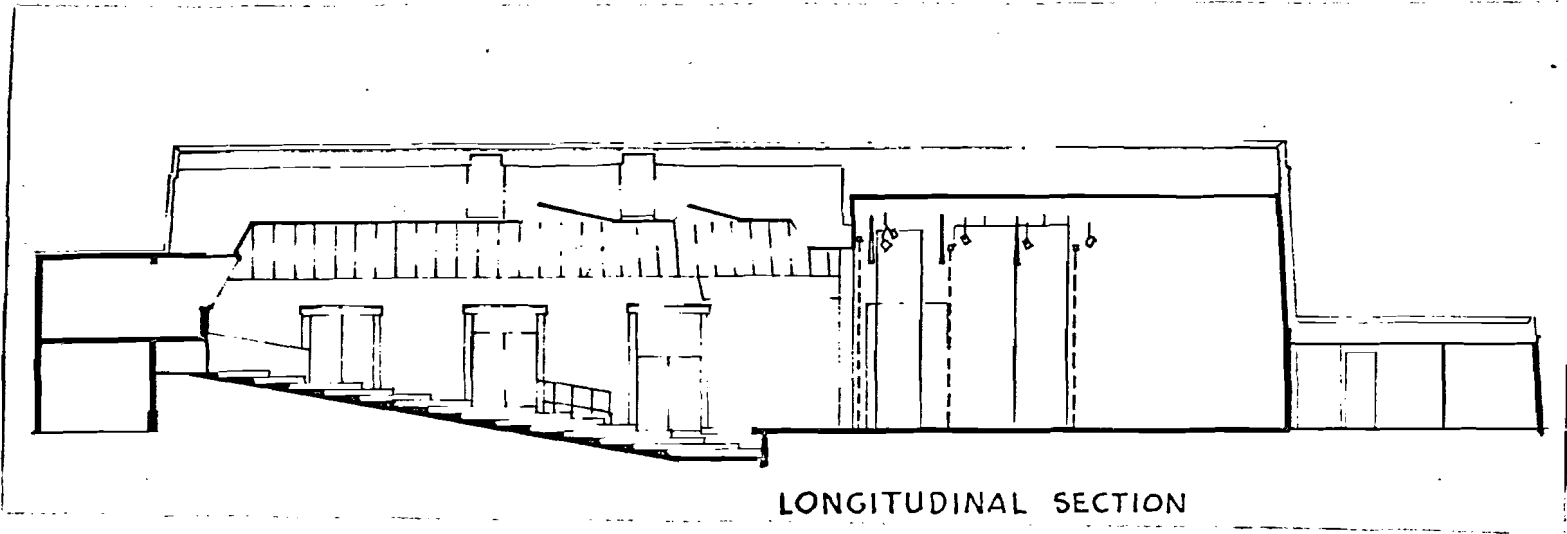


FIGURE 1

FLOORPLAN OF WICHITA
CHILDREN'S THEATRE

SIDE ELEVATION OF WICHITA
CHILDREN'S THEATRE

FIGURE 2



1968

1969

94

22nd ANNUAL



SEASON OF

WICHITA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

(An Activity of Wichita Art Association)

IS YOUR CHILD MISSING THIS IMPORTANT ADVENTURE IN GROWING UP?

Children crave excitement and new experiences. They long to explore the world about them. Always they want to see more — do more — know more.

Nothing sparks young imaginations, nourishes young minds, satisfies young curiosities in quite the creative way that good theatre does. Living theatres meet these needs as television and movies never can. The Wichita Children's Theatre offers your child LIVING theatre—an important advantage in growing up.

SEE THESE PLAYS

November 16, 1968—Rip Van Winkle Here is Irving's beloved old "Rip," an American classic that every child knows and loves. You've heard of the mysterious Dwarfs he meets. Come and see it all.

December 28, 1968—The Reed Marionettes This is the Eighth Yuletide Season the Reeds have visited us. They will present "The Clever Mister Toad" from "Wind in the Willows," the little fellow who brags, blusters and bumbles thru life—high comedy-lovable characters and mad chases.

March 15, 1969—The Elegant Witch A musical comedy about a most unusual witch who does most unusual things after a bewildering and hilarious display of magic. This play will be presented by El Dorado Juco Players. Director Darryl Patten.

May 3, 1969—Raggedy Ann and Andy (Adapted for Dance Drama by Osythe Dears Smith Moore. Discover the secret adventures of these lovable dolls and their friends as they frolic in and out of the play room.

SEASON TICKETS for children (all four plays) — \$2.00

SEASON TICKETS for Parents — \$1.00

All Single Admissions (one play only) — \$1.00

BUY TICKETS FROM P.T.A. AT YOUR SCHOOL

Retain your used season ticket and exchange it between May 5 and 15, 1969, for a Giant Double Dip Cone at either Colonial Grill at Prairie Village or Twin Lakes.



ICE CREAM
FOUNTAIN and GRILL

Performances

10:30 — 2:30 — 7:30

HIGH SCHOOL EAST
AUDITORIUM

For Additional Information Call or Write:
Irene Vickers Baker, the Managing Director of Wichita Children's Theatre
AM 5-1977 — 1422 University Ave., Wichita 67213

FIGURE 3

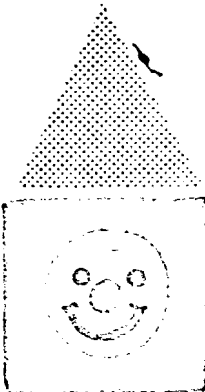
FLYER SENT TO WICHITA

SCHOOL CHILDREN

FIGURE 4

1968 1969

22nd ANNUAL SEASON OF



WICHITA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

SEASON TICKETS for children (all four plays) — \$2.00
SEASON TICKETS for Parents — \$1.00
All Single Admissions (one play only) — \$1.00
BUY TICKETS FROM P.T.A. AT YOUR SCHOOL

THIS SEASON'S PRESENTATIONS

November 16, 1968 - Rip Van Winkle *Irving's beloved American classic that every child knows and loves.*

December 28, 1968 - The Road Menonettes *They will present "The Clever Mister Toad" from "Wind in the Willows," the little fellow who brags, blusters and bumbles thru life.*

March 15, 1969 - The Elegant Witch *A musical comedy about a most unusual witch and a bewildering and hilarious display of magic.*

May 3, 1969 - Raggedy Ann and Andy *Discover the secret adventures of these lovable dolls and their friends in a dance drama by Osythe Dearsmith Moore.*

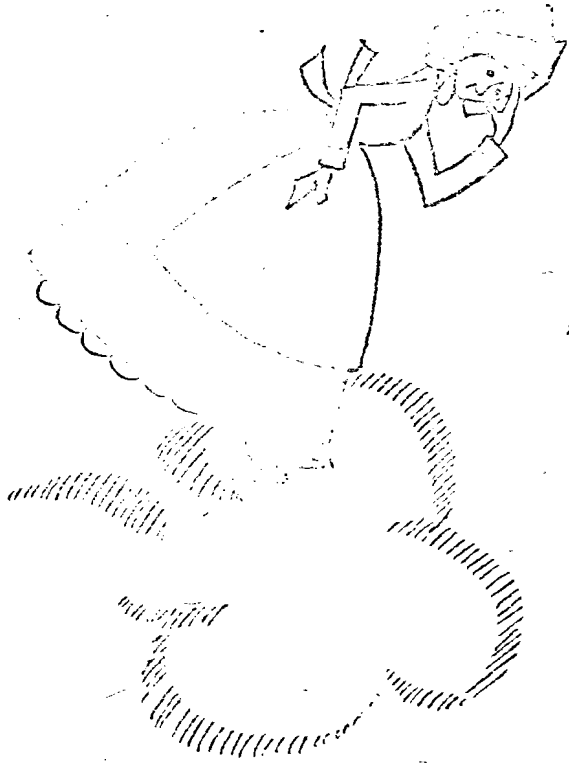
SEASON TICKETS for children (all four plays) — \$2.00

SEASON TICKETS for Parents — \$1.00

All Single Admissions (one play only) — \$1.00

BUY TICKETS FROM P.T.A. AT YOUR SCHOOL

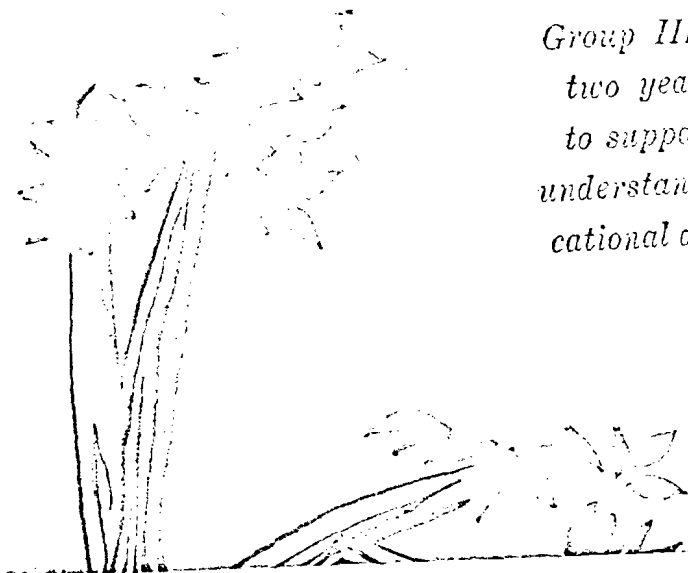
FIGURE 6



We welcome you to the exciting world of the Children's Theater. As far as we know, this is the second theater in the U.S. built especially to bring live theater to children; the first is in Washington and was built and operated by the Junior League of that city. The stage and back-stage areas are finished and the auditorium concrete risers are waiting for the chairs. The \$10,000 bill of material is frozen to be used when the auditorium completion funds can be raised. Then Children's Theater productions can be mounted from East High School to their own home.

Wichita Children's Theater is a group of adult volunteers who bring live theater to about 40,000 youngsters each year. This organization is comprised of four groups.

FIGURE 7



Group I - The "Home Shows" are given at East High Auditorium. These shows are given - 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. The cost of \$2.00 for a season ticket. Groups from "The Homes" are guests at the morning shows. Shows are selected from open tryouts. All work is voluntary.

Group II is called the "Troupers" and is made up of volunteers who present a play at a different elementary school each Friday morning of the school year. There are two casts and this is their only reason. The play is incorporated into the school curriculum by the Director of Elementary Instruction. The current play is John Appleseed, a historical drama.

Group III is the Wichita Children's Theater Guild. It was organized two years ago. Its objectives are to provide a permanent organization to support the Children's Theater program and to broaden the public understanding of the value of Children's Theater as a cultural and educational activity. Memberships are open to the public at a cost of \$5.00 for a single membership, \$10.00 for a family membership, or \$1.00 for a student membership.

Group IV is the Children's Theater School of Performing Arts. Classes in Creative Dramatics, Creative Dance, Ballet and Formal Theater Arts are offered.

Wichita Children's Theater was organized by Irene Wichita Fisher, who has been its manager since 1917. It operates in cooperation with an Advisory Committee of business men. Children's Theater is a part of Wichita City Association but its organization, operation and finances are separate.

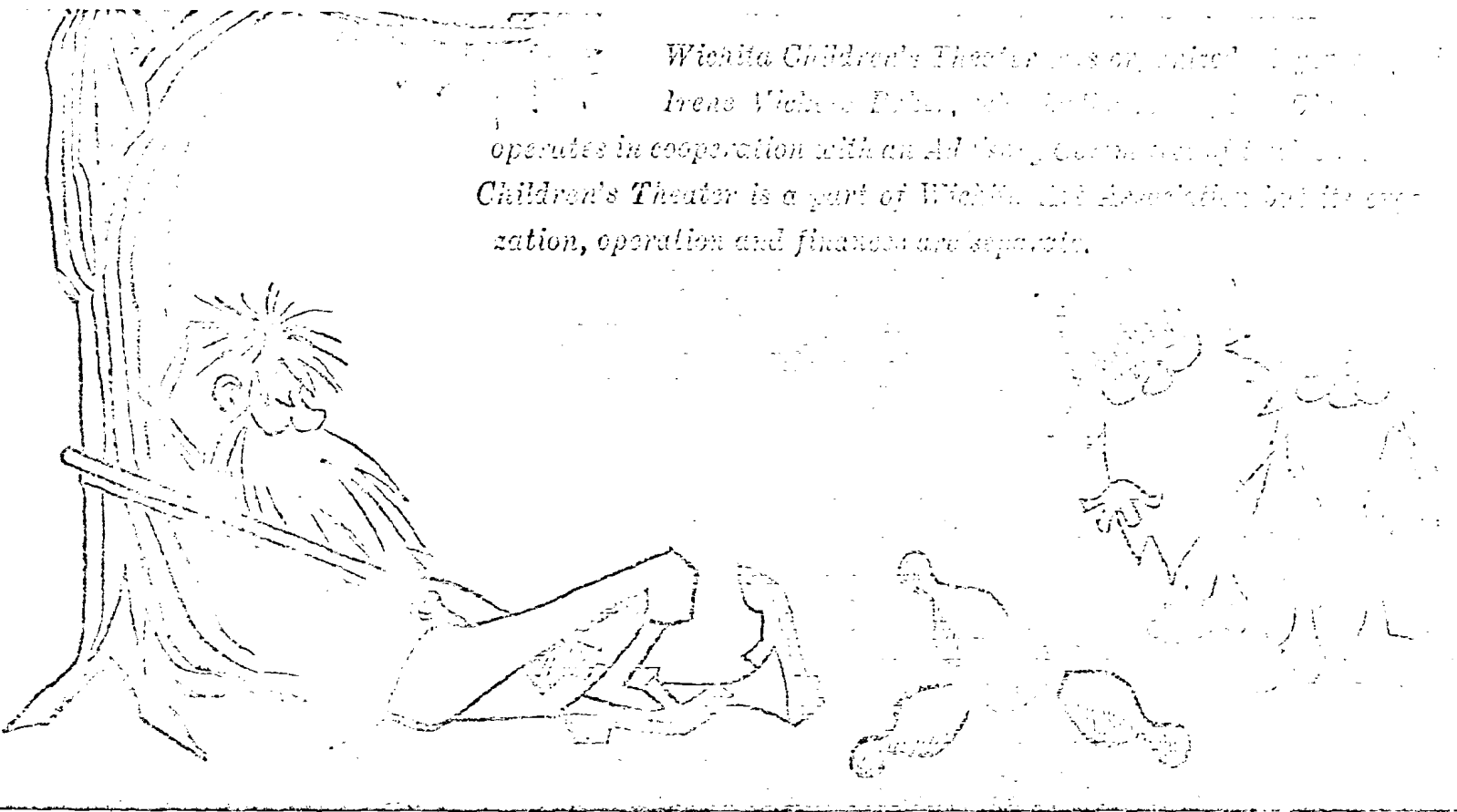


FIGURE 8
PUBLICITY BROCHURE (CONTINUED)