DIRECTORIAL ROLES: A STUDY IN THEATRICAL COMMUNICATION

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

Brenda K. DeVore, B. A.
Denton, Texas
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This study examines the process of theatrical direction as a communication system. Its components are described in terms of their function as elements of a communication process. The communication activities within the theatrical process are analyzed by means of four categories of theatrical communication networks: conceptual, aesthetic, observational, and social. Theories of communication have been surveyed and then applied to the theatrical process. Particular attention is paid to role functions of the director within the social and the aesthetic networks.

The conclusion reached in the study is that the effectiveness of the communication networks used in theatrical directing is determined by the functional roles and the leadership styles adopted by the director as he participates in these networks.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The art of theatre incorporates the separate arts of literature, painting, sculture, dance, and music. The attempt to mold elements from these separate arts into a new or different, composite work leads to an art-form of considerable complexity. A second cause of this complexity is the need to combine the creative endeavors of a number of disparate theatrical artists into a unified presentation which will enable the participants and the spectators to respond to the performance. A third area of complexity stems from theatre's focus on action. "In contrast to sculpture, painting, or literature, theater is a dynamic art, changing from moment to moment as performers interact with one another--and with the audience."¹ If this dynamic process is halted at any point, whether in rehearsals or in performance, the act of theatre ceases. If the interaction becomes less than dynamic, becomes merely a pseudo-process, the result is Peter Brook's "deadly theatre."²

Given this complex process and the need to combine several individual arts into one by means of interaction among the contributing artists, the theory evolved that one person should supervise the preparation of this
unified presentation. This person came to be called the director. (In France he is called the metteur en scène, and in England he is referred to as the producer.)

Although the theory that theatrical productions attain unification from the supervision of one individual is historically new, the concept is not. "The director, under one title or another, undoubtedly has always existed in the theatre, for his function is essential and can be performed by no other artist." Direction or guidance of theatrical productions has come from the playwright (Aeschylus), an actor in the company (the commedia dell'arte, where the most experienced performer usually served as concertatore or guida), an actor-manager (David Garrick, John Phillip Kemble, Charles Macready, and Charles Kean), a critic (Walter Kerr), or a choreographer (Jerome Robbins)—to cite only a few examples.

Between 1796, when Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, supervisor of the Weimar Court Theatre, began using the techniques of the modern theatre director, and the end of the nineteenth century, the concept of the director as the primary or sole theatre artist was developed. During this period, numerous technical advances in theatrical production appeared, stock companies were disintegrating, and a characteristic theatrical style disappeared. Faced with these conditions, various workers in the theatre came to recognize that all the elements of a production could be
coordinated only through supervision by one individual.7 These workers hoped that this individual could give unity and proportion to the production while helping the other artists to make their maximum contributions to the play. As a result of the theories of Gordon Craig and Adolph Appia, and of the theories and practice of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, Max Reinhardt, Andre Antoine, Constantin Stanislavski, and others, a distinct art of direction has come to prominence in the twentieth century.8

What the director directs—the process of theatrical production—begins with a drama, usually in the form of a manuscript prepared by a playwright.9 The manuscript is the playwright's expression of, and response to, his perceptions of his environment. The written drama is studied by each of the collaborating artists of the theatre: the managers or producers, the director, the actors, and the members of the artistic or technical staff. Each artist or craftsman responds to the playwright's perceptions out of his own experiences, attitudes, and frames of reference. The collaboration—the combined responses—of the artists is intended to lead to a unified interpretation or response to the playwright's concepts; this production occurs in the presence of an audience—a group organized to receive the concepts and the interpretations within a social setting.

This final stage in the process allows the artists' concepts to be joined with those of the audience. The
individuals in the audience respond, either singly or together as a polarized group, to many stimuli. One of these stimuli, for example, may be an individual actor. The audience may react to that actor's personality, his emotional or mental state, his voice, his physical appearance, and/or the character or role which he portrays. The audience's reaction may be to the reality of the actor and the portrayal of the character independently, or the reaction may be to the combined illusionary stimulus of the actor as the character. A second source of stimuli in this example is the audience's perception of the character as a "person" involved in the events on stage. When this perception occurs, the fictional person affects the perceiver in many, if not all, the ways such a person would affect a member of the audience in real life.

A third possible stimulus is the playwright's ideas, as stated or implied in the manuscript and as brought to life by the performance. These ideas may be romantic, political, social, or anything else, and may serve as instruments for teaching, persuading, entertaining, or any combination of these functions. A fourth set of stimuli may come from the auditory and visual elements of the production—the vocal quality of the cast members individually and combined, the word choice and rhythm of the script, the music, the sound effects, the stage setting, the costumes, the lighting, and the physical appearance of the actors.
In short, everything that is heard, seen, and thought about or felt during the production may stimulate an audience's reactions. The audience may respond to each of the stimuli independently or to a combination of the elements into one stimulus. The responses may even be triggered by the social event. For some people, theatre attendance may serve as a means of escape from daily routine. For others, it may be a requirement for maintaining their social position. That is, the event may provide a means for impressing others with clothes, jewels, escorts, and other symbols of wealth or power. Some people may view the event as an opportunity for mingling with old acquaintances and for making new friends.

Whatever the stimulus, the audience's responses may be momentary or lasting, and may result in instant expression (applause, laughter, booing) or delayed expression (discussion, reviews, touting of the show). The theatrical experience involves both the immediate point-to-point contact of audience and performer during the presentation, and the way in which the audience remembers the presentation. To discriminate the sequence of presentational reactions from the rearrangement of those reactions into a unified response, the reactions during a performance may be called the "theatrical experience" and the remembrance of the production the "memorial experience."10

This interaction between the audience and the production indicates that, among other things, theatre is
a means of communication—that is a dynamic series of transactions between and among individuals. These transactions involve at least the following elements: a source, a receiver, a message, a channel, a situation context, a system of feedback, of symbols, of norms, and of roles, and a system of interaction networks.11

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the process of theatrical direction as a communication system. It is necessary to discover the theoretical basis of communication; to determine the attributes of theatrical communication; to analyze the activities of the director as a communicator; and to examine the director's role in the networks of theatrical communication.

Hypothesis

The effectiveness of the communication networks used in theatrical directing is determined by the functional roles and leadership styles adopted by the director as he participates in these networks.

Methodology

This study follows the standard design of descriptive research. Such research studies "existing conditions, situations, or relationships in order to discover or establish norms or standards."12 In order to determine
the existing relationship between the two disciplines, theories of both communication and theatrical directing have been analyzed. To accomplish this, the components of the theatrical process have been examined to determine their function, if any, as elements of a communication process. Likewise, the various categories of communication have been observed within the theatrical process. These observations indicate the existence of at least four levels of communication networks within the theatrical production process. Furthermore, these observations reveal that the function of the director within these networks may determine the effectiveness of the networks. Through theoretical research and personal observation, each of the networks has been studied briefly. In the same manner, the role functions of the director within the social and the aesthetic networks have been analyzed in greater depth.

Background

Communication is inherent and inevitable in the human condition, which requires that men relate to and interact with each other. "Communication is universally regarded as the essential social process, the means by which man achieves his individual humanity and maintains social relationships. Without the capacity to use symbols and to interact, men would be forced to live out their lives in isolation. . . ."13 Behaviorists argue that all human
behavior is capable of communication and that men cannot not communicate. From this viewpoint, anything one does can, and does, communicate something to someone.\textsuperscript{14}

The concept designated by the term communication is surrounded by vagueness and contradiction. The usage of the word is widespread in virtually every discipline from the physical and the social sciences to business and the arts. "The word 'communication' has become popular. It is used currently to label relationship problems between labor and management, among countries, among people generally. Some uses of the communication label refer to a different way of viewing these problems; others merely change the name of the same problems that existed yesterday."\textsuperscript{15}

Since the word communication is so widely used, a specific meaning must be established for the term in order to discuss it within a particular context. There are numerous definitions. Hanneman, for example, defined communication as "message transaction among participants"\textsuperscript{16} Barnlund, as follows: "communication is an 'effort after meaning,' a creative act initiated by man in which he seeks to discriminate and organize cues so as to orient himself in his environment and satisfy his changing needs."\textsuperscript{17} Scheidel identified communication as "a process involving speaking/listening agents who, by sending and receiving verbal and nonverbal messages, interact within a physical
and psychological context to achieve a meaningful effect." Berlo's concept, cited previously, established communication as a dynamic series of transactions involving at least four elements: a source, a receiver, a channel, and a message.

Each of these definitions implied the concept of process, and represented what Berlo called process definitions of communication. Regarding the process theory itself, Berlo stated that "if we accept the concept of process, we view events and relationships as dynamic, on-going, ever-changing, continuous. When we label something as a process, we also mean that it does not have a beginning, an end, a fixed sequence of events. It is not static, at rest. It is moving. The ingredients within a process interact; each affects all of the others."

Thus, in this thesis, communication is a series of dynamic, continuous, and ever-changing interactions involving the sending and receiving of messages within a specific context. More simply, it is a process of message exchange within, between, or among people. The various behaviors of humans are significantly exhibited and perceived through the participation of individuals involved in interactive relationships.

It is interesting to note that theatre has also been defined as a process. "Theater is a dynamic art, changing from moment to moment as performers interact with one another--and with the audience," Wilson stated.
Beckerman added that theatre is spontaneous, that it is "what goes on between the parts." Berlo noted that "it is the blending, the dynamic interrelationships among the ingredients developed in the process that determine whether we have what we would call 'theatre'."

At least by implication, theatre too is a series of dynamic, continuous, and ever-changing transactions or interactions. By definition, then, theatre can be viewed as a specialized form or process of communication.

This concept is not entirely new. John Dewey observed: "In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience." Another view often expressed is that the theatre came into being because it was the only practical way of exposing a large number of people to an author's ideas in the days before the custom of printing and reading books became universal. As Canfield noted, "the stage was a manner of publication, an oral one, as it were. Be that as it may, the theatre is a medium of communication, a vivid way of telling a story." Indeed, as Berlo indicated, the theatre "is a distinguished vehicle of communication, with a considerable tradition and heritage."

As a means or an act of communication, the theatre may indeed provide an enjoyable means for storytelling,
for giving information, for teaching, and for persuading. While these goals are being sought through theatrical means, numerous forms and processes of communication may be active during either the preparation or the presentation of the stimuli. Indeed, how may one achieve unity and harmony—the chief goals of the director— but through some process of communication?

If the director is the person in charge of achieving unity and harmony in the theatrical presentation, then it is the director who has the primary responsibility for initiating, participating in, and/or supervising the forms and processes of communication. To achieve a successful production, a director must express artistic ideas in a way that allows the cast and the production staff to perceive the concepts as the director perceives them and then through various kinds of reactions, relay this perception, or understanding, back to the director. The observation and experience of many directors and critics seem to indicate that most directing problems or failures result not from the director's lack of creativity and artistic skill, but rather from his inability to discuss production ideas with the collaborating artists in such a way that mutual understanding is reached. Such a premise may well mean that artistic success depends upon the director's ability to discuss and interact effectively with the collaborating artists and craftsmen, and therefore, that the study of
communication could be an important part of the director's training.

Although most directors and theorists recognize the importance of communication within the theatrical process, a survey of directing textbooks showed little, if any, discussion of this aspect of the director's work. Even Hodge's *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication and Style*, which focused on the problem of directorial communication more than most of the textbooks surveyed, dealt with the subject only in terms of communication through the technical aspects of staging. When the writers recognized the need for communication in the directing process, the term was usually applied only to the transmission of the literary and artistic ideas involved in the production process. Most writers agreed that the director must be able to get along with his cast and production staff members, but virtually no information was given about methods of attaining workable one-to-one relationships between the director and the people with whom he must work. Yet it is these relationships which provide the foundation for the work of artistic creation and which are ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the production. Nearly all the problems a director encounters as he creates the production are problems of communication. Therefore, at the very least, the directing process merits study as a form of communication.
Assumptions

Such a study is presented in this thesis. Seven assumptions form the basis of the study. First, as noted previously, the theatrical event is one kind of communication. Second, if the theatrical event is to occur at all, it is necessary for communication to be established within, between, and among the participants in the theatrical presentation. Third, since the director is the person responsible for unifying the work of the separate participants and achieving harmony among the disparate elements of the production, it is assumed that he must be in charge of initiating and supervising the processes of communication.

Fourth, there are many complex communication networks within a theatrical production process. These theatrical communication networks may be classified into four categories which are designated according to the types of messages transmitted in each group.

1) The conceptual networks: those in which messages regarding the literary ideas initiated by the playwright are transmitted.

2) The aesthetic networks: those in which the messages about the artistic ideas which transform the literary work into a theatrical event are contained.

3) The observational networks: those in which the spectators become involved in the communication event.
4) The social networks: those which contain non-theatrical messages and which are necessary for the functioning of any group of humans.

The fifth assumption underlying this study is that the social networks are inherent in the theatrical process and therefore must be activated in order for the other networks to function. The sixth assumption is that the relative success of the social networks determines the success of each of the other types of networks, and therefore, the success of the theatrical presentation. The final and chief assumption is that the roles the director assumes may greatly affect the interactions of the networks and that these roles may be the primary determiner of successful directorial communication.

Summary

Given these assumptions, the roles of the director in the social theatrical communication networks and their influence within the aesthetic networks are examined in detail in the chapters which follow. Chapter II discusses the elements of the communication process, their application in the theatrical process, and each of the four theatrical network categories. Chapter III focuses on the categories or levels of communication as they exist within the production process. Chapter IV describes the director's roles in the social and aesthetic networks and explores a method for employing these roles while directing a theatrical
production. Chapter V summarizes the study and suggests topics for additional research.
NOTES


6 Helen Krich Chinoy, "The Emergence of the Director," Cole and Chinoy, Directors on Directing, pp. 19-22. Chinoy cites May 1, 1874, as the day the "director's theatre" emerged. It was on this date that the troupe of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen performed in Berlin.


8 See note 3.

9 Even in improvisational theatre a manuscript, or a skeleton thereof, is evolved during the preparation and performance processes with the company playing the role of the playwright.

10 Beckerman, pp. 130-131.

message, and feedback. The remaining elements are now generally accepted as basic to the communication process by theorists in the communication field.


15 Berlo, p. 3.


17 Barnlund, p. 6.


19 See note 11.


21 Wilson, p. 5.

22 Beckerman, p. 129.


26 Berlo, p. 9.

27 Based on readings in Cole and Chinoy; Harold Clurman, *On Directing* (New York, 1972); and personal experience and observation.

CHAPTER II

ELEMENTS OF THEATRICAL COMMUNICATION

Like communication in general, theatrical communication is difficult to study in process.¹ Within the context of one theatrical production, for example, there may exist five conceptual networks, ten aesthetic networks, ten observational networks, and twenty-five social networks—all of which may be operating simultaneously and continuously. Since it is chaotic at best and even virtually impossible to describe all activities in the theatrical communication process simultaneously, one must arrest the process; each segment or element in the process must be examined separately; each network and category of networks must be studied individually. From the knowledge thereby gained about each part, it is possible to speculate with more accuracy about the process as a whole. This chapter examines these elements as they function within the communication transaction and during the theatrical production process, and then delineates the four network categories found within the production process.

The Elements of Communication

There are many communication elements functioning within each network. Before the networks themselves can
be studied, the functions of these elements must be analyzed. In Chapter I, ten elements were said to exist within any given communication transaction: situation context, source, receiver, symbols, message, channel, feedback, roles, norms, and the networks themselves.

**Situation Context**

Communication occurs within specific boundaries. This setting is referred to as the situation context, and includes both the specific setting of the communication event and the general environment out of which the specific setting may arise. The specific setting includes the actual physical setting and the conditions in which the communication transaction takes place, along with the status of the interactions as they are relevant to the immediate communication interchange.\(^\text{2}\) The specific setting comprehends the occasion, the place, the time, and both the physical and the psychological dimensions of the interaction. The physical dimensions include elements such as the size of the place, the seating arrangement, the temperature, the lighting—any environmental factors. The psychological dimensions include the size and feeling of the audience—"the numbers of listeners and their predispositions, biases, and emotional states."\(^\text{3}\)

The general environment is the "totality of things as they exist and may affect the communication process."\(^\text{4}\) In addition to the psychological dimensions which exist
outside of the specific setting, the general environment of the situation context includes social dimensions: cultural characteristics and social values which may influence the communication event.\textsuperscript{5}

The general environment, which may reflect a number of disparate factors contributed by each of the production members, may prove to be important in the theatrical production process, especially within educational theatre. In this type of situation, a director must work with actors and technicians of diverse backgrounds and skill levels. Many members of the production unit may be adapting to newly acquired senses of responsibility and of freedom, and to newly formed--or forming--self-concepts. The pressures of social adjustment, of academic requirements, of financial concerns, and so on, may be great. The maturity levels for dealing with these pressures may also vary. The ability to deal with these pressures within the general environment may reflect a person's abilities to deal with the pressures found within the specific context of the production process. The important point is that at this level, the pressures initiated within the general environment may greatly affect a person's behavior in dealing with the pressures of the specific theatrical context, and vice-versa. A director may have to develop understanding, trust, and open communication within the general environment before any communication can take place within the specific context of the production process.
The situation context of each communication event is unique. The social dimensions—and in some cases the physical dimensions, may remain unchanged from transaction to transaction, but the psychological dimensions, the general environmental conditions, and often the physical dimensions will, in all probability, not be exactly the same in any two events. A theatrical event, for example, usually occurs in a place with definite physical dimensions. Often both the structure and the mechanical devices which are available are highly specialized, but are common to this particular kind of building. Yet the physical dimensions change from one building to another and from one production to another in the same building. Although the proscenium stage is a common form of theatrical architecture, one may find buildings which contain thrust stages, arena stages, and various combinations of these three styles. Today, many theatre structures are adaptable to any of these configurations, and the physical environment may change as the production requirements are altered. The physical dimensions may even change during the process of production. What began on a bare stage with work lights but no properties, lighting effects, costumes, specific audience seating arrangements, and so on may evolve into an event with all of these dimensions present.

Changes in the physical dimensions which occur during the production process, or from event to event, may alter
the psychological dimensions. It is generally accepted that these physical additions and technical devices aid the actors in the creation of individual characters as well as in the creation of believable character relationships. Often it is difficult for actors to backtrack and work on a long-term production in a post-performance rehearsal pattern which does not include the full use of the technical devices. During the rehearsal pattern in preparation for a performance in the American College Theatre Festival at Fort Worth, some weeks after the initial full-scale performance, the actors were asked to rehearse without the aid of full lighting effects, without the use of the scrim, without the multi-media effects, without the full complement of properties, and without costumes. Physical attributes and activities of the characters were altered by the absence of costumes. Without many of the properties, and the light and scrim cues, several scenes fell apart; movements, lines, and tempo simply disappeared.

The psychological dimensions may also be altered during the course of one rehearsal by such things as the time (actors may be more amenable to work, criticism, and suggestions at 6 p.m. when the rehearsal begins than they are at 11 p.m. when the rehearsal ends), the communication transactions which have and are taking place during the rehearsal, and the relative success of the
rehearsal as it is judged individually by the members of the producing unit. The psychological dimensions which arise from the general environment may also be altered during the course of a single rehearsal.

Likewise, the physical environment may affect the psychological dimensions of the members of the audience. For example, most spectators feel comfortable in a proscenium setting. They are able to sit back and enjoy the performance. However, these same audience members may feel tense in an arena configuration where they are in closer proximity to the actors and the action, and where they may feel forced to participate in the performance. On the other hand, a second group of spectators may react oppositely to these situations. Different audiences, of course, will react differently to these physical environments. A director must be aware of these possibilities and must consider the manuscript, the actors, and the audience when determining a physical environment for a production.

Source and Receiver

Although the source and the receiver may be scrutinized separately, a more accurate analysis is obtained if the two elements are discussed together. Both the source and the receiver are critical components in the communication process. Without the active participation of each element, communication cannot take place. The
source/receiver dyad may also be referred to as stimulus/response, sender/receiver, encoder/decoder, and communicator/communicatee. The source is the agent whose function is to initiate and guide the act of communication. The receiver is the participant who, by his reception of the message, permits the communicative act to be completed. Without this reception, communication has not occurred. Both the source and the receiver are influenced by the situation context. It should be noted that in all communication transactions, the source/receiver dyad is reciprocal—the source is at times the receiver and the receiver at times the source—by virtue of the feedback process.6

Within a theatrical process, there are infinite possibilities for the source/receiver dyad. In communication transactions in which the playwright is active, he is usually the dominant source. These transactions occur in situations in which members of the production unit are attempting to determine the ideas and emotions expressed by the playwright through the manuscript. The playwright may be able to help these actors and technicians find the play by aiding in this search for meanings. If the playwright cannot participate actively in the production process, his manuscript alone may serve as the source for the director's interpretation of the playwright's ideas. Because of his position within the
production process, the director is the dominant receiver in these interactions. However, the actors, the technicians, and all other workers on the production unit may also function as receivers. This situation occurs most frequently when the individual artists are preparing their contributions to the production.

Once the rehearsal pattern begins, the director becomes the dominant source. Since it is the director who must unify the production concepts, he is responsible for the creative transactions found within the rehearsal atmosphere. The destination of the director's message may be the actor(s), the designer(s), the individual member(s) of the technical staff, or ultimately, the members of the audience. Any combination of these receiver elements is possible.

During the creative transactions within the rehearsal process, there may be considerable interchange in the source/receiver roles. For example, while an actor may receive suggestions for interpretation of his role from a director, he may also use his own creative capabilities to determine character qualities and traits. As the actor develops and displays these characteristics during the rehearsal performances, he becomes the source for the creative ideas and the director assumes the role of the receiver. Any member of the production unit may participate in this type of role exchange. In many cases, the success of the rehearsal process and ultimately the
performance, may be determined by the degree to which the
group members feel free to engage in this type of creative
interchange.

The same interchange may occur during the interpersonal transactions in the rehearsal situation. Because
of his special position in the production, the director
is also the principal source in these interpersonal relationships. The receiver in this situation may be any mem-
ber of the production unit, or any combination of members.
In fact, such exchanges are highly desirable. The degree
to which they are possible may reflect the levels of success
within the interpersonal relationships, which may in turn
determine the success of the entire production process.

Once the production process moves from rehearsal to
performance, the source focus is predominantly on the
actor as an individual or in combination with other actors.
The source may also be the combined stimulus of the total
visual/aural aspects of the production, including the
actors, the scenery, the language, and the music. The
director, by serving primarily as a receiver, becomes a
surrogate for the spectators who will be the primary re-
ceivers. It is also plausible that the actors and tech-
nicians may alternately be sources and receivers within
this performance situation.

The important point regarding the source/receiver
phenomenon in the theatrical production process is the
recognition of the interchange of roles within the various production situations and from one situation to another. An understanding of these possibilities is extremely important to the successful organization of the production unit. The director's use of role relationships will be examined in Chapter IV.

Symbols and Messages

For communication to take place in any situation, both the source and the receiver must use symbols which have meanings common to each of them. A symbol is something used arbitrarily to stand for something else and may be either verbal or nonverbal. The assignment of a given symbol to a particular referent, the thing for which the symbol stands, is determined by the social dimension of the general environment. Yet while the source and the receiver may attach individualized meaning to the referent or to the symbol, the symbols must have approximately the same referents for both the source and the receiver.

Ordinarily symbol-referent relationships are organized into verbal and nonverbal languages--symbol systems--relative to a specific culture or part of a culture. The messages in communication are structured by means of such symbol systems. A message is "an idea, concept, emotion, desire, or feeling which a source desires to transmit to a destination." It is a specific set of
symbols--selected from a larger set of alternatives and arranged in a deliberate manner--intended to communicate information. Messages do not exist in isolation but are joint creations of those who speak and those who listen. Consisting essentially of 'sights' and 'sounds,' they are the ongoing stimuli which bind together those who engage in communication."

Although the type and the content of the messages may vary from one theatrical communication situation to another all the messages are essentially sights and sounds which are the creations of those who speak and act, those who speak, and those who view and listen. The play itself (that is, the live performance) may be a message; the philosophies of the playwright may be a message, with the play simply providing a means of expression for those ideas; the thoughts of the director may provide the basis for the message; or the message may be the emotions or feelings of the actors portraying the roles. Whatever the situation or context of the message, the exchange of both intellectual and emotional responses must occur through the use of some common symbol system.

**Channel (Medium)**

The means by which the messages are conveyed from one person to another is called the channel or the medium. As the "avenue or means by which a message travels between the communicator and the communicatee," . . . the channel
is a "link between participating units in communication," and may be anything that can affect the sensory mechanisms of a receiver. The channels most often used affect the senses of sight and hearing, either singly or together.

The various channels of communication within the theatrical production process are easily recognized. Those which affect hearing and sight are dominant. In most theatrical productions, the initial stimulus for the audience is a visual awareness of the architecture of the theatrical environment. In some instances, the initial stimulus may be either auditory or a combination of the visual and the aural. These instances may be as intentional as the use of specific sound presentations, or as unintentional as the expected but uncontrolled clamor of the crowd, or the noises of the general environment. Other visual stimuli are the scene design, the set decoration, the lighting patterns, the costumes, the pictorial composition as seen in both the still and moving pictures created by the actors, the structure of the stage, the members of the audience and the environment or space in which they are located, and the actor(s). The channels affecting the sense of hearing include the actors' voices, music--either as an integral element of the play or as incidental accompaniment to the play--and any other sound effects that may accompany the production.

In many productions, the properties or special stage effects also function as channels conveying stimuli to the
audience's sense of smell. Plays employing the contemporary technique of audience involvement may go so far as to employ channels for the transfer of taste and touch stimuli from the stage, or from the actors located in spaces unconnected to the stage, to the members of the audience.

The channels discussed thus far function primarily, if not exclusively, within the performance situation. Other situations have their own channels. Those involving the playwright and/or the manuscript use the voice of the playwright, the director, or anyone else involved in them; the nonverbal actions of the participants in the interactions; the printed word; and the play or drama itself—including all the symbols which may stimulate the receiver's imaginative, emotional, and intellectual capacities.

In the rehearsal situation—including both the creative transactions and the interpersonal relationships—the channels may include the human voice, nonverbal actions, the environment in which the rehearsals take place, the drama—that is, either the written symbols or the conveyance of the ideas of the drama by the director, playwright, or another member of the production unit.

McLuhan's theory that the "medium is the message" applies significantly to the communication transactions within the theatrical production. It has been previously stated that the play is the message and that both the play manuscript and the performance of the play may function as
the channel or medium for presenting the message to the audience. Similarly, the actors may themselves be both the message and a vehicle for conveying the message of the play. Likewise, the creative capabilities and the imaginative and intellectual thoughts of the director may serve as messages, or again, as vehicles for expressing the message of the play—or the ideas of the playwright—to the actors and the members of the technical production staff.

In the theatre, the primary channel is between the audience and the performance of the play, which may serve both as a symbol of the message and as a vehicle for the conveyance of that message to the audience. It seems imperative that theatre practitioners understand this dual function of the performance if the theatrical communication process is to function with any degree of success.

Noise. Noise in communication may be defined as "stimuli which are present in the channel and are added to the message. Noise may totally destroy a message by making it incomprehensible or twisting its intended meaning. . . . Distracting stimuli, whether visual, tactile, or aural, and whether internal or external to the person, can be noise." Two types of communication noise are generally described: channel noise and semantic noise. Channel noise is any disturbance which interferes with the fidelity of the physical transmission of the message,
including radio static, smeared newspaper ink, rolling television screens, magazine type too small to read, a person speaking in a room over another conversation, slamming doors, and other such diverse distractions. Even though the message is received exactly as it was sent, semantic noise may occur because of a discrepancy between the codes used by the source and the receiver: words or subject too difficult for comprehension by the receiver; differences in selected denotative meanings of words between the source and the receiver; differences in the connotation of words between the source and the receiver; a sentence pattern confusing to the receiver; a message organization pattern confusing to the message receiver; and cultural differences between source and receiver. Any type of communication barrier disturbs, if it does not totally destroy, the process of successful message transmission from the source to the receiver.

It is evident that many sources and opportunities for messages to be impaired by communication barriers exist within the theatrical production process. One common barrier may result from the style or genre of the drama. When the plays of Samuel Beckett first appeared, for example, they were nearly incomprehensible by anyone other than the playwright or his close associates. Even after the members of the production unit had successfully interpreted the drama, audiences found it difficult to interpret or to enjoy the performances.
Another kind of communication barrier, the allusions used by a playwright, is particularly evident in historical works. The director may have to do considerable research before he is fully able to understand the imagery used by the playwright. Then, once the images are clear, the director must find some means of effectively presenting them to the actors and members of the design staff. He must prevent the potential barrier from blocking the effective transmission of creative messages within the rehearsal process. The actors and the designers, with the aid of the director, also must work to transmit the images clearly to the audience.

Noise within the interpersonal transactions may stem from many causes. One important source is the general environment, which may or may not have direct bearing on the immediate situation. Another may be a lack of understanding of roles and norms.

Feedback

Feedback may be defined as the "responses of the receiver which can be interpreted as indicating the impact of a message upon him. In informal conversations, a receiver normally provides immediate feedback through his bodily and verbal responses." Feedback is "that integral part of the process of human communication that allows the speaker to monitor the process and to evaluate the success of his attempts to get the desired response"
from the receiver. The source can modify the message, and in some cases even the channel, according to the feedback, and thus allow the receiver to interpret the message in the manner intended by the source.

In theatrical communication, feedback may occur in various ways. Applause, laughter, booing, or restless movements of the spectators are all forms of feedback in the performance situation. The movement or gesture that elicits the audience reaction may be the actor's response (feedback) to a director's instruction or suggestion in rehearsal. Again, a designer's renderings may be a form of feedback to the director's initial statements about the play. The performance itself may be regarded as a form of feedback to the messages initiated by the playwright or the drama, and any type of feedback, verbal or nonverbal, may occur within the production's interpersonal transactions. It seems obvious that once the receiver initiates feedback, he has become the source of a new message while the original source becomes the receiver. In this manner, the roles are reciprocal.

Roles

Roles may be defined as unified patterns of behavior, and are often considered synonymous with status positions, "a collection of rights and duties assigned and expected of an individual." In this thesis, the term "role" refers to both behavior and status. In this context, "role"
is not to be confused with the term as it is commonly used in theatrical circles—that is, as a tag for the character the actor is portraying. Roles are identified by the various behaviors they require. The role chosen at a given moment depends on the time, the place, the situation, the emotional context, the desires, and the attitudes that prevail at that moment.\textsuperscript{19}

Benne and Sheats have divided the roles commonly found in small-group interaction into three categories: group task roles, group building and maintenance roles, and self-centered roles. These groups, the roles assigned to them and the characteristics, of the roles appear in condensed form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Task Roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiator-contributor</td>
<td>Suggests new ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information-seeker</td>
<td>Offers new proposals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information-giver</td>
<td>Seeks for information and clarification of comments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaborator</td>
<td>Offers facts or authoritative generalizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>Develops and extends ideas of group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourager</td>
<td>Pulls ideas together. Shows relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Praises, agrees with, and accepts contributions of others. Offers warmth, solidarity, and recognition.
Harmonizer

Mediates differences. Reduces tensions by giving group members chances to explore differences.

Compromiser

Offers compromise involving own ideas to maintain group cohesion.

Gate-keeper

Keeps communication channels open. Encourages and facilitates interaction from usually silent members.

Self-Centered Roles

Blocker

Interferes with progress. Rejects ideas of others. Takes negative stand on all issues. Refuses cooperation.

Aggressor

Struggles for status. Deflates status of others.

Recognition-seeker

Boasts and calls attention to self.

Dominator

Asserts authority, superiority, and control.

Confessor

Gives personal, non-group oriented insights.

Although the traditional view that the role of supervisor belongs to the director and the role of subordinate to all the other members of the production unit is still valid, a director may assume many different roles while functioning as a supervisor or a group leader: information-
giver, coordinator, encourager, harmonizer, gate-keeper, and information-seeker. The role of dictator would require a director to assume such roles as aggressor, dominator, recognition-seeker, and blocker. Which role the director chooses may be determined by the specific situation in which he is involved, and the roles chosen by the director will determine the roles that the other group members will adopt.

The roles which the members of the theatrical production group assume within the interpersonal relationships permeate and affect the interactions within each of the other production situations and ultimately the success of the performance. The function of each member of the group, and the way in which each member perceives his own function and the functions of others, greatly affect the workings of the various interactions within the group.

Norms

A norm is "an idea in the minds of the members of a group, an idea that can be put in the form of a statement specifying what the members or other men should do, ought to do, are expected to do, under given circumstance."21 Norms are "relatively stable group-generated rules which govern behavior. They act to produce homogeneity of values and behavior, and provide for control of behavior by serving as standards against which behavior can be evaluated. This control is exercised without recourse to direct interpersonal
application of power, although sanctions can be brought against members who violate norms. The more dependent a member is upon a group, or the more it satisfies his needs, the more important norms become to that member."

There are many norms present in the theatrical communication process. Many of the norms existing within the production situations are predetermined norms, or norms of tradition, superimposed upon the particular producing unit rather than growing from within the group. Audiences traditionally expect certain happenings and procedures prior to, during, and following a performance. Although these norms may be altered, difficulty is usually encountered by any attempt to do so. The changes do not usually occur automatically or quickly.

Actors traditionally expect certain modes of behavior, or norms, from a director; directors treat actors the same way. During the rehearsal process, for example, it is a predetermined norm that the director has the final and often the only ruling over matters of stage blocking. Actors are expected to memorize their lines by a certain time. The drama itself presents and exists by means of formal artistic norms as well as within the broader norms of social acceptance.

Certain norms, such as the length of rehearsals, the discipline, and the methods of working may influence both the creative and interpersonal transactions. Although predetermined norms may be active within the interpersonal relationships,
it is important that the members of the producing unit establish and maintain norms of their own. This is a point often neglected by directors. Another point often neglected by other members of the production group, particularly within educational theatre, is that once norms have been established within the group, the violation of those norms by any member of the group should not be tolerated.

**Communication Network**

The communication network may be defined as "the pattern of interaction between the source and the receiver in a communication transaction." Such patterns are "regularly occurring communication transactions between two or more participants," and "designate a system for the dissemination of information among the members of a group." Networks take many forms, from the informal linkages maintained among groups of friends to the more formal, task-oriented relationships established in work situations. Informal communication networks occur during transactions in which no one consciously assigns or enforces the use of specific source/receiver relationships. The network emerges as the participants interact freely with anyone, in differing rates of intensity and frequency. Formal communication networks, however, show deliberately designed patterns of interaction. "In part, the communication network is planned; in part, it grows up in response to the need for specific kinds of communication; in part, it develops in
response to the social functions of communication. At any
given stage in its development, its gradual change is much
influenced by the pattern that has already been established.
Hence, although the structure of the network will be con-
siderably influenced by the structure of the organization's
task, it will not be completely determined by the latter."28

Communication networks may involve two people or many
participants. The number of communicators affects the amount
of direct communication. "The ideal way of transmitting
and receiving a message is through direct communication;
but, as the number of persons involved in a network in-
creases beyond a handful and as the physical space within
which the network exists extends beyond a single room,
direct communication among all participants becomes imprac-
tical."29

Different types of communication networks may define
the communication relationships among the various partic-
ipsants. There are two basic relationship patterns:
**asymmetric relation**--a basically one-way communication
relation, involving separate units of senders and receivers;
**symmetric relation**--a two-way communication relation, in
which the participants freely exchange the roles of sender
and receiver.30

Once a pattern of communication networks has been
established, the networks will have an important influence
on decision-making processes within the group, and
particularly upon nonprogrammed activity. The networks will also determine the relative frequency with which members of the groups will encounter particular messages or kinds of messages. 

Theatrical Communication Networks

One assumption made in this thesis is that there are many complex communication networks functioning within the theatrical production process. These networks can be classified into four basic types or categories based primarily on the types of messages transmitted within each network group. The network types are also characterized by dominant source and receiver roles, and their degree of flexibility; by the channels used for the transmission of the messages; by the specific settings; and by the traditional role expectations. The four categories of networks—which may be labeled conceptual, aesthetic, observational, and social—are not mutually exclusive. They may function independently at various stages of the production process, but it is also possible for all four categories to function simultaneously. Also, the social networks function continuously within each of the other networks. Many networks within each category may develop without design; in some instances, however, the director may wish to deliberately create network patterns.

The Conceptual Networks

The principal messages transmitted within the conceptual networks are those regarding the literary ideas initiated by
the playwright. Initially these ideas may involve the playwright with any element from his general environment which may influence the creation of the drama. This element may then permeate the other networks within the conceptual category. A director's knowledge of specific events in the life of a playwright, for example, may influence his understanding of that playwright's manuscript and ultimately the production concepts.

The dominant source in the conceptual networks is the playwright. Yet for a majority of productions the playwright is unavailable; the manuscript itself may become the principal source. In each instance, the primary receiver is the director although it is possible for the actors, the designers, and the technicians to function as receivers.

The conceptual networks are essentially asymmetric. Although two-way communication may take place when the playwright is actively engaged in the transactions, most of the interactions within the conceptual networks involve the manuscript as source and are thus dominantly one-way exchanges. Flexibility of roles and feedback may be limited or non-existent within this type of theatrical network.

The basic channel in the conceptual networks is the drama as it is illustrated by the printed words of the manuscript. That is, the message—the ideas of the playwright—are transmitted via the manuscript. The director may also function as a secondary channel for the dissemination of
information from the playwright or the manuscript to the members of the production unit.

The physical dimensions of the specific setting of the conceptual networks may vary greatly. A reading room, an office, or a theatre may all provide the immediate environment for the transaction within these networks. The psychological dimensions usually revolve around a desire for an understanding of the playwright's ideas and a search for a creative method by which this understanding may be transmitted to all the members of the production group and ultimately to the members of the audience.

Traditionally within the conceptual networks, the playwright is viewed as the creator of the play, including both its intellectual and emotional ideas. The director—and others who may function as receivers within this network category—are viewed more as interpreters of these ideas. Therefore, in many circles, the playwright or the manuscript assumes the dominant role within the conceptual networks.

The Aesthetic Networks

Finding a means for presenting the playwright's ideas is the goal of transactions within the aesthetic networks. They organize the messages about the artistic ideas which transform the literary work into a theatrical event. Once a director has chosen or obtained an understanding of a play, he must cause the other members of the production group to bring the drama to life through performance.
Thus, it is the director who becomes the dominant source within this category of theatrical networks. The other members of the production unit--actors, designers, technicians--are the dominant receivers. There may be director source/receiver communication between the director and each of these people, or a system may develop in which the director communicates with key people who then communicate the director's ideas to other. A director may communicate directly with the scene designer, for example, who then communicates with the carpenters, painters, electricians, and so on. Though a director may have little or no direct communication with these people, his ideas reach them virtually unchanged.

When making individual contributions to the production, the non-directorial members of the production group may function as sources within the aesthetic networks. In these cases, the director functions as a receiver. The aesthetic networks are essentially symmetrical--two-way communication networks--with feedback and role interchange prominent. However, because of the basic function of his ultimate job, the director maintains asymmetrical networks when final decisions are considered.

The principal messages transmitted within the aesthetic networks are the ideas of the playwright that are exhibited in the manuscript. Because of his dominant source position, a director's ideas may also be transmitted within these
networks. The director's ideas may be independent from those of the playwright or may be fused with them. Any artistic ideas, from any source within the networks, may provide the basis for messages within this category of networks.

The basic channel in the aesthetic networks is again the drama contained in the printed words of the manuscript. Both verbal and nonverbal channels may be used for the communication of messages within these networks.

The aesthetic networks function primarily during the rehearsal process. The physical dimensions of the specific setting may vary but usually are pre-designated areas such as the stage, rehearsal rooms, scenery shops, costume shops, and the like. A creative atmosphere provides the basis for the psychological dimensions; that is, the members of the production group are mentally and emotionally prepared to offer imaginative contributions to the group effort. From these creative contributions comes the work of art.

In the contemporary theatre, the director ordinarily is given the dominant role position within the aesthetic networks. He may be viewed as a supervisor, a leader, a dictator, or any combination of these. The receivers may be viewed as subordinates, as co-workers, or as a combination of the two. There is considerable role flexibility, but the director always maintains the "central" role position.
The Observational Networks

The observational networks are those in which the spectators become involved in the art-work. The principal message is again the ideas of the playwright. Yet these ideas may be fused with the ideas of the actors, the designers, the technicians, and the director.

The dominant source within the observational networks is the performance of the play. This may include the actors and all other aural and visual stimuli with which the audience members may come in contact. The principal receivers are the spectators—as individual members of the audience or as the audience group. The actors and the craftsmen may also function as sources and receivers during the performance. Within the observational networks, the director is also a principal receiver.

The feedback provided by the director at this time may enable him to function as a source while the aesthetic networks continue to operate during the performance. The observational networks are symmetrical but the feedback messages may be limited by the conventions which exist within the theatrical performance atmosphere. In this respect, the networks may be viewed as dominantly asymmetrical or one-way.

The basic channel in the observational networks is the aural and visual performance, and is both verbal and nonverbal. Each aesthetic element serves as both channel and message simultaneously.
The physical dimensions of the specific setting may vary, but generally they are simply one version of a conventional theatrical atmosphere. Some type of performance area and some type of spectator area must be present, even if the areas are the same. The psychological dimensions may also vary, depending upon the type of drama, the production concept, the mood of the audience, audience expectations, and so on.

Traditionally within the observational networks, the performers—aided by the visual and the aural aspects of the production—are the principal creators and maintain the dominant role positions. By definition, however, it is impossible to have a theatrical communication event without the participation of the audience members. For this reason, therefore, the audience may be dominant as often as it is subordinate. Indeed, it may be said that by its very presence, the audience participates creatively in the art-work.

The Social Networks

The social networks contain non-theatrical, non-artistic messages which are necessary for the functioning of any human group. These messages/transactions may be called "interpersonal." The social networks are basic to all the other networks and function simultaneously with them.

Any member of the production group may function as both a source and a receiver within these networks. By view of
his role within the aesthetic networks, the director may be viewed as the dominant source within the social networks as well. And these networks should function symmetrically. The degree of role flexibility or two-way communication may determine the success of these networks, which then affect the other network categories. Should the social networks become asymmetrical with the director or any other member of the production group functioning as the only source—both the social relationships and the production process may be in trouble.

The basic channels in the social networks are aural and visual. However, any of the channels possible in any type of communication may be employed in these networks.

The social networks that occur in any environment usually are present during the theatrical process. The psychological dimensions may contain elements from the general environments of each of the production members involved in a given transaction and will probably be influenced by the specific requirements of the production process.

Because of his function within the production process and also because of his social status (teacher, professional, etc.) the director may maintain a dominant role position within the social networks. Yet the functioning of these networks may require frequent changes in dominance.
Summary

Each of the ten elements in the communication process functions within the theatrical production process. The components of theatre—the playwright, the drama, the director, the actors, the craftsmen, the theatre space, the performance, the audience, the scenery and the other visual effects, and the sound effects—are created by media of communication networks. Each element may assume various combinations of the elements of communication—source, receiver, situation context, message, channel, feedback, symbol, roles, norms, and the networks themselves. Each of the theatrical components may function as any of the elements of communication at any given time. Furthermore, these elemental functions are not static; instead, there is a great degree of reciprocity among them.

Observations of this interchange of elements and functions indicates the existence of at least four levels of communication networks within the theatrical process. These are the conceptual, the aesthetic, the observational, and the social. The network categories are determined by the types of messages transmitted in each group and also by the dominant source/receiver dyad.

The four networks may function independently at various stages of the production process, or the networks may all function simultaneously. The social networks function at all times. It is the interaction among the
networks within the various categories and among the four types of categories that creates the process of theatrical communication. The levels or types of communication involved are examined in Chapter III.
NOTES


5. Scheidel, p. 15.

6. Refer to page 34.


10. Scheidel, p. 115.


19 Lawrence B. Rosenfeld, Human Interaction in the Small Group Setting (Columbus, 1973), p. 102.


22 Rosenfeld, p. 20.


25 Blake and Haroldsen, p. 22.


27 Blake and Haroldsen, p. 22.


30 Lin, p. 241.

31 March and Simon, p. 79.
CHAPTER III

LEVELS OF THEATRICAL COMMUNICATION

The theatrical networks function by means of communication transactions. These transactions occur through four major levels of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, and public.

Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication is usually referred to as the "first level"; the sender and the receiver are one and the same. Each person spends a great deal of time in dialogues with himself; the "self" becomes self₁, self₂, and so on. One example is the decision-making process in which the rational self (self₁) may argue with the non-rational self (self₂). "Some of the time we are consciously explaining and analyzing things to clarify them for ourselves or to prepare for some future communication. On these occasions the dialogue is frequently very clear—we ask questions, examine related issues and points, and so on, almost as if we were two people talking to each other. At other times, our dialogues are subconscious interactions between our perceptions and our previously held concepts, ideals, and principles. It is in these subconscious dialogues that what we call self is formed."¹

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As the first level of communication, intrapersonal communication is "considered to imply the use of the individual's symbolic capacity either alone or in addition to the individual's other communicative competencies. In level one behavior both origin and destination of a message are within one person; the message uses internalized vocal symbols for the purpose of achieving and maintaining individual and social adjustment."\(^2\)

In the theatre, the intrapersonal level of communication is the one at which much of the individual creativity takes place, whether that of playwright, director, actor, designer, or craftsman. Whatever the situation, the person involved attains the created "object" (whether it be the script, the production concept, a characterization, a setting, or a costume design) through a complex series of interactions involving imagination and reason, emotion and intellect, and inclinations for both freedom and restraint. These interactions occur within both the conceptual and aesthetic network categories.

**Interpersonal Communication**

The expression of the art work must employ the interpersonal level of communication--that is, the "direct communication between two or more people in physical proximity in which all of the five senses can be utilized and immediate feedback is present."\(^3\) The interpersonal level
is frequently referred to as dyadic or one-to-one communication. These names indicate that during interpersonal communication one individual interacts with another individual. Although the context may be formal, it is most frequently informal. That is, the speakers sound "like themselves"; there are grammatical errors, unexpected pauses, incorrect word choices, and other hallmarks of daily conversation. Formal communication, however, usually emphasizes the manner of presentation—public speaking, mass communication, and other rhetorical situations—and exhibits a good deal of conscious artistry.\footnote{4}

Since the participants in this type of communication are usually face-to-face, the interaction is sustained and focused. For it to be successful or effective, both participants must actively participate as both senders and receivers of messages. Interpersonal communication is "characterized by an interaction in which both people are aware of sending and receiving messages. The sending and receiving occur almost simultaneously, so it is often difficult to determine when a person is sending and when he is receiving a message."\footnote{5}

Such interpersonal communication provides most of the information individuals receive about themselves, other people, and their environments. It forms the basis for interactions within the family, the social group (friends), and the work group. Within the conceptual and the aesthetic
networks, interpersonal communication allows for the transmission of first the literary ideas, and then the artistic ideas about the manner in which the literary ideas can be effectively created in performance. The playwright and the director, for example, may meet in face-to-face communication to discuss the ideas the playwright desires to be brought forth in the production. These thoughts about the literary ideas of the drama are transmitted via the conceptual networks and at the interpersonal level. Likewise, when the director meets individually with his designers or with an actor and transmits these same thoughts to them, the transactions are occurring within the aesthetic networks, again at the interpersonal level. The transmitting of the ideas to the audience members via the observational networks may occur at the interpersonal level, but the dominant concept is that these transactions happen at the public level.

In addition, the social networks use interpersonal communication for the transmission of non-artistic messages. These life messages are found in transactions which are influenced by the theatrical context but which are not specifically involved in the transmission of artistic ideas: information about attitudes toward the people involved in the creation of the art-work, for example, toward the play and the overall theatrical situation, and toward individual emotional, mental, and physical states. Whenever any two members of the production group interact
outside the artistic framework, interpersonal communication is at work within the social networks.

The attitudes conveyed through these networks are usually preconceived. For the production situation to function with any degree of success, it may be necessary that these preconceived attitudes be reinforced or changed through persuasion. In persuasive communication, the source "controls all appropriate communication variables in an attempt to determine the response of the receiver toward a particular choice or belief or conduct."\(^6\) In other words, the source of the message attempts to structure the message in such a way that the attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and so on of the receivers will be altered.

The director may be the source who most frequently finds it necessary to initiate persuasive communication. He must be aware of attitude requirements for the effective functioning of the production process, must analyze the attitudes of the artists and craftsmen involved, and finally must find means for implementing the necessary changes.

As suggested by its presence in all the theatrical communication network categories, interpersonal communication is involved within all aspects of theatrical communication. It is the interpersonal transactions within the social networks which provide the basis for all the other transactions. Yet this is the aspect of play...
production, and particularly of directing, which seems to be most often neglected. Since interpersonal communication occurs in the social networks without the added burden of artistic communication, this level of theatrical communication will be more fully discussed in Chapter IV.

Group Communication

The third level of communication is group or "persons-to-persons" communication. Though necessarily involving more than two people, group communication is often considered to be an extension of interpersonal communication. If the dyadic situation does not exist in its pure form, each member of the group receives and responds to messages of each of the other group members on the interpersonal level. Included within group communication are a great variety of communication transactions. Two major subtypes are considered here: organizational and small group.

Organizational Communication

Organizational communication is that in which the dissemination of information to members of a group and the forms of this dissemination take place within definite boundaries and are concerned with the achievement of the goals of a specific organization. These boundaries are more sharply defined and less permeable than in other types of group communication. Role prescriptions, professional norms, prescribed routes of transmission, and
especially the evolution of norms of appropriate behavior which provide group members with standards of assessing the appropriateness of communication transactions are important. Organizational communication also involves the serial reproduction of messages—that is, messages are transmitted from one person to another, then from that person to still another, and so on with each communication network remaining predominantly dyadic.9

The theatrical producing unit functions as an organization—it is a group of people having specific responsibilities and united for a specific purpose10—and is therefore involved in organizational communication. The usual goal of the specific organization is to create an art-work by means of rehearsals and performances. The degree of formality depends to some extent upon the size of the producing unit; generally, the larger an organization is, the more formalized are the communication channels and the greater is the dependence on the serial reproduction of messages. Regardless of size, however, a patterned hierarchy based on status and role perceptions exists within the theatrical organization. This hierarchy determines the structure of the communication networks within the production situation. Although variations will occur from one theatrical situation to another, the general pattern shown on Figure 1 usually forms the basis for the organizational hierarchical system in theatrical communication.
If the director makes or approves all the final decisions regarding the production, he governs the organizational hierarchy. When working within the aesthetic networks, he usually communicates interpersonally with the actors, though often an assistant director or stage manager may interact in a dyadic situation with the director and then transmit the resulting messages to the actors. Such a network is more prevalent during the performances than during the rehearsal process. The director also communicates interpersonally with the various designers, who in turn transmit messages to the technical director, shop foreman, and other technicians. These people then transmit messages to the workers who build the sets and the costumes, who find the necessary properties, who design or implement the lighting, and so on. For all these various technical elements to function as unified parts of the production, the initial transactions between the director and the designers must be successful.
Small Group Communication

The second category of group communication is that involving a "number of persons who communicate with one another often over a span of time, and who are few enough so that each person is able to communicate with all the others, not at second-hand, through other people, but face to face."\(^{12}\) For such a small group to exist, there must be a bond of communication, relevant interactions, and cohesiveness.

The small group is the oldest and most common of all social organizations. The only historical continuity of men in society seems to be that of the small group; civilizations may come and go, but the small group continues as the basic unit of society. Man does not exist in solitude, but rather as a member of an infinite number of small groups. Membership in some of them may involve only personal friendships and may serve only to gratify social needs. Membership in many other small groups may serve a much broader range of purposes. Groups are usually formed in order to accomplish some designated purpose. The purpose or goal of the group is, at least to some extent, the goal of the individual members of the group. In order for the goal to be accomplished, a cooperative effort is required of each of the group members.\(^ {13}\)

There are essentially five types of small groups: primary groups, casual groups, problem-solving groups,
educational groups, and therapeutic groups. Primary groups are the first and probably the most influential that every human being encounters. They are primary in the sense that they give the individual his earliest, most elementary, and most complete experience of social unity. They provide the initial training in social behavior and interpersonal relationships. The family is an individual's first primary group. Other primary groups include peer groups, friends, work colleagues, and church groups.

The second type of small group is the casual group. Casual groups are not formed to solve specific problems, but rather to gain companionship. The casual groups exist to exchange ideas, to enjoy interacting with each other, and to experience the warmth of friendship. Examples of casual groups are the coffee group, bull sessions, and social gatherings.

A third type of small group, the educational group, is formed for the purpose of instructing, teaching, and learning. Educational groups may be private, as in the classroom, workshops, and conventions, or public. Public groups are usually information-giving and often have an audience which is the receiver of the group's communication. The most common type of educational group is that found in the classroom.

Therapeutic groups are the fourth type of small group. "The therapeutic group is interested in personal improvement--
changes in behavior, values, or attitudes of the individual. There is no collective group goal; rather, each member seeks solutions to his own problems.\textsuperscript{15}

Therapeutic groups may be formal or informal. Formal therapeutic groups are employed by social workers, psychiatrists, and psychologists to combat specific problems of their patients. The formal therapeutic group is "a vehicle used to aid in the discovery of solutions and new insights, as well as to facilitate mutual interpersonal support."\textsuperscript{16}

Informal therapeutic groups are numerous. They are formed wherever there is a need for an outlet of tensions and irritations, or a need to enjoy and share with others of like interests and experiences. The informal therapeutic group is cathartic. Common examples of informal groups are the gripe session, the bull session, or the happy hour.

Sometimes confused with the therapeutic group is the training or "T-group." Included within this category are all groups which exist for the general purpose of interpersonal growth. "Generally a training group attempts to modify the normal behaviors of its members through developing interpersonal sensitivity, human relations skills, mutual trust, and a freer expression of personal feelings."\textsuperscript{17}

Common examples of T-groups are encounter groups, confrontation groups, awareness groups, and creativity workshops.

The last type of small group is the problem-solving or task-oriented group. The problem-solving group is
characterized by the existence of a particular group goal involving some anticipated action. The task-oriented group is the most prevalent group in our society. "Every human organization--business, educational, service, and political--includes numerous task-oriented groups to carry out the various functions of that organization and other task-oriented groups to coordinate the efforts of all other groups."18

Regardless of the type, all small groups have many common characteristics. Although the groups are categorized according to primary functions, most groups contain elements of all types. Brilhart maintained that there are five characteristics common to all groups: (1) size sufficiently small for each person in the group to be aware of and have some reaction to every other person; (2) mutually interdependent purpose in which the success of each person is contingent upon the success of the others in achieving this goal; (3) a sense of belonging or membership, or identification with each other member of the group; (4) oral interaction (not all of the interaction will be oral, but a significant characteristic of a discussion group is reciprocal influence exercised by talking); (5) behavior based on norms and procedures accepted by all members of the group.19

Small groups usually exist in at least two dimensions: the task dimension and the social dimension. The task
dimension incorporates the relationship between group members and the work they are to perform—the job they have to do and how they go about doing it. The social dimension includes the relationship of group members with each other—how they feel toward each other and about their membership in the group.20

Various types of behavior are prevalent within both the task and the social dimensions of groups. Homans classified three elements of behavior within the small group: activity, or what members of a group do as members of it; interaction, or the relationship which one member's activity has to that of another; sentiment, or the sum of interior feeling, physical or mental, that a group has in relation to the activity of the group.21

Small group activity occurs during a theatrical production in a variety of ways. The production unit may function like a primary group, with the members of the unit usually friends or colleagues, and usually members of the same peer group. Especially in educational theatre, the production may serve as an important training ground for social interaction, or the producing unit may exist as a casual group. In this instance, the various artists are as much interested in companionship and the exchange of ideas as in creating the work of art. Community theatres provide an excellent example of the casual group within a theatrical context. It should be noted that
many artistic ideas and concepts are born within the inter-
action of social groups.

The participants in a theatrical production are also members of an educational group. They may be preparing to enter a career or attempting to improve their abilities in an already existing career. An understanding of human values and of life in general may be attained from the theatrical experience. The performance itself may serve as a public information-giving group, with the audience as the target of the instruction. Members of the theatrical production group may find it an outlet for the release of tensions and irritations, and a medium for the discussion of or the participation in like interests and experiences. At such a moment, the production unit becomes an informal therapeutic group. It should also be noted that theatrical techniques have been used in formal therapeutic groups.

Most importantly, participants in a theatrical production group form a problem-solving or a task-oriented group. The goal or task is the creation of an art-work. As discussed previously, the nature of a theatrical art-work is such that in order for the work to be created, group participation is required in addition to individual activity. Furthermore, within the theatrical context, the achievement of the goal—the work of art—is totally contingent upon the success of each individual member of the group.
Public Communication

The fourth level of communication is public communication: "When one person engages in speech communication with a group of other people he is involved in [fourth level] speech communication behavior. When one individual speaks to others, concentrating more on what they have in common rather than what differentiates one from another, he is involved in person-to-persons speech communication."22

Public communication includes "media" communication. This type includes the transmission of messages via indirect channels; that is, the sender and the receiver are not involved in face-to-face encounters; the channels are manipulated mechanically; and the sender receives no immediate or direct feedback from the receiver. The most common examples are radio, television, and the cinema.

Public communication follows more carefully prescribed norms of behavior than the other levels. Primarily through nonverbal means, but also through questions and other kinds of audience participation, the sender receives limited immediate feedback from the receiver. The influence or perceived character of the source himself is as important as the message. This influence of the speaker is commonly referred to as "source credibility."23

Public communication functions in the theatre primarily within the observational networks, though it may occur at any time in any network. The on-stage performing of the
production is, however, equivalent to a speaker standing before an audience. There are conventional norms of behavior between audience members and performers, and immediate feedback may be received from the audience. This feedback takes two major forms: laughter or other audible utterances, applause, or silence.

Moreover, source credibility is as important to a theatrical production as it is to a political speaker. Just as a well-known personality is likely to gather a larger audience than a play of little renown. In the same way that an audience at a speech may be favorably or non-favorably impressed by the initial appearance of a speaker, a theatre audience may be influenced by the way a stage looks when the curtain is raised. If a speaker must consider the attitude of the audience members when preparing a speech, a playwright or a director must consider the audience's attitudes while preparing a work of art. When the playwright functions in this way, the conceptual networks become involved; the director's action involves the aesthetic networks.

Ultimately, the work of art is not completed until public communication is achieved. A play is not a play until it is performed; the production of the play is not considered a performance until audience members are present.
Summary

There are four levels of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, and public. The theatrical communication networks may function at one level of communication exclusively or may involve any combination of levels. The interpersonal and the group levels of communication often occur simultaneously or in such an overlapping manner that it is difficult to distinguish the level in action at a given moment.

Although all four categories of networks may function within the boundaries of some type or combination of types of small groups, the social networks dominate the small-group environment. The social networks also function primarily within the social dimension of the small group.

The conceptual networks contain both the intrapersonal and the interpersonal levels. The individual creativity of group members occurs primarily at the intrapersonal level. The unification of these various elements of creativity occurs at the interpersonal and group levels of communication.

The observational networks occur primarily within the framework of public communication. Because of this, this level of communication may be the principal goal of the production process.
NOTES


5 Shrope, p. 9.


7 This is commonly accepted among theorists. Refer to Barker and Kibler, p. 5, and Dance and Larson, p. 154.

8 Blake and Haroldsen, p. 29.

9 Ibid.

10 A commonly accepted definition of organization. Refer to any standard dictionary.

11 It is true that in the professional theatre, the producer takes over some of the responsibilities and is usually higher on the organizational ladder than is the director.


15 Ibid., p. 211.

16 Ibid.
17 Fisher, p. 7.
18 Ibid.
20 Fisher, p. 29.
22 Dance and Larson, p. 57.
CHAPTER IV

ROLES: THE DIRECTOR'S FUNCTION WITHIN THE THEATRICAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

The interpersonal relationships which are organized into the social networks of theatrical communication provide the basis for the artistic relationships within the conceptual, aesthetic, and observational networks that govern the theatrical process. In fact, the interactions of the social networks ultimately determine the quality of the work of art.

Since the director is in charge of the theatrical presentation and has the primary responsibility for initiating, participating in, and/or supervising the various processes of communication, he is responsible for all the facets of communication found within the theatrical event. The director needs to be aware of his function within the social networks, to understand the workings and the implications of the transactions within the various networks, and to engineer the formation of those networks and the transactions within them so as to insure the success of the performance.

This chapter focuses upon the ways in which a director may function within the social networks, and thereby, within
all of the theatrical communication networks. The formation of networks within a group setting and the functioning of the transactions within those networks are determined to a great extent by the assignment of roles and by the perception of those role positions. Hence, the function of the director within the theatrical communication process is examined in terms of the role positions he may assume within the networks: leadership role, the secondary role positions which may be assumed simultaneously with it, and the continuum encompassing points between the autocratic and anarchic forms of leadership.

The Director-Leader

To accomplish the goals and functions outlined in Chapter I, a director is forced to assume a leadership role. Leadership may be defined as "interpersonal influence, exercised in situation and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals. Leadership always involves attempts on the part of a leader (influencer) to affect (influence) the behavior of a follower (influencee) or followers in situation." A leader is an "individual who performs actions that assist the group achieve its goals." Because the director's task is to unify the work of art, the traditional concept of the role of the director as leader is so strong that virtually every director envisions himself in that role and practically all members of
contemporary production groups expect the director to assume it. Once the production has evolved from the conceptual networks, the director must initiate ideas and make final decisions within the social and the aesthetic networks—ideas and decisions which greatly affect the observational networks. Such authority and decisiveness are not commonly found in non-leader role characteristics.

By functional definition, the director must direct; as leader he must lead. The director also must have some one to direct; the leader must have some one to lead. Both roles, singly or in combination, require the recognition of other roles within the group. In other words, a leader cannot function in isolation from the other group members.

Good leadership must be particularly sensitive to the feelings and problems of the group. Not only must the functional leader recognize and respond to these feelings, but he must also articulate them sharply and give special attention to the group aspects of individual problems and needs. He must also stimulate and help the group to find solutions, drawing upon that part of the member's experience which is related to the group goals. The interaction between leadership and membership is of paramount importance for participation. It is obvious that a leader cannot respond well to a group which is not responding to him, and vice versa.

A director may spend many hours analyzing a script, responding to the emotional and intellectual messages of the playwright, and determining methods of eliciting
creative responses from the members of the production group. Most directors, consciously or unconsciously, successfully or unsuccessfully, find ways of leading group members to artistic discoveries. Yet many directors, particularly the inexperienced, neglect to analyze the interpersonal aspects of theatrical group existence. But the director must be able to lead the group members in interpersonal transactions in order for the group to function. In order to lead these artists and craftsmen, the director must develop confidence, respect, group rapport, and so on. "No man can lead or govern without somehow winning the confidence of those whom he leads." Just as he plans stage movement, the director must consciously design methods of leadership if the process of theatrical communication is to be successful.

Secondary Leadership Roles

The directorial leadership role encompasses many behavior patterns or functions which may be termed "secondary" role positions. Because of traditional concepts, it is relatively difficult for the director to shed his primary role. Yet in his choice of secondary roles--existing simultaneously with the primary one--the director may design leadership methods and patterns and thus, the social networks.
Benne and Sheats Classification

Various classifications of roles exist which may be appropriate for the secondary role positions of directorial leadership. One such system includes the various role types suggested by Benne and Sheats (see page 34). The director may assume any of these roles at any given time. Most of the roles within the group task, and the group building and maintenance categories may prove beneficial to the director and to the group. The self-centered roles, which are assumed by many directors, may prove to be more destructive than beneficial.

Initiator-Contributor. During a theatrical production, the director is responsible for suggesting creative ideas and for offering means of attaining creative goals. If the aesthetic networks are to be used in this manner, the groundwork must be laid through the social networks. Simply by selecting individuals to participate in the production group and by assigning basic roles within the group (such as actor, technician, etc.), the director initiates the basic design for the social networks. During a recent production in which the director was attempting to organize a theatrical company, the first group meeting was devoted to an explication of member roles. The director introduced each individual member of the group, described the individual's background, and explained that individual's
function within the production group. This action provided a basis for the formation of the interpersonal transactions of the social networks and a foundation for the artistic interactions of the aesthetic networks.

By contributing feelings, ideas, understandings, and so on about the playwright's message, the director both initiates ideas and contributes them to the group. Within the aesthetic networks, stage blocking, movement, tempo, and gestures are manifestations of the director's function as initiator-contributor.

The director may also suggest or impose norms of individual and group behavior within the social networks which will prove beneficial to the aesthetic networks. A director may suggest, for example, that the actors should attain at least six hours of sleep per night. Furthermore, a director may contribute such a norm by initiating a system of checks to insure that the norm is not only accepted but also enforced.

**Information-Seeker.** The director constantly searches for information. He may attempt to discover the temperaments of the group members, for example, to ascertain any individual characteristics which might aid or hinder interactions within any of the networks, or to determine the effects of the general environment, and the specific setting upon those same interactions. If the director has worked
with the members of the production group previously, then the most important task would be to determine the effects of the specific setting. If the members of the production group are unknown to the director, the individualized information becomes paramount. When possible, as much of this information possible should be obtained prior to the membership commitments. Yet the director must continually monitor possible individual or group changes.

A director may require information about the general characteristics of a particular group with whom he is working. During the production of a Black play by an all-Black company with a white director, there were difficulties in beginning rehearsals at the scheduled hour. At least one, and usually all, of the actors were from fifteen to forty-five minutes late for the rehearsals; it seemed impossible to communicate to them that, in order to meet the performance deadlines, they could not afford to lose rehearsal time daily. The problem was solved only after the director sought several solutions within the interpersonal relationships. Through them, it was discovered that in the Black sub-culture, "on time" means arriving from thirty minutes to one-hour after the designated time. The actor call was moved forward accordingly and the actors ceased feeling insecure about having an unfamiliar norm imposed on them;
the aesthetic networks received the proper amount of time and attention. Had information not been sought regarding this interpersonal problem which affected the aesthetic networks, the production process might not have continued to the performance.

Information-Giver. The role of information-giver is especially prevalent within the aesthetic networks. Much of the actors' information about the production is given to them by the director. This is particularly true if the actors are very inexperienced, if the drama is from a time period or a genre unfamiliar even to experienced actors, and if the director's background, work, and so forth, differs markedly from that of the actors and the environment to which they are accustomed. Professional directors working within the educational framework, for example, may have to provide the artists and craftsmen of the production group with insights and experiences not commonly found within the specific educational theatre setting.

The role of information-giver is also important within the social networks. If many of the members of the group are unknown to each other, for example, the director may offer information to the group about the individual members. This may help to break the ice and begin (initiate) the development of rapport (the development of trust, confidence, and understanding). Many times, in fact, the
director must serve as information-giver before he can become an initiator.

The director may also give information which will lead to the development of norms within the group. In the case of novice groups, for instance, the director may have to communicate traditional norms or rules that should be followed by the group members--such norms as rehearsal promptness, line memorization promptness, and other behavior codes within the specific theatrical setting. A director may spend most of his time giving information with little attention given the feedback process or he may spend proportionate amounts of time both giving and seeking information.

Coordinator. By definition, virtually all directors must at times assume the role of coordinator within the aesthetic networks. The director-leader must coordinate and unify the talents, creative ideas, and personalities of many individuals so that separate art-forms may be merged into that of the theatre. Simply by assuming secondary role positions, the director becomes a coordinator. It is practically impossible to view a successful director-leader as anything other than a leader-coordinator.

The director-coordinator role is also necessary within the social networks. Social activities which will aid in the development of group rapport--group meals during rehearsal
breaks, for example, jam sessions following rehearsals, and planned social and work sessions for small groups within the larger group—may serve to increase the enthusiasm for the production process, to develop confidence between group members both offstage and onstage, and to promote general trust and understanding among the group members. Such interpersonal activities may mold the interactions within the aesthetic networks into believable relationships.

In order to create the effect of a community of people, laughing, loving, struggling, sweating, and dying together, the director of a drama about the trials of the Depression chose to develop social activities that would enhance the feeling of group togetherness and dependence. Situations were created and coordinated in which the artists and craftsmen did indeed laugh, struggle, and sweat together. The rehearsal schedule was such that the group members were together several hours daily. Several all-day meetings, including rehearsals, technical work sessions, meals, relaxation periods, and general discussions, were scheduled. Although not totally successful, these group social activities, coordinated by the director, helped develop a sense of "oneness" among the artists. At many points in the performance, the spectators could actually believe that they were viewing a community of people struggling together for existence.
As coordinator, the director-leader may find it necessary to plan work schedules around individual time tables. He may have to coordinate the work of outsiders with the work of group members. This is particularly true for the addition of auxiliary staff members such as music directors, musicians, and choreographers. The director-coordinator molds disparate personalities, temperaments, and talents into a functioning, creative whole.

**Encourager.** Within an educational theatre situation, the director may find it necessary to offer encouragement to the group members, who often need help in attaining the "I'm OK, you're OK" point of view in order to function adequately within the social and the aesthetic networks. The role of encourager is of particular worth in situations in which the group members are immature or inexperienced. Many times the general environment in which the theatrical process takes place requires the director to assume the role of encourager. If the production group is subject to pressures from outside that group—such as non-support, prejudices of one type or another, verbal attacks, and so on—the director may find himself providing the only encouragement and support for the members of the production group.

The director-encourager accepts contributions from the group members and then praises the resulting suggestions,
activities, or insights. In many cases, the director may actively support and promote such contributions. It is possible that as an encourager, the director will allow various individuals to assume some of his functions as coordinator within both the social and the aesthetic networks. The director-encourager is not afraid to offer praise, recognition, or constructive criticism to the other members of the production group.

Harmonizer.--Friction and conflict exist within any group. As a result, the director must at times assume the role of harmonizer. A certain amount of conflict may have positive results, but too much friction may destroy interactions within the social networks and adversely affect the creative endeavors of the group. The harmonizer must mediate extreme differences and attempt to reduce tensions and friction by giving group members the opportunity to explore their differences and by encouraging them to do so. The normal disagreements involving creative ideas that occur within the aesthetic networks are less destructive if the social networks are functioning harmoniously. Though it is difficult to find social groups in which all members are one-hundred percent compatible, the director-harmonizer must monitor potentially explosive relationships and engineer the interpersonal transactions in such a manner that dangerous conflicts will be
avoided. Group members are allowed to work in an open situation, and the director accepts the responsibility for the reduction of conflict.

**Gate-Keeper.** The role of gate-keeper must be assumed by the director if maximum productivity is to occur. The channels of communication must be kept open between himself and the group, between himself and the individual members of the group, and among or between the various group members. When communication barriers exist within the social networks, it becomes difficult for the aesthetic messages to be transmitted with a high degree of success. The interpersonal barriers can be so great that the aesthetic messages become totally blocked.

That barriers within the social transactions adversely affect the interactions of the aesthetic networks is plain. During the casting for a college production of Anouilh's Antigone, a certain senior actress was not chosen for the leading role. Several friends of this actress, including her husband, were cast in the show. The actress in question was offered a minor acting role and technical assignments, but she refused membership in the production group. In an effort to get even with the director for not casting her, the actress attempted to create negative conflict within the group. As a result, the group was divided into three factions: those who supported the actress, those who
supported the director, and those who exhibited no definite views. In interactions with the actress and her supporting faction, all attempts to communicate through the role of director-harmonizer or director-gatekeeper were unsuccessful.

The most obvious communication barrier within the group, and the one which most obviously affected the aesthetic networks, existed in the interpersonal transactions between the director and the actor portraying Haemon and in the interactions between that actor and the actress playing Antigone. The actor was a very close friend of the uncast actress and became very bitter about the injustice the actress had suffered when a freshman was given the role in her place. As the rehearsal period progressed, the actor, reinforced by outside pressures from the actress in question, refused to interact with the director or the actress playing Antigone on any interpersonal basis. Within the aesthetic networks, this actor refused to accept or respond to any directorial suggestions or leadership. He ignored the actress playing Antigone even when he was on stage with her and supposedly interacting with her creatively. Needless to say, in performance the relationship between Antigone and Haemon was not believable. Therefore, Haemon’s death decision had no validity or believability for the audience. The barriers within the aesthetic networks were so great that several members of the audience
questioned the director regarding the gaps in character believability.

Overall, the show was moderately successful. Because of the factions within the interpersonal networks, however, the group never became a proper theatrical ensemble. As gate-keeper, the director was unable to keep the channels of communication open. The only way to have achieved this would have been to fire the actor playing Haemon, an action that was impossible because there was no one to replace him. A second avenue would have been to cast the senior actress in the role. At the time of the casting, the director was unaware of the possibility for such a conflict. Yet this actress simply could not have handled the role. A third possible solution would have been the attainment of greater source credibility and status for the director. Although the conflict may have existed unconsciously or subconsciously, it probably would not have reached such a high degree of explosiveness and therefore would not have been as detrimental to the group. Too much of rehearsal time had to be spent attempting to keep the communication channels open within the interpersonal networks. Without doubt, the aesthetic networks suffered.

Self-centered Roles.--In situations in which the director tends to lose sight of the need to have someone to direct and to lead, he becomes "self-centered." That is, he considers
the production process a one-man endeavor rather than a group effort. The self-centered roles are usually considered detrimental.

The three most common self-centered roles are the aggressor, the recognition-seeker, and the dominator. The aggressor attempts to communicate to the group members a sense of superiority; no one may gain status other than the director. The recognition-seeker constantly uses the word "I," boasts, or calls attention to his own activities. To hear the recognition-seeker's story, one would assume that the director is not only the supreme artist of the theatre but also the only person involved in the creative process. The dominator not only maintains strict control within the production unit, but also continually asserts his own authority and superiority. He refuses to recognize any of the contributions of other members of the group.

Although groups may function with self-centered leadership, the creative endeavors will probably be limited. In addition, the members of the group will probably not enjoy the experience. For student or amateur actors, the sense of enjoyment and the feeling of individual worth and accomplishment, and the feeling of group success are extremely important. When the director maintains that he has done it all and refuses to recognize
the contributions of the group members, their feelings will be quite negative. A performance produced under such circumstances may be adequate but will, in all probability, not achieve any great degree of excellence.

**Trauth/Shostrom Classification**

A second classification of roles which may be appropriate for the secondary role positions of directorial leadership has been developed by Suzanne Trauth 7 from Everett Shostrom's manipulative/non-manipulative system. 8 The characteristics of these role dichotomies are shown in condensed form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bully</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>uses threats and exaggerated aggression to manipulate people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertor</td>
<td>Non-manipulative</td>
<td>aggressive but direct and straightforward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictator</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>manipulates using any tactics that will control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Non-manipulative</td>
<td>employs a non-dominant forcefulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>overly critical, distrustful, and resentful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressor</td>
<td>Non-manipulative</td>
<td>expresses his own convictions strongly without judging the convictions of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protector</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>over-sympathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>Non-manipulative</td>
<td>willing to work with others to help them help themselves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weakling
Manipulative
manipulates through an exaggerated display of sensitivity and vulnerability

Empathizer
Non-manipulative
has high expectations of others but still listens to them and accepts the human tendency to err

Trauth's roles—prodder, autocrat, evaluative critic, democratic director, and therapist—represent a middle-ground between the manipulative and the non-manipulative roles developed by Shostrom.

The manipulative Bully who is sarcastic and demeaning, deliberately attempting to frustrate actors with such witticisms as "I didn't know actors could think!" might be modified to become the Prodder. This is the director who pushes actors but is always aware of the fact that actors, like most people, have limits. He might be heard to say "I think you can go much further!" The Dictator ("Do it my way whether you like it or not") who completely restricts actor-initiated work might, with a little effort, be changed into the Autocrat who demonstrates, corrects, and gives orders but only to perfect or solve technical difficulties. A typical statement might be "I need to have you do exactly what I think is demanded here." The critical, ego-deflating Judge who says "Nothing you ever do is right," might be replaced by the Evaluative Critic whose objective feedback is provided in a non-personal, non-threatening manner. For example, he says, "What you are doing is inappropriate given the goals we've established." The Protector who tries to shield actors from the "pain" of the rehearsal process by saying "Don't worry, I'll figure it all out for you," could become the Democratic director who actively facilitates the process of actor discovery: "I'll help you solve your problems." Finally, the Weakling who abandons his actors ("You're the actors, you do it; I can't expect to do everything!") might be modified to become the director Therapist whose primary task is to provide psychological safety for the actors. His typical statement might be "I won't tell you what to do, but I'll make it safe for you to fail."
Social Roles

A third system of role classifications which may be suitable for the secondary role positions of the director-leader is that found in everyday social situations. These roles may simply be transferred from the social situation to the theatrical situation. The two roles predominantly found in the theatrical situation are those of teacher and friend.

Teacher.--In most educational situations, the director not only is perceived as a teacher by himself and the other members of the production group, he literally is a teacher. Since the majority of the production group members in this situation are students, both the actual and the perceived role of teacher tends to affect source credibility and status. Moreover, the interpersonal relationships which exist in the classroom are likely to be carried over into the theatrical situation. A very formalized classroom structure may tend to create social networks in which the non-director members of the production group view themselves as subordinates. The director-teacher must establish the premise that the teacher-student roles are reflexive within the theatrical situation. That is, everyone in the group both gives and takes information within the learning situation.

Within both the social and the aesthetic networks, the director-teacher functions in much the same manner
as the director/information-giver. In addition, the director-teacher may find it necessary to not only give information, but to see that the information is absorbed, carried out, interpreted correctly, and so on. In the secondary role of teacher, the director commonly is respected by the other group members. Whether in a strictly educational situation or in a theatrical situation totally divorced from the academic world, whether it be as an acting instructor, a teacher of theatre history, a revealer of character motivations or individual personality traits, the director assumes the secondary role position of teacher.

Friend.--In many instances, the director may already be a friend of many participants in the production. Such relationships are commonly found in community theatre situations. Usually a group of friends with like interest --the theatre--get together to create a play. One of them is selected to direct. Another common situation in which the director is a friend prior to the development of the specific production group is found in laboratory productions within the educational situation. Student directors, more often than not, have friendship interactions with those people they cast as actors and select for technical assignments.

In conjunction with the secondary roles of encourager and harmonizer, the role of friend may be very valuable
within both the social and the aesthetic networks. Many problems which arise in both network categories can be easily solved by the interaction of friends. If the role of friend creates problems in maintaining directorial control, however, and if this role affects directorial decision-making, the director-friend role position may be found detrimental both to the director and to the group as a whole.

It is obvious that there are many secondary roles which the director-leader may choose to assume. The abundance of role availabilities implies that the director may modify his method of working from production to production or from situation to situation within one production, and that not all directors will work in the same manner. The secondary roles which a director assumes may be dictated by the style of leadership which he chooses to employ in a given situation.

Styles of Directorial Leadership

Traditionally, styles of directorial leadership have been conceived as a dichotomy of choice between the autocratic and the democratic modes. It is also possible to consider directorial leadership as occupying a continuum between autocracy and anarchy.

The Autocrat-Democrat Dichotomy

The autocratic director tends to control the communication networks by talking all the time, by never listening
to anyone else, and by always having a better story, idea, or way of doing something. Since the autocratic director wants to tell the actors and other collaborators exactly what to do, both on and off the stage, their initiation of ideas is greatly restricted, if not completely stifled by the director's inability to operate within a free or open situation. The autocratic director may foster the perception that no role within the group, other than his own is important. In many instances, this attitude may develop unconsciously rather than consciously; the result is the same. The autocratic director tries to maintain group dependence on a single authority-figure—himself.

The extreme autocratic director-leader, therefore, constructs barriers within the communication networks. These barriers may permeate both the social and the aesthetic networks. Since the autocratic director views his role as the only important one in the group, group activity within both the aesthetic and the social networks is likely to be minimal. Creative output may be almost non-existent. The members of the production group may well feel that if the director thinks he can do it alone, let him. General apathy may prevail. It is safe to assume that the production process that exists in this kind of autocratic/apathetic environment will be less than totally successful.
The democratic director, on the other hand, tends to encourage communication interaction between the group members and himself, and among the individual members of the production unit. This type of director asserts the worth of individual contributions to both the social and aesthetic networks—and thus to the overall production process. The director who adopts a democratic style of leadership engineers an atmosphere in which the group members feel sociable, industrious, and creative. This kind of leader accepts the responsibility for listening to individual problems which may affect participation in all the networks, and for allowing good feelings to penetrate the social networks and thus the aesthetic networks. By readily accepting and trying suggestions made by participants, the democratic director encourages greater participation and the free initiation of ideas and feelings.

The director who adopts the democratic mode of leadership attempts to prohibit or limit the construction of barriers within both the social and the aesthetic networks. Since the democratic director views all group roles as important, group activity is apt to be enhanced, creative output may reach the maximum possible. It is safe to assume that the production process led by a democratic director may approach total success.
The Autocratic-Anarchic Continuum

Rather than viewing the styles of directing strictly as a dichotomy, it seems more realistic and advantageous to consider the directorial-leadership styles as points along a continuum. Common sense indicates that a director cannot, or perhaps should not, always adopt a totally democratic or a totally autocratic style—the only styles possible within the concept of the traditional dichotomy. Instead, the director may find it necessary to adopt an autocratic leadership style in one situation and a democratic mode of leadership in another—perhaps with both situations occurring during a single production. If this were true, the democratic style of directing would become a midpoint between the autocratic style at one end and the anarchic style at the opposite end (see Figure 2).

| Autocratic (Dictator) | Democratic (Coordinator) | Anarchic (Slacker) |

Fig. 2--Continuum of directorial styles

The director adopting the autocratic mode of leadership assumes he has absolute and unrestricted power. The characteristics of the autocratic director which exist within the framework of the traditional dichotomy are operative here as well. The autocratic director-leader
may retain his authority by his role status, by engineering of the interactions, or by more tyrannical means. The autocratic-director-leader tends to impose his norms, his ideas, his standards upon the group with little regard to the natural development of norms within the group itself. These norms will be much more rigid, seemingly more important, and will require stricter enforcement than will the norms developed under other leadership styles.

The autocratic director usually assumes the role of dictator; he maintains his authority through whatever means is necessary. His goals are to mold a group of followers into a miniature of himself and to present only his creation on stage. Rather than viewing the various artists and craftsmen of the production group as collaborators—as creative individuals—the autocratic director-leader is more likely to view them as puppets to be manipulated by his whims. In order to perform his function of creating a unified production, it may be necessary for any director to adopt this procedure within the aesthetic networks. Directors other than the recognition-seeking dictator, however, will do this advisedly. In other words, this method of reaching the production goal will be employed only when other, more group-oriented means have failed.

The director assuming the autocratic mode of leadership may adopt secondary roles in addition to that of
dictator. The bully or assertor (depending upon the situation and the degree of tyranny judged to be required), the judge, and in some cases, the protector are common examples. The self-centered roles of Benne and Sheats—the aggressor, the recognition-seeker, and the dominator—are commonly assumed by the autocratic director. As stated previously, groups exposed to such modes of leadership in isolation from all other leadership styles often exhibit minimal activity, limited creativity, and general apathy.

At the other end of the continuum, the anarchic style of leadership shows similar results. This kind of director denies the existence of an authoritarian or controlling principle; no common standard or purpose is possible. One could say, in fact, that the concept of a director—that is, a person who controls in order to unify—is denied. The anarchic director imposes no norms of his own, and furthermore, advocates that norms not be consciously developed within the group. "Anything goes" might be the motto of the anarchic leader, and he may even abandon the production group if the going gets rough.

The anarchic director often assumes the role of slacker and shirks both work and responsibility. His goals are to let the individual members of the group do what they please, both interpersonally and aesthetically. The slacker may view the individual members of the group
as creative individuals but not necessarily as collaborators. In other words, no unifying principle may exist for the work of art. Instead, the production may become a hodgepodge of theatrical forms and techniques, of individual ideas, and of unrelated themes and principles. This kind of director may expect the production process and the performance to "simply just happen"; rarely are his expectations met.

The anarchic director may also adopt the secondary role positions of weakling, harmonizer, and friend. The actors and the craftsmen are expected to figure everything out for themselves. The weakling may simply abandon the group, or function as protector by attempting to shield members from the realization that they are not always right, that a creative work of art is not simply an expression of freedom, and that the theatrical production process requires compromise, hard work, and discipline. The harmonizer attempts to promote tolerance for the aesthetic and interpersonal ideas of each member of the group, and the slacker to assume the role of friend within all of the transactions in which he participates. Frequently, the friendship relationship leads to failure of the production.

Often anarchic leadership results in chaos. If art requires both interpersonal and aesthetic discipline, along with form and structure, a production process or a performance totally lacking them is apt to prove unsuccessful. The
effectiveness of the aesthetic and the interpersonal networks is minimal; creativity is limited; apathy exists in abundance.

Thus, although the means are different, the results of the autocratic and the anarchic styles seem to be the same. Perhaps the most advantageous style of leadership is one which maintains a midpoint between the two extremes—the democratic style. The director who chooses the democratic form of leadership attempts to create a group situation in which all members have equality and respect. The views of the democratic director from the traditional dichotomy of directing styles (autocratic/democratic) are valid here also. The democratic director allows and encourages the development of norms from within the group. He frequently offers suggestions rather than imposing ideas. He expects individuals to maintain self-discipline and expects the group to maintain the integrity of the group norms. Only when absolutely necessary will the democratic director assist in this maintenance during transactions within the interpersonal networks.

As a rule, also, the democratic director assumes the chief secondary role of coordinator within the social and the aesthetic networks. The need for such an activity, it was noted in Chapter I, led to the elevation of "the director" to the supreme position among the collaborators in a theatrical art-work. Virtually everything a director
should do involves some aspect of coordination. He must lead disparate artists and craftsmen from the various artistic fields by recognizing the unique creative abilities of each individual and by gathering and filtering these abilities into a comprehensible whole.

The democratic director-coordinator may occupy any number of lesser secondary role positions: the prodder, the critic, the therapist, the teacher, the friend, the initiator-contributor, the information giver and seeker, the harmonizer, the encourager, and the gate-keeper. Such flexibility is seldom available to the autocratic or the anarchic director. On the one hand the rigidity of the attitudes and the need to maintain "face" make change difficult; on the other, once the "norms" of anarchy have taken hold, nothing the director does is very effective.

The flexibility of the democratic director thus allows him to move easily to the precise role called for by a given situation. He can, in fact, range completely along the continuum without sacrificing any perquisites of his leadership and without harming the group norms. Groups exposed to such a mode of leadership tend to exhibit greater group activity and productivity, maximum creative output, and greater individual and group concern for the goals of the production process. Although success will vary, groups directed under this kind of leadership more often approach success than those groups functioning under autocratic or anarchic leadership.
Hence the democratic style should be used even though the director must accept ultimate responsibility for the artistic and educational results. Each member of the production and each new situation will require a special combination of roles. In most instances the preponderance of roles will come from the autocratic half of the continuum. Nevertheless, if individuals in the group or the group structures have reached a relatively high degree of maturity, both interpersonally and aesthetically, the director may select more roles from the anarchic half of the continuum. Contemporary group theatres at the professional level, such as Joseph Chaikin's Open Theatre, have been able to succeed artistically with almost total anarchy. Theatrical productions with children and so-called "creative dramatics sessions" are viable only through autocracy. Other forms of theatre and drama fall somewhere between these two extremes. In any case, the director who relies entirely on one style all of the time is likely to find his productions not so successful as he had hoped they would be. The relationship between the leadership styles and the secondary role choices appear in condensed form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADERSHIP STYLE</th>
<th>CHIEF SECONDARY ROLE</th>
<th>OTHER SECONDARY ROLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Dictator</td>
<td>Bully, Assertor, Judge, Protector, Aggresstor, Recognition-seeker, Dominator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choosing Styles of Leadership

The manner in which a director chooses to communicate with the members of his production group—the styles of leadership and the roles he may assume—should be chosen carefully. The communication networks, the structure of roles by which they are managed, and the pattern of leadership ought to receive the same creative effort as the design of the scenery or the actors' movements. Each network may require a different mode of leadership. If the director has worked with a majority of the group members previously and has confidence in their personal attributes and talents, he is likely to work from the same position in all the networks and to adopt a more democratic style. If the group members are unknown to the director, he may function in a more democratic mode within the social networks in an attempt to "get to know" the individuals but prefer an autocratic mode within the aesthetic networks. The same distribution of styles may occur if the director knows the members of the group well but also realizes that the artistic skills of the group are limited by inexperience.
In a recent production of an original drama, the director knew many of the company members prior to the beginning of the production process. Since he had taught them in several classes or directed them in several productions, he was aware of many of their personal characteristics and creative abilities. It was easy for the director to function as a democratic leader, within the social and the aesthetic networks. His primary style was democratic, and he moved in either direction along the continuum as the situation dictated.

In another production—Aeschylus' The Libation Bearers, directed by Takis Muzenidis, formerly the director of the National Theatre of Greece, the director was unfamiliar with the students in his production. He did realize that the actors were generally inexperienced and lacked training or experience in the techniques of Greek drama. As a result, he exhibited very autocratic behavior within the aesthetic networks. Every meaning in the play, every movement and body attitude, every vocal inflection and pause, literally every detail, was dictated by the director. Within the social networks, however, while the students considered Muzenidis a dictator, he actually functioned democratically. Outside of the formal rehearsals, he was eager to answer questions and to share his ideas and experiences, to discuss any aspect of theatre, and to listen to the ideas and experiences
of the students. Indeed he welcomed every opportunity to socialize with them outside of rehearsals, and to learn about their attitudes and life styles. While he fostered one-way learning in interactions of the aesthetic networks, the social network relationships were dyadic in the extreme. No doubt the democratic mode of leadership employed within the social networks helped the students accept and indeed come to cherish the autocracy in the other networks.

These examples indicate several factors upon which a director may base his leadership decisions. First, the style of leadership must be appropriate to the level or type of production in which he is involved: adult, professional, composed of strangers; children, personal friends, experienced in dramatics; amateur, adult, students; and so forth. Second, the style of leadership chosen must allow maximum flexibility in the change of primary styles as the situation warrants but particularly in the fluctuation among the secondary roles. Third, the style of leadership must allow constant monitoring of the developing relationships within each of the theatrical networks and the ways the networks are affecting each other at a given moment.

Fourth, the chief consideration within the social networks is the make-up of the production group: the personalities, temperaments, and skills of the individuals, and their level of maturity; the size of the group; the
prevailing group attitudes; the average maturity of the group and the level of theatrical experience; the primary role which the group has assigned to the director. If the production group is predominantly made up of students, for example, the primary role perception will be that the director is a teacher. The director must also consider existing relationships between himself and the individuals in the group, between himself and the collective group, and between the various members of the group.

As a general rule, the less experienced the group members are, the more autocratic will be the directing method. Yet the roles of the encourager and the therapist should not be neglected. The more mature the individuals are, the more the director can use democratic methods of leadership. A larger group (above fifteen or twenty people) probably requires more hierarchical organization and more use of autocratic methods of directing than does a smaller group (five to fifteen people). If the director has no prior knowledge regarding the individuals in the group, he will do well to begin with more democratic methods in the social networks while using autocratic modes of leadership within the aesthetic networks.

Fifth, the situation context in which the production process will take place is only slightly less
important than the group's make-up. The context may include school pressures imposed upon the group members, personal problems of individuals, rehearsal space, the amount of support which the producing unit receives from members of a department, division, institution, and so on, the ultimate purpose for the production, and the amount of rehearsal time. More democratic modes of leadership can be employed, for example, if a group has eight weeks in which to prepare a production than if the same group has only two weeks to prepare the same production. While working on *The Libation Bearers* in the manner described above, Muzenidis himself stated he would have allowed the actors much more freedom in the aesthetic networks if they had had six months to rehearse instead of four weeks and that he would have allowed their interpretations of the characters to figure more prominently in the final product.

Obviously, therefore, a director must realize that anything in the situation context may affect the interactions within the social networks and hence the entire production process. He must be able to adapt to changing conditions within the situation context and be prepared for emergencies. Like the people involved, the interactions of the social networks are in a constant state of flux: the director must keep track of the fluctuations and indeed use them to his and the production's advantage.
Sixth, the director's method of leadership will be affected by the playscript he is using. The difficulty of the drama—that is, its degree of familiarity to the audience and the production group; its complexities; the amount of time and space in which to produce it; the available artists, craftsmen, and money—may determine the mode of leadership. The greater the degree of difficulty, the more useful will be some degree of autocracy. Highly complex plays such as period dramas, musicals, stylized comedies, and psychological dramas may require detailed work prior to the casting and the rehearsals. This work must be done in an autocratic mode. The play's genre may also affect the decision as to which directorial leadership style is more appropriate. Musicals, requiring autocratic control in aspects of the aesthetic networks, function quite well when the social networks are conducted in a democratic vein. While production of classics may require stricter control than other plays, the production of a new script may only work when every member of the production group has complete freedom to bring his creative capabilities to the performance.

Finally, the theatrical production process itself may affect the style of leadership and the secondary roles chosen by the director. That process begins with the decision to perform a certain play at a particular time and place, before a specific audience, and with a predetermined
group of people. The process ends with the performance of the play before its audience. Although nearly any kind of organization may be applied to the process, its chief characteristics remain constant. Among other things, the production process always exhibits (1) continual forward movement in time, (2) continuous demand for special kinds of space and equipment, (3) constant fluctuation from general concepts to the specific activities that illustrate them until the latter occupies the whole attention of the participants and the audience, (4) momentum and growth as more and more artistic contributions join the onrushing stream, and (5) considerable fragility because of the necessity for successful communication at every point along the way.  

The complexity of the theatrical communication networks was noted in Chapters I-III. The operation of these networks within the production process requires the following leadership and role decisions.

1. The choice of styles and roles, and the changes that are made, have a cumulative effect; whether for good or ill, each decision is carried along with the mainstream, the effects of a given decision continue long after it may have been discarded.

2. Once the production process has begun, major changes in style and role choices are difficult if not impossible.
3. If the process is initiated with the anarchic style, it can be moved to the democratic style only with difficulty; it is probably not possible to move to the autocratic position.

4. If the initial style is autocratic, movement along the continuum is determined by the amount of training and experience the leader gives to his followers, or that they bring to the process. That is, he must prepare them for changes in style of leadership or find some way to protect them from over-dependence on him.

5. If the initial style is democratic, necessary changes in style or roles can be made to avoid undue or malign influence of the production process. Hence, the changes can be made easily enough to ameliorate the effects of bad decisions as the process of decision-making gathers momentum. Nevertheless, extreme changes from the initial position would have the same negative effect as in the other leadership styles.

6. Thus, because the director has (and should use) a certain amount of flexibility but excessive change in style may prove disruptive to the theatrical process, the initial analysis of the production's communication needs has to be very accurate; errors in artistic analysis are easily corrected through rehearsal, but errors in communication tend to become permanent through their deleterious effect on source credibilities, ego involvements, and message comprehension.
7. Although the momentum of the process reduces the distance of movement possible along the continuum of styles, the intensification that occurs as the process continues allows for a wider variety of roles to be employed within the allowable extremes of movement.

8. The style of leadership and the director's secondary role choices must allow for maximum role changes in the group members whose task it will be to carry out the specific activities that demonstrate the messages which the playwright and the director have originated.

Summary

This chapter has described the function of the director within the theatrical communication networks. An examination of the role positions the director may assume within the communication transactions revealed that many systems of role classifications can be adopted to the theatrical situation. The role of leader is the dominant directorial role; by virtue of his artistic function, he must assume this role. After that, he may adopt many secondary roles that are determined by the style of leadership which the director chooses. The leadership styles occupy a continuum from the autocratic to the democratic to the anarchic. An analysis of the theatrical process may aid a director in determining the most appropriate style and role for any given situation. Systems of analysis exist within the aesthetic networks,
but need to be developed within the framework of the social networks.

The interactions of the social networks may determine the success of the other networks and thus the theatrical production process. These interactions are determined by the roles the director assumes, these in turn are determined by the style of leadership which he selects. Carefully designing the mode of directorial leadership should establish the most effective merger of the communication networks within the theatrical production process. Ultimately that is, the process of communication and the process of theatrical production should become one and the same.
NOTES


3. Rosenfeld, p. 25.


6. Refer to Chapter II.


9. Ibid.

10. Trauth, pp. 3-4.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study examines the communicative nature of the art and craft of the theatrical production process. The theoretical basis of communication, the unique attributes of theatrical communication, and the function of directorial roles within this communication/theatrical process are examined.

Assumptions of the Study

1) The theatrical production process is one type of communication.

2) In order for the theatrical production process to exist, communication must be established within, between, and among the participants in the production group.

3) The director is in charge of initiating and supervising the processes of communication.

4) The theatrical production process is composed of numerous complex communication networks. These theatrical communication networks may be classified into four categories: conceptual, aesthetic, observational, and social.

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5) The social networks form the basis for the other theatrical networks and must be activated in order for the networks within the other three categories to function.

6) The relative success of the social networks determines the success of each of the other types of networks, and therefore, the success of the theatrical presentation.

7) The roles assumed by the director greatly affect the interactions of the networks and may be the primary determiner of successful directorial communication.

Summary of the Study

Theatre is a dynamic process in which behaviors, thoughts, and emotions are significantly portrayed and perceived through the interactions of the participants. These interactions may evolve from the aesthetic framework of the drama, from the interpersonal relationships of the members of the production group, or from a combination of these. Similarly, communication is a dynamic process in which various human behaviors are meaningfully exhibited and perceived through the participation of individuals involved in interactive relationships. These relationships may involve many or few people, may exist on many different levels, may be intentional or unintentional,
may exist in many different environments, may exist for a variety of reasons or purposes, and so on. The principal ideas inherent in both of these definitions are that behaviors exhibited by sources are significantly perceived by receivers and that the interactions are dynamic or on-going rather than static.

Thus the process of theatre was considered in terms of the many facets of the communication process that controls its functioning. The elements and activities involved in theatrical production were examined to determine their functions in a communication process. The primary elements necessary for a communication interaction are (1) source, (2) receiver, (3) message, (4) channel, (5) situation, (6) feedback system, (7) symbol system, (8) roles, (9) norms, and (10) a system of networks resulting from the interaction of the other nine elements. The principal components found within the theatrical process are (1) playwright, (2) the drama, (3) director, (4) actors, (5) technicians or craftsmen, (6) situation, (7) performance, and (8) the audience. Each of these theatrical components may function as each of the elements of communication at any given time.

These functions are not static; instead, there is a great degree of reciprocity among them. The director may be the receiver of the message when confronting the playwright or the drama and when viewing the performance as a
spectator/critic, but he may function as a channel in transmitting the message of the playwright to the actors and the craftsmen. In addition, the director may be the source of many of the aesthetic ideas (stage composition and line interpretation, for example) found within the performance. His actions, thoughts, and his communication—whether verbal or nonverbal—may form the basis of both the aesthetic and the interpersonal messages. Such interchange of the communication elements is found within each of the theatrical components, and allows for numerous recombinations of roles into an infinite number of interaction networks.

Examination of this interchange indicates the existence of at least four categories of communication networks within the theatrical production process: the conceptual, the aesthetic, the observational, and the social. The collective interaction of these network categories results in the communication system of theatre.

Communication systems exist at one of four levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, and public. Each of the theatrical communication network categories may function at any of these levels, although certain categories may function predominantly at one level or the other. The conceptual networks are predominantly intrapersonal. Both the conceptual and the aesthetic networks, however, employ interpersonal communication. Much of the work of
the theatrical production group occurs within the framework of interpersonal communication. In addition, the social networks frequently function in this manner.

The third level, group communication, includes small-group and organizational communication. Small group communication takes place within the theatre in a variety of ways: as a primary group, the theatrical production group serves to train the individuals in social interaction. In providing companionship for individuals of like interest, the theatrical group becomes a casual or social group. The participants in a theatrical production are members of an educational group. They may be preparing for entering a career in the field or attempting to improve an already existing career. The performance aspect of the process may provide educational opportunities for the members of the audience, and the theatrical production process is used in various types of therapy. The production group may find the theatrical process an outlet for the release of tensions and irritations, and a medium for the discussion of or the participation in like interests and experiences. Finally, the effort to create a work of art forces the participants in a theatrical production to form a problem-solving group. Whatever the secondary goals may be, the most immediate goal of any individual theatrical process is the creation of the work of art.
Moreover, since a production group has a specific goal and since all the information to group members is disseminated within definite boundaries, organizational communication predominates. Serial reproduction of messages is usually necessary within the theatrical process, especially if the group is rather large, and a patterned hierarchy based on status and role perceptions exists. This hierarchy is determined by the role functions of the director, which are responsible for the structure of the communication networks within the production situation.

The fourth level—public communication—functions in the theatre primarily within the observational networks. The on-stage performing of the production is equivalent to a speaker standing before an audience. There are conventional norms of behavior between audience members and performers and immediate feedback may be received from the audience through nonverbal channels.

These elements of communication, the four levels of communication, and the infinite possibilities for networks within the four theatrical communication network categories indicate that flexibility of directorial roles influences the interaction and the formation of the networks within the theatrical network categories and the communication levels. Furthermore, since the director is in charge of supervising all aspects of the theatrical production process,
the roles which he assumes tend to influence the role choices and interactions of the other members of the group.

The primary role assumed by the director is that of leader; indeed he must assume this role if he is to direct a production. Whatever role flexibility he develops comes from the secondary roles he may assume. These secondary roles, furthermore, are determined by the style of leadership adopted by the director. If the traditional view is followed, this style can be only autocratic or democratic. Rather than viewing the choice of directing styles as a dichotomy, however, this thesis suggests that the choices lie along the continuum.

A director may adopt one principal point on this continuum from which to develop his style of directorial leadership. He may perform all directorial functions within this style, or he may move to other points along the continuum in any given situation. He even may function from two or more points simultaneously as he participates in two or more networks at the same time. The leadership style he chooses may be based upon specific situations within the theatrical context and upon such factors as the temperaments and the theatrical experience of members of the production group, the play's genre, the length of the rehearsal period, and so on.
A director's style of leadership determines to some extent the secondary roles he assumes. The autocratic director assumes the primary secondary role of dictator. Other secondary roles which this type of director assumes are aggressor, recognition-seeker, and dominator. The anarchic director-leader assumes the dominant secondary role of slacker/weakling. He may also assume the role of harmonizer, friend, and protector, usually emphasizing the more negative aspects of these roles.

The democratic director-leader has a much wider range of secondary roles from which to choose. His dominant secondary role position is coordinator. This type of director-leader may also assume such roles as initiator-coordinator, information giver and seeker, encourager, harmonizer, friend, teacher, and so on.

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, a director must constantly monitor all facets of the theatrical production process, and change leadership styles and role positions as necessary. The most flexible and therefore the most preferred position on the continuum is the democratic style. From this midpoint, the director-leader may move toward any other position more easily.

Results of the Study

The results of this study indicate that the theatrical production process, and particularly the function of the
director within that process, merits more extensive study as a form of communication. The leadership styles and the roles which the director assumes within this process, especially within the social networks, determine not only his activities, but the activities of each of the other members of the production group, the formation of the various networks, and ultimately, the success of the entire process.

Recommendations for Further Research

In order to explicate the communicative nature of the theatrical production process and the function of the director in that process, the following recommendations are offered.

1) Each of the elements of communication should be the subject of a case study that focuses on its function within each of the four theatrical network categories, and the production process as a whole.

2) Such a study or series also should be applied to the manner in which the network categories interact to create the theatrical process.

3) Other systems of role classifications should be used to analyze directorial leadership.

4) A methodology for the empirical study of theatrical directing should be developed. Present methods for
such a study\textsuperscript{1} seem less sophisticated than the subject requires.
NOTES

1Refer to the research being done at Bowling Green State University as exemplified in publications of *Empirical Research in Theatre.*
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