

CREATIVITY: Learning and Leading in a New Renaissance—Brent Cirves

GLOSSARY OF DRAMA AND ETHICS TERMINOLOGY

Affective memory: the personal storage house every actor has of powerful past events with attendant emotions that will help him/her find strong feelings in the present of the play. Sense memory (memory of sensations) is the other half of this construct. Add imagination, intellect, and observation of others' affects and you have all of the brain tools at the disposal of actors. Constantin Stanislavski.

Anagnorisis: recognition, identification. Aristotle.

Antagonist: a character who is opposed to the protagonist, i.e., against resolving the agony.

Arete: virtue. Aristotle.

Beat: a moment of emotion begun with a new stimulus and played until the next new stimulus. Stanislavski.

Blocking: the large physical actions that involve actors crossing from one stage area to another. Attributed to British director W. S. Gilbert, 19th century.

Catharsis: variously purgation, purification, clarification. Aristotle.

Cheating or opening out: using the fourth wall as a motivation to play out to the audience without losing character motivation.

Conflict: the key element of story involving a character who has obstacles thrown in the way of reaching a clear objective.

Countering: a blocking movement by an actor to rebalance the stage in reaction to another actor's movement or change of position.

Cross: a movement from one of fifteen stage blocks to another; effective crosses are always motivated.

Dianoia: thought, theme. Aristotle.

Drama in education: a set of pedagogies in British and Commonwealth schools meant to teach a broad range of ethical as well as performative lessons to students in K-12 programs. "In theatre pedagogy, we not only endow experience with meaning, but we are—as players—invited to make manifest our own subjectivities in the world evoked through character and play, a world laden with metaphor and nuance, a world where relationship to other and self-

spectatorship are in dynamic and unrelenting interaction.” —DIE practitioner Kathleen Gallagher.

Dramatic action: the action that constitutes the major events propelling the action of the play. Stanislavski.

Driving question: the key question an actor/character must ask in order to be clear on urgent intentions. E.g.: How can I convince him (another character) that if he takes that risk he will die? See also Golden question.

Endowment: bestowing personal feelings on a prop, set piece, locale, so as to make it “warmly felt” by actor/character and audience.

Eudaimonia: a Greek word often translated as well-being, happiness, or, perhaps best, human flourishing. Aristotle saw the methodical acquisition of *eudaimonia* as the highest human good. He identifies several types/qualities of human beings that show the end-outcome of a life lived “while flourishing”: 1) The great or magnanimous soul—usually a philosopher who combines all the best qualities in himself. 2) The just person. 3) The man who is wise in practical ways, always making the right decisions; a good leader. 4) The good friend. 5) the noble or gentlemanly man, treating all around him with dignity (possessing gentlemanliness or nobility: *kalokagathia*). Note: “[The truly wise person will] be more than human. A man will not live like that by virtue of his humanness, but by virtue of some divine thing within him. His activity is as superior to the activity of the other virtues as this divine thing is to his composite character. Now if mind is divine in comparison with man, the life of the mind is divine in comparison with mere human life. We should not follow popular advice and, being human, have only mortal thoughts, but should become immortal and do everything toward living the best in us.” The successful philosopher (#1 above) is this type of individual, a man closest to god. Aristotle.

Exemplar: a character whom the playwright sees as a good example of an ethical person—or the image of same—that can be compared with the character falling short. See Playwright's vision.

Feeling questions: the sort of questions directors should constantly be asking actors. E.g.: How do you (how does your character) feel about this? About him? About her? About what she just said/did? Michael Shurtleff.

Five Guidelines for Drama: 1) The play should be written in the finest poetic form. 2) The play should concern a main character who falls from a high place to a low place, suffering a terrible reversal. 3) The main character should fall as a result of a tragic flaw. 4) The play should inspire audiences to achieve catharsis, a cleansing and enlightenment, which will help them to flourish and ultimately live better lives. 5) The play should adhere to the unities of time, place, and action. Aristotle.

Foil characters: characters who help to "set off" or show by contrast the traits of other characters, especially the protagonist.

Flourishing: using one's best capacities to the fullest so as to achieve a stage of satisfaction or happiness. See *eudaimonia* above. Aristotle.

Fourth wall: an imaginary wall between the stage and audience; the actor's job is to both create this wall in his mind's eye and dissolve it so there is no barrier between himself and the audience. Breaking the fourth wall means stepping outside the story to engage directly with the audience in a meta-theatrical moment. Denis Diderot, 1750s.

Given circumstances: The background and circumstances of a character, ranging from who he is to where he is to why he is doing what he is doing. (Who am I? What am I doing here? How can I get out of the trouble I'm currently in?)

Golden mean: the balance one must strive to strike in all matters of opinion, temperament, and behavior. Aristotle.

Golden question: What does the character want/desperately want/want to achieve? This is the elemental beautiful question for directors and actors. Stanislavski.

Hamartia: miscalculation, understood in Romanticism as "tragic flaw." Aristotle.

Hunking: playing the same emotion throughout the scene without beat variation (to be avoided). Michael Shurtleff.

Impulse: a natural action or reaction that the actor makes in rehearsal. Actors should run with good impulses; the director should constantly notice same.

Indicating: showing what a character is feeling without convincingly replicating the feeling, resulting in a shallow, mannered performance.

Intention: a smaller need than an overall motivation; a need in a beat or unit of action or scene. The sum of intentions add up to the super-objective. Stanislavski.

Lexis: diction, speech. Aristotle.

Magic If: a tool used to stimulate the imagination and emotions by asking a simple (and beautiful) question: "What would I do if I were this character in these circumstances?" Stanislavski.

Melos: melody. Aristotle.

Mimesis: imitation, representation, or expression. Aristotle.

Motivation: the character's reason for doing anything he or she does in the story. Strong motivations are the best. Stanislavski.

Mythos: plot, the structure of actions. Aristotle.

Opsis: spectacle. Aristotle.

Original experience: a powerful personal experience from one's past that can be used in the present moment of a scene in both rehearsal and performance. Stanislavski.

Particularization: a process for making each event, character, prop, place as exact and personal/emotion-laden as possible. Uta Hagen.

Peripeteia: reversal of fortune. Aristotle.

Phronesis: practical wisdom or prudence relating to how to make the best decisions so as to live a better life, to flourish. All human beings, including our likenesses on the stage, should act with *phronesis* every day. Dramatic characters (as well as human) go wrong when they act out of accordance with *phronesis*. C.f. Aristotle's virtues, "*sophia*" (philosopher's wisdom), life hacks.

Physical actions: the actions that the actor and director are on a treasure hunt to find, which will show the audience from moment to moment what the characters are thinking or feeling or needing. A physical action could be as small as a facial expression or as large as a lunge at an adversary from a raised platform. Stanislavski.

Playwright's vision: among other definitions, the artist's personal vision of happiness, stability, stasis, character virtue (see exemplar), etc., that the story departs from and tries to return to.

Process drama: a method of teaching and learning drama where both the students and teacher are working in and out of role. Educator Cecily O'Neill describes process drama being used to explore a problem, situation, theme or series of related ideas or themes through the use of the artistic medium of unscripted drama.

Protagonist: character in favor of resolving the agony (main problem).

The Seven Basic Plots: 1) Overcoming the Monster 2) Rags to Riches 3) The Quest 4) Voyage and Return 5) Comedy 6) Tragedy 7) Rebirth. Christopher Booker.

Six Stages of Development: six developmental stages of morality as posited by Lawrence Kohlberg, inspired by Jean Piaget. Level One (Pre-Conventional). 1. Obedience and punishment orientation (How can I avoid punishment?). 2. Self-interest orientation (What's in it for me?) (Paying for a benefit). Level Two (Conventional). 3. Interpersonal accord and conformity (Social

norms) (The good boy/girl attitude). 4. Authority and social-order maintaining orientation (Law and order morality). Level Three (Post-Conventional). 5. Social contract orientation. 6. Universal ethical principles (Principled conscience). Lawrence Kohlberg.

Six Steps: Uta Hagen's "beautiful questions" that every actor should ask when building a character: 1) WHO AM I? What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing? 2) WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES? What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?) Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?) What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?) What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on? 3) WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS? How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances? 4) WHAT DO I WANT? What is my main objective? My immediate need or goal? 5) WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE? What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it? 6) WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT? How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions? Uta Hagen.

Stakes: the heightened consequences for each character of achieving or failing to achieve his/her objectives. The director, and actor, should continually ask: What's at stake here, now, in this moment.

Story: the basic through-line of events that are compelling enough for an audience to keep watching. "We are the storytelling animal." —B. Cirves

Subtext: the character's complex thoughts, feelings, motives that exist just under the written line; at times subtext is, in fact, hidden by what the character is saying but not actually feeling. Actors and directors should be on a continual treasure hunt for subtext.

Super-objective: the overarching goal that the actor/character is trying to achieve throughout the play. E.g.: Hamlet's super-objective is to understand and resolve his father's untimely death so that he can end his despair and get on with his life. Note: the super-objective should be as direct and active as possible.

Suspension of disbelief (or willing suspension of disbelief): the moment(s) when the actor and the audience "forget" (though they don't, really) that they are not witnessing actual events. It is the goal of every good director and actor to increase the number and length of these moments for the audience as well as the actor. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1817.

Theatre in education: a movement begun in Britain in the 1960s to bring productions and theatre training into schools as a means not only of entertainment and teaching performance skills but also engaging students in timely ethical questions.

Thick concepts: ideas—thick with meaning—that have a practical application in life; sometimes they are counterintuitive. E.g.: Maybe one shouldn't look *too* much into who one really is.

The Thirteen Great Emotions: 1) Anger 2) Calmness 3) Friendliness 4) Fear 5) Courage 6) Shame 7) Confidence 8) Kindness 9) Cruelty 10) Pity 11) Indignation 12) Envy 13) Love. Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, Book II).

Transference: An actor tool for copying personal experiences to those of the character in the play so as to make for deeply-felt moments, personalized acting. Uta Hagen.

The Twelve Guideposts: Tools for helping actors to perform deeply felt moments on the stage. They include: relationship, conflict, moment before, humor, opposites, discoveries, communication/competition, importance, finding events, place, role/game-playing, mystery and secret. Shurtleff.

Virtue: character excellence, which helps the person to do the right thing at the right time and in the right way; virtue must be developed like a habit. The Four Cardinal Virtues in order of importance: 1) Prudence, also known as practical wisdom 2) Temperance, or self-control, moderation 3) Courage—"moderation or observance of the mean with respect to feelings of fear and confidence" 4) Justice. "Giving the enemy what is due to them in the proper ways." All other virtues and vices stem from the above. Aristotle.

Virtues (contemporary and commonly accepted) and their opposites: Abstinence vs. gluttony; Acceptance vs. rejection, judgement; Assertiveness vs. low self-esteem; Audacity vs. timidity; Authenticity vs. putting on an act; Cleanliness vs. slovenliness; Compassion vs. insensitivity; Confidence vs. uncertainty or arrogance; Consideration vs. selfishness; Contentment vs. dissatisfaction, restlessness; Cooperation vs. defiance; Courage vs. cowardice, self-doubt; Courtesy vs. discourteousness; Creativity vs. destructiveness; Determination vs. complacency, frustration, a penchant for giving up; Dignity vs. indignity; Diligence vs. laziness, sloth; Empathy vs. fear or hatred of others; Encouragement vs. disparagement; Energy vs. inertness; Engagement vs. detachment; Ethical vs. unethical; Enthusiasm vs. indifference; Equanimity vs. bigotry, prejudice; Excellence vs. mediocrity; Faithfulness vs. lack of faith; Fairness vs. unfairness; Flexibility vs. stubbornness; Forgiveness vs. holding a grudge; Freedom vs. control, obsession; Friendliness vs. suspicion; Generosity vs. stinginess, greed; Gentlemanliness vs. rudeness, crudeness; Gentleness vs. harshness; Grace vs. clumsiness; Graciousness vs. gracelessness; Gratefulness vs. ungratefulness; Greatness vs. smallness; Gregariousness vs. loneliness; Harmoniousness vs. hostility; Helpfulness vs. negativity; Honesty vs. dishonesty; Honor vs. dishonor; Hopefulness vs. discouragement, despair; Humility vs. egoism, arrogance; Idealism vs. cynicism; Imagination vs. lack of imagination; Integrity vs. corruption; Joyfulness vs. gloominess; Justice vs. injustice; Kindness vs. cruelty; Leadership vs. slackness; Love vs. hatred; Loyalty vs. disloyalty; Moderation vs. overindulgence, excessiveness; Modesty vs. self-importance; Morality vs. immorality; Motivation vs. boredom; Optimism vs. pessimism; Orderliness vs. disorderliness, complacency; Organization vs. chaos; Originality vs. intellectual theft; Passion vs. apathy; Patience vs. impatience; Peacefulness vs. aggression; Perseverance vs.

lack of direction; Preparedness vs. unpreparedness; Purposefulness vs. shiftlessness; Rationalism vs. irrationalism; Reliability vs. unreliability; Resilience vs. flaccidness; Respect vs. disrespect; Responsibility vs. irresponsibility; Reverence vs. inconsideration; Self-actualization vs. dogged self-centeredness, conflicted nature; Self-discipline vs. unruliness, waywardness; Service vs. selfishness; Sincerity vs. disingenuousness; Surety vs. skepticism; Sympathy vs. coldness; Tactfulness vs. tactlessness; Temperance vs. intemperance; Tenacity vs. indolence; Thankfulness vs. bitterness; Thoughtfulness vs. thoughtlessness; Tolerance vs. intolerance; Truthfulness vs. deceitfulness; Trustworthiness vs. untrustworthiness, betrayal; Visionary vs. tunnel-visioned; Wisdom vs. ignorance; Wonder vs. resignation. From various sources compiled by B. Cirves.

Virtue ethics: a modern philosophical movement that harkens back to Aristotle, putting the acquisition of virtues and character building at the heart of the primary human goal of living a good life.

World of the play: the setting and circumstances of the story affected by social norms, economics, politics, and overall culture of the time period.