

DANCE AS LITERARY CRITICISM: LITERARY ANALYSIS AND DRAMATURGY
IN A DANCE THEATRE CHOREOGRAPHIC PROCESS

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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In my research into interdisciplinary choreographic processes, I found there to be a lacking representation of recent scholarship dedicated to exploring the relationship between literature and dance. As a dance theatre choreographer who often utilizes textual sources as impetuses for artistic creation, I have employed methods of traditional dramaturgy in my practice and, in seeking scholarship on this subject, have noted a need for clear examples of dance dramaturgy in practice. In this thesis study, I employed methods from literary studies and dramaturgy in the process of adapting a work of short fiction by Kurt Vonnegut for the stage. I documented my process and have structured the information for the benefit of those who may read it. The artistic product of this research was presented to an audience in direct relation to its literary source. At the conclusion of this research, I posit that dance can function as literary criticism.

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Dedicated to American writer, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. (1922-2007)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I have been interested in interdisciplinary research linking the arts of literature, theatre, and dance for ten years. I believe that aesthetic principles are an inherent link among the arts, and that compositional elements pervade the processes and resultant products of choreographers, directors, and writers, alike. In creating work as a dance theatre artist, I have functioned as a writer, dramaturg, director, and choreographer in fulfillment of my creative process. In this thesis study, I sought to further explore the presence of these roles in my choreographic process, and to incorporate multidisciplinary research methods from literature, theatre, and dance within a creative practice. I utilized a specific literary text as a catalyst for creating a dance theatre adaptation, ultimately positing that dance is a vehicle for literary criticism.

In my preliminary research into this interdisciplinary endeavor, I sought documented analysis of existing dance adaptations of literature. I did not find many examples during my research, and yet I am aware that there have been several instances of such collaborations in the history of the dance art form. This lacking representation of dance in scholarship that originates from other fields of study is an existing problem, which has been duly noted in dance scholarship of as much as twenty years ago. My proposed thesis study seeks to address this continuing problem. Additionally, I sought to open new doors of discovery through documentation, performance, and open discussion of an experimental choreographic process that links literature, theatre, and dance. This process involved existing analytical and compositional approaches from these three art forms, including literary analysis, dramaturgy (the theatre based study of adapting

dramatic themes from textual sources), and choreography.

The literary text I chose to adapt is a previously undistributed work of short fiction by Kurt Vonnegut, “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, which was recently published in 2011. “Hundred Dollar Kisses” is told through a question and answer format, in the context of a police interrogation. The protagonist character, Henry Lovell, is being interrogated about an act of violence he committed against the antagonist character, coworker Verne Petrie, in response to repeated provocation. A detective and one female stenographer hear the story from Henry’s point of view. The story involves immoral behavior on the part of the antagonist, who constantly exposes Henry to his collection of pornography at the office. This conflict escalates when Henry and an entire office of male employees listen in on a tragic phone conversation between a jilted janitor and his estranged high school sweetheart, now an unscrupulous female centerfold in one of Verne’s magazines.

In preparation for this study, I first adapted another early Vonnegut short fiction work, “Girl Pool”, published in the same anthology as “Hundred Dollar Kisses”, as a kind of pilot project. The nature of that practice process, entitled *GIRL POOL (an adaptation)*, is referred to in the body of this document. I chose to focus on a work by Kurt Vonnegut, because I have always had a particular affinity for his work, but also because I feel that we explore common themes in our respective art forms. Some of these common themes are humor, satire, commentary on American society, and a focus on issues of the human condition, such as mortality and morality. I also recognize an opportunity to insert choreography into the framework of his stories, in that Vonnegut’s imaginative, often science fiction approach to storytelling provides spaces within the context or plotline for unlikely interpretation. I believe dance, and more purely, the

spectrum of movement available within the human realm, is itself, an unlikely vehicle for storytelling in modern society. Thus, dance has the potential, through interpretation, to fulfill those cerebral vacancies which Vonnegut inspires his readers to fill for themselves.

I consider my role as an experimental choreographer to be like that of a science fiction writer, in that we both attempt “to do what has not been done before”. There are several aspects of this short story that were appealing to me as an artist. “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, being one of Vonnegut’s early short fictions, perhaps written in the aim of some commercial publication, still retains the common themes I have delineated, above. Its format of storytelling through a question and answer dialogue proved to be a fascinating framework for my choreographic process. The brief length of this short fiction work was appropriate material for an adaptation of this nature, because the creative interpretation was confined, in its means of expression, to the duration of one 7 minute dance piece. Additionally, the 1950’s time period in which the story was written is of historical significance, which proved to enrich the research involved in all three processes within the fields of literature, theatre, and dance.

The act of analyzing literary fiction for intended meaning and relevance to existing conditions in the world, as well as for the common denominators within the human experience, offers readers a deeper relational understanding of the author’s intentional framework within a given literary work. An author often creates abstract themes in a story that are agents of greater ideas. Abstraction in literary forms is comparable to that of abstraction in visual and kinesthetic art forms. All are likely mediums for interpretation, inspiration, or adaptation. One of my chosen approaches to adapting this literary text was the application of dramaturgy, a branch of study created and currently

utilized in a variety of capacities in the field of theatre, as well as in dance. The foundation for dramaturgy is factual evidence or textual support from which a translation into dramatic themes can develop.

To apply dramaturgy to dance, it is necessary to study the background and history of all topical, thematic, and generally inspirational sources that may inform the choreographer's vision. Whatever the specialization, the thrust of a dramaturgical approach is executed from a basis of thorough knowledge and evidential support, with a main objective to ensure that the resources of inspiration, whether it be a play, a novel, a poem, an event in history, a film, or simply a theme, are aptly adapted into the content of a given artistic work. In the case of my thesis study, dramaturgical research and application informed choreographic generation, which was refined into a resultant dance theatre adaptation.

There were three stages in this process:

- 1) The formation of my own analysis of a work of literary short fiction.
- 2) The application of theatrical and dance methods including principles of dramaturgy and my own approach to generating choreography in interpretation of the initial literary text.
- 3) The organization and refinement of these elements into a resultant dance adaptation of the initial literary source, presented in performance, and shared with invited scholars from the fields of literature, theatre, and dance.

Purpose

The purpose of my research was to create a dance performance adaptation of one piece of short fiction literature, Kurt Vonnegut's "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", as interpreted through movement and context, and presented as a form of literary criticism. As a dance theatre artist, my creative and production process is rooted in the union of dance and theatrical methods. I utilized my knowledge of the practice of literary analysis to identify relevant elements within the chosen short fiction, and applied my knowledge of dramaturgy and choreography as parts of a systematic approach to movement research. By interpreting the chosen literature, "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", I created my own literary criticism through the medium of movement, while engaging in a kind of collaboration with the text, and thus, with the late author, himself. It is my hope that this research will be the basis for my own future scholarship and publication on relevant topics. I also present this thesis document with the hope that my research will inform other scholars from relevant fields of dance, theatre, literature, creative writing, and cultural studies.

Delimitations

This process of creating a dance theatre choreography with the aim that it function as literary criticism was delimited to the adaptation of only one Kurt Vonnegut short fiction work, although information regarding his other works and his biography was integrated into the development of literary analysis and was naturally a part of the dramaturgical research. These delimitations served to strengthen the clarity of my research. The documentation of my research is focused primarily on three components of a total artistic process, applied in direct relation to the adaptation of Vonnegut's

“Hundred-Dollar Kisses”: “Structured Literary Analysis”, “Dramaturgical Research and Application”, and “Choreographic Process: Rehearsal Documentation”. In addition to structured documentation of the process, a documented depiction of the artistic product is included.

Definitions

This study is multidisciplinary, and may be consulted by scholars in a variety of fields, and so it is important to clarify utilized terms that stem from the individual fields of literature, theatre, and dance, for the benefit of the reader. In defining these terms, I have also gained a stronger sense of clarity regarding both their individual and interacting functions, as they pertain to my work in adaptation.

Note: In addition to the following cited material from multiple individuals and reference texts, basic dictionary definitions were consulted in the development of these operational definitions.

- Choreography- literally means “dance writing” in terms of the Greek roots of the word. The art of creating and designing movement and form in composition. Susan Macpherson’s *Dictionary of Dance*, published in 1996, defines choreography as “the invention and arrangement of dance movement into a set form for performance” (1996, 28).
- Dramaturgy- the art of dramatic composition; a practice apart from directing and playwriting, though its techniques may be applied in collaboration with these roles, and by one or more persons in the process of artistic production. For the purpose of this study, I applied dramaturgical practice to aid in identifying and

translating literary themes from the short fiction text into dramatic themes for the stage. Dramaturgy is defined as “the all-encompassing work that produces the text staged, and is intended to produce a specific effect on the spectator” or in the classical sense “the art of composition of plays” that “seeks to identify the constitutive elements of dramatic construction for any classical text”, in *the Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis*, edited by Patrice Pavis (1998, 124-125).

- Dramaturgical Research- a theatre based research, which expands from the careful study of a text, into the many outside factors which inform the text itself, and its adaptation to the stage in performance. Information for this definition has been sourced from the University of Puget Sound Collins Library website.
- Choreographic Generation- the act or process of sequential or spontaneous development and innovation relevant to the composition of movement and form. In this document, I describe my own process of developing movement and context in the production of a dance theatre adaptation. The act of “generating material” is described by Gregory Nash for the text “Dance Words”, compiled by Valerie Preston-Dunlop, as “creating a body of raw dance material before the processes of structuring and refining” (1995, 421).
- Experimental Choreography- An “experimental phase”, relevant to choreography, is defined by Ashley Page in Valerie Preston-Dunlop’s 1995 compilation of dance terminology, as “a period of time in a choreographer’s output when he or she is primarily testing new avenues of working method rather than making works intended to be sustained repertory pieces.” This citation is accessed from *Dance*

Words (1995, 393). The University of California, Riverside, offers an Experimental Choreography degree. My understanding of this term, or phrase, is that it refers to research and experimentation in choreographic approach and practice, in an attempt to “do what may have not been done before”, or, simply, to innovate through experimentation.

- Collaboration- Barry Kay described collaboration in 1981 as “a close working partnership of two artists”. “The ideas may spring from either and be integrated into the production so that you can’t tell from where it originated.” These quotations are found in *Dance Words*, (1981, 400). *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines two modes of collaboration that are relevant to artistic production. Firstly, “to work jointly with others or together in an intellectual endeavor”, and secondly, “to cooperate with an agency or instrumentality with which one is not immediately connected”. The question of whether one can “collaborate” with other fields simply by applying methods akin to those fields to one’s own field of research, rather than physically collaborating with other persons from those fields, is, perhaps, debatable. For the purpose of my own research and discussion, I see the act of incorporating methods or practices invented by persons from fields unfamiliar with my own as a kind of collaboration.
- Adaptation- a composition that has been translated and reconstructed into a new form from its original source, or “the re-casting of a work in one genre to another”. “The concept of adaptation also refers to dramaturgical work based on the text to be staged.” “Adaptation, unlike *translation*, or *contemporization*, can

be very free; it does not hesitate to change or even invert the meaning of the original...”. These quotations are from *the Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis*, edited by Patrice Pavis (1998, 14).

- Literary Criticism- commentary, evaluation, and interpretation of the qualities of a literary source, and the significance of the work in the context of society, often in consideration of the author’s greater body of work and experience. The purpose of this thesis study is to create a dance theatre art work that comments on, evaluates, and interprets the qualities of a Kurt Vonnegut work of short fiction. “The art or science of literary criticism is devoted to the comparison and analysis, to the interpretation and evaluation of works of literature”, from the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, edited by J.A. Cudon, and revised by C.E. Preston (1998, 196).
- Literary Theory- informed explanation of the nature of literature, especially concerning its intellectual and philosophical significance. I address relevant literary theory in this research process. The third edition preface of *the Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* comments, “literary theory has proliferated, sometimes counter-productively in so far as there are commentaries about commentaries about commentaries...” (1991).
- Literary Analysis- examination of the separate elements or structure of a literary source for a specific purpose. I conducted and wrote a literary analysis of the selected Vonnegut short fiction as the starting point for the interpretive process of this study, as I looked at the fiction through a “choreographer lens” and thus for a specific purpose. I commented on elements of literary criticism and certain

literary theory in this process. “A detailed splitting up and examination of a work of literature. A close study of the various elements and the relationship between them. An essential part of criticism.” As T.S. Eliot put it, “the tools of the critic are comparison and analysis. Analytical criticism helps to make clear an author’s meaning and the structure of his work.” This citation is found in *the Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (1998, 36).

- Interpretation- a unique understanding of intangible meanings present within a source material. This thesis study documents and presents in performance the result of an interpretive process fueled by methods from the fields of literature, dance, and theatre. Defined as a “critical approach by the reader or spectator of text and stage. Interpretation is concerned with determining meaning”, says *the Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (1998, 187).
- Artistic Product- the end result, or resultant work of art, which an artistic process yields. In the case of this study, the product was a performance. Mark Murphy defines “the product” as “the final work, when all the collaborators have worked it through to get all the images intended, defined and refined”, in *Dance Words* (1995, 393).
- Dance Theatre- “the union of genuine dance and theatrical methods of stage performance, creating a new, unique dance form” as quoted from Norbert Servos, in Taryn Benbow-Pfalzgraf’s extensive reference text, *The International Dictionary of Modern Dance* (1998, 756). In the case of this study, not only the stage performance, but the production and creative process are rooted in such a union.

- Literary Source- a textual source material. In the case of this study, a fictional narrative text employing abstract elements within its overall composition. Geraldine Stephenson defines the plural term, *sources*, as “the resources which a choreographer in plays and films will research prior to creating movement scenes, in order to sense the style and ambience for the dances”, citing specifically, “Museums, photographs, books, paintings, biographies, and music of the period”, as potential *sources*, in *Dance Words* (1995, 599). “Source material” is defined by Stephen Preston in the same reference text as “sources on which to base period dance style in modern stagings, including original musical scores, and notation of dances similar in character to the new choreography” (1995, 396).
- Character- a person or thing that has distinct traits and/or features that define he/she/it as an individual entity. In dance theatre, the purposeful allotment of human/animal/lifelike traits to a person, thing, or movement that retain a distinctness and “personality”. “A character in a book can only be visualized if we add information to those physical and moral traits that are explicitly stated, constructing a portrait on the basis of scattered information through a process of inference and generalization. In the case of a stage character, however, there are too many visual details to keep track of all of them and use them in arriving at a judgment: we must therefore abstract the relevant features and consider them in relation to the text, in order to choose the interpretation that seems right and simplify the complex stage image we receive in a process of abstraction and stylization.” This definition is found in *the Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (1998, 50-51). *The Dictionary of Literary Terms and*

Literary Theory suggests, “modern ‘*character*’ tends to be the portrayal of individuals” (1998, 127).

- Motif- a repeated theme in a narrative or abstract composition which holds significance, either meaningful or conceptual; a recurring element that has symbolic significance in a story. In dance, a motif will be movement based. In dance terms, Susanne K. Langer, in 1951, said, as quoted in *Dance Words*, “motifs are organizing devices that give the artist’s imagination a start, and so ‘motivate’ the work. They drive it forward and guide its progress”(1951, 351). In literary terms, “it may consist of a character, a recurrent image, or a verbal pattern,” says *the Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, (1998, 522). In theatre, “a unit of the plot that cannot be broken down into smaller units” or “certain basic, sometimes repetitive themes” which “form a chain that is both poetic and narrative”, as defined by *the Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (1998, 221).
- Theme- the main idea present in the wholeness of a composition, either narrative or abstract. In this study, I will be discussing and dealing with literary, dramatic, and movement themes. “The theme of a work is not its subject, but its central idea, which may be stated directly, or indirectly.” This cited definition appears in *the Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (1998, 913).
- Tone- the attitude and feeling of a composition, either narrative or abstract. Or, defined in *the Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* as “The reflection of a writer’s attitude, (especially towards his readers), manner, mood, and moral outlook in his work; even, perhaps, the way his personality pervades

the work” (1998, 920). In terms of usage in dance and theatre, an emotional quality, often used in description of sound, ambience, or essence.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this thesis study is three fold. 1) The first significant contribution that this thesis can make to current dance scholarship is the clear description of my own experimental choreographic process, which may serve to inform future dance theatre artists. 2) Secondly, this thesis study serves as a significant example of an interdisciplinary application of methods from the fields of literature, theatre, and dance, resulting in synergetic art production, which may lead discourse between scholars in these aesthetically linked fields. 3) The third significant factor is the thesis document, itself. This document a) functions as further evidential support for the intellectual properties of the dance art form, b) acts as a manual for those scholars who have yet to approach human movement as a subject of analysis, and c) details a practice through which dance achieves the form of literary criticism.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the process of establishing dance's existing relationship to critical studies in literature, and to the research and practices of dramaturgy, I consulted various sources of scholarship on these subjects. As a result of this research, I compiled summaries of several relevant essays that provide evidence and theory surrounding interdisciplinary dance relationships. The following literature review is divided into five total topical categories, three of which represent these distinct connections to dance, entitled "Literature and Dance", "Dramaturgy and Dance", and "Interdisciplinary Choreographic Process". The fourth category, "Kurt Vonnegut: Biography and Analysis", represents the texts I consulted for biographical information of the chosen author, Kurt Vonnegut, analysis of his body of work, and background information on the chosen short fiction. The fifth category, "Source Materials for Dramaturgical Research", serves as a documentation of additional source materials.

Literature and Dance

In the world of literary studies, the terms "theory", "analysis", and "criticism" are sometimes carelessly interchanged. To clearly comprehend the selected scholarship addressing the relationship between literature and the arts, particularly dance, it is important to distinguish these terms from each other. They identify forms of literary study that have existed in our history as long as literature, itself. Literary theory is the informed explanation of the nature of literature, especially concerning its intellectual and philosophical significance. Because literary theory encompasses methods of studying

literature, literary “analysis” and “criticism” can be considered to be under the “umbrella” of general literary theory. Within the span of literary studies, it is important to acknowledge that “analysis” and “criticism” are not the same. Literary analysis is the identification and examination of the separate elements or structure of a literary source for a necessary purpose. Literary criticism is commentary, evaluation, and interpretation of the qualities of a literary source, and the significance of the work in the context of society, often in consideration of the author’s greater body of work and experience. In order to delineate between the terms literary “theory”, “criticism”, and “analysis”, and to establish shared and contrasting meanings of certain compositional terms across the fields of literature, theatre, and dance, I consulted various reference texts and dictionaries. To appreciate the potential for a relationship between literature and the performing arts, and literature’s potential for integration within movement and theatrical contexts, I researched scholarship discussing this particular kind of artistic integration. The following essays analyze the presence of literature in a variety of artistic and academic realms, collectively providing an opportunity for comparison between unique examples of interdisciplinary literary connections in the histories of dance and art.

The introduction to the 1995 book, *Bodies of the Text: Dance as Theory, Literature as Dance*, individually entitled “Movement Movements”, is a potent history of dance’s emergence into academia, shedding light on past movements and theories within the world of dance and extending beyond the field. Nearly twenty years later, many dance scholars and professionals are aware of the early efforts to establish dance’s permanence as an art form and a multi-dimensional academic institution, nearly twenty years later. The authors point to dance’s evolving role as both an art form with its own unique

language, and as an active participant in collective dialogue and research on the academic level. Goellner and Murphy assert that dance is suitable and even fertile ground for analysis and interaction with agents of literary criticism, cultural and media studies, and beyond, citing that, as early as 1994, “cross disciplinary, literary-dance investigations [were] underway” (1995, 8).

Jacqueline Shea Murphy dedicates a chapter of the book *Bodies of the Text* to Bill T. Jones’ 1990 phenomenon *Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin/ The Promised Land*, summing up her analysis in a vivid impression of the work as the product of a choreographer’s vision, which actively “inhabits and explodes these relations between African American performance, slavery, and political identity” (p. 83). Through Murphy’s insight and description, I identify Jones’ epic dance theatre production to be a direct example of dance as literary criticism. *Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin/ The Promised Land* demonstrates the power of the dance art form to newly interpret literature which has been exhaustively analyzed, and to translate text into the language of movement, brought to life through the “voiceless”, yet politically charged human body as aesthetic object and expresser of meaning. Murphy considers Jones’ bold quest to adapt scenes from such celebrated and traditionally bound American literature as “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*”, as well as from the Bible, itself, as a deliberate, emphatic, and even blasphemous call to action. Murphy describes: “Throughout, Jones forces a relentless questioning of what racial and sexual violence does, what it is for, how it operates, and how dancing bodies are, and have been connected to it” (1995, 83). In the breadth of her analysis, Murphy also assesses several detailed scenes within Jones’ work, thus offering a textual version of the ideas and approaches to adaptation for the stage. This fact adds yet another

helix to the existing spiral of analysis. Murphy writes an article, which comments on Jones' art, which comments on literature, which comments on the human condition, and so on.

Shortly after beginning my thesis project, I was grateful to find a recent article published in 2013, by Marion Schmid, entitled "Proust at the Ballet: Literature and Dance in Dialogue". This article provides a relevant discussion of existing and potential connections between literary and movement based forms, as though picking up from where Jacqueline Shea Murphy's *Bodies of the Text* ended, almost two decades earlier. The author early affirms that this kind of analysis is minimal in contemporary scholarship, a perspective that reflects my own experience. Framing an analysis of Roland Petit's ballet adaptation of Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* as a rare translation of dance into literary criticism, Schmid tackles the "little-researched interartistic relations between literature and dance" (2013, 184). The author stresses that Petit's rare form of ballet adaptation is more than the typical illustration or representation of plot and themes. It indicates thoughtful translation of Proust's own theories, while providing commentary through a variety of perspectives presented through movement and context onstage.

According to Schmid, her article sets out "to engage with the wider theoretical questions raised by dance adaptations of literature" in order to draw attention to "the need for a critical language to express the literature–dance interface" (2013, 185). The similar timing of both Schmid's and my response to the contemporary question of the potentially complex relationship between dance and literature, and the particular subject of dance

adaptation, implies that perhaps there is a resurgence of interest in this evolving synergy between textual and movement forms.

“Explorations of Postmodern Time, Space, and Image”, by Charles Russell, was featured in *Literary Texts and the Arts: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, in 2003. Russell assesses use of time, space and image within the narrative of fiction writer, Ronald Sucknick, and the postmodern paintings of David Salle, while making cross-disciplinary connections between other like elements present within each artist’s work, and comparing literature and the visual arts for their shared aesthetic properties. Russell intentionally chose to analyze the work of this specific writer and painter, because each created work during the same period in history, which he suggests to be a rationale for comparison. Russell sees the deconstruction of time and space present in the writings and paintings of Sucknick and Salle as indicative of the theories and thought processes common among postmodern artists in that era between the 1960’s and the latter part of the twentieth century, offering the conclusion that visual and literary ‘texts’ can be mutually interchangeable, although he insists that “ a comparative methodology needs to account for the real differences in the media while identifying the affinities that justify the comparison” (2003, 29). Charles Russell’s interdisciplinary examination of textual and aesthetic concepts is relevant to the relationship between literature and dance, because dance is a visual, as well as kinesthetic art form. This essay has been included in the “Literature and Dance” section because the author successfully compares literary, or “read” symbols with symbols present in visual art, suggesting a viable and interchangeable relationship between composed language and composed images, which are components of imagery based choreography.

Dramaturgy and Dance

As an artist of the dance theatre form and a choreographer for theatre, I have taken a passionate interest in incorporating the practice of dramaturgy into my work. An important foundation for my research has been developing an operational definition for dramaturgy in a variety of contexts, and assessing how these functions pertain to the choreographic process. The study of dramaturgy began in European theatre in the 1800's, and it became well established in theatres of the twentieth century, first in Germany, then England, France, and America. Early dramaturgs scouted playwrights on behalf of theatrical institutions by reading, adapting, and promoting either new or reinvented classical plays. These plays were chosen based on their appropriateness for a given theater or a director's capacity and vision, as well as for the particularities of a given audience (Cattaneo 1997, 3). In recent history, the responsibilities of a dramaturg have expanded to include refined analysis and research of the content of plays and the background and intention of playwrights, and dramaturgs have been integrated into a number of different working capacities. Dramaturgical methods were first adopted by choreographers in the post-modern dance era of the late Twentieth Century.

Anne Cattaneo, dramaturg for New York's Lincoln Center Theatre as of 2014, provides an introductory history and overview of dramaturgy in both Europe and America, which delineates its several evolved branches and applications to current theatre production in America, as part of the 1997 anthology, *Dramaturgy in American Theatre*. In this chapter, Cattaneo introduces readers to the standard American dramaturg's several modes of operation as an editor, translator, researcher, historian, critic, mediator, muse, and expert on popular culture, citing the role of dramaturg as "probably the most

intellectual or academic position in the theatre” (1997, 14). While modern dramaturgy has the capacity to make many unique contributions to a creative production process, the foundation of dramaturgy is based on factual evidence or textual support from which a translation into dramatic themes can develop. This primary function of dramaturgy has evolved, and become not only useful, but also innovative through its interdisciplinary inclusion in other fields and art forms, particularly in the field of dance. There have been many examples of dramaturgy in collaboration with contemporary choreographers in the last thirty years. Dance dramaturgy has evolved into its own unique field, involving not only the study of background, historical topics, themes, and inspirational sources, but integrative approaches which assist, and redefine the choreographer’s interpretive process.

In the summer of 2013, the Canadian Theatre Review released a special issue, dedicated to the topic of current dance dramaturgy scholarship, partially as a response to a recent Canadian dance dramaturgy conference, which yielded documentation of many reputable theories from emerging experts on this still evolving field. What follows are discussions of three different articles from this 2013 issue. Collectively, these articles offer perspectives from 1) an acting director of the first dance dramaturgy program in the history of academia, 2) a long-time active dramaturg and author on the subject, and 3) a choreographer turned dramaturg and his company’s experiment of adaptation.

In his article for this issue on dance dramaturgy, Darcey Callison, director of the first dance dramaturgy MFA program in North America, frames a question that he has found valuable to the dance community. Callison asks, “at this time in history, why have the facilitative functions of a dance dramaturg emerged as a primary element in the

creation, production, and dissemination of contemporary choreography?” His immediate response is that there are, in fact, “as many answers to this revised question as there are potential choreographers or choreographic ideas”. Because there is such a broad and variable spectrum of dramaturgical input into the current choreographic sphere, Callison devotes this article to “the critical thinking that culminated in the inclusion of dance dramaturgy as a field of practice-based research” in the MFA program at York University (2013, 25).

Callison identifies distinct positions a choreographer might take in working with a dramaturg, while acknowledging the myriad of possible choreographer/dramaturg relationships. Perhaps the reader’s clearest window into the nature of such a relationship is in Callison’s description of dance dramaturgs’ potential roles in working with a choreographer, who may call on them “to collaborate; to research an idea; to witness the process; to act as memory; to document creative findings; or to be a friend, a co-creator, a listener, or an advisor” (2013, 27).

“Moving Thoughts” is a collection of reflections and observations by Bruce Barton, a working dance dramaturg. The author shares some of his own strategies, employed in the act of collaboration. Bruce Barton wrote and co-wrote a total of three articles in this Summer 2013 issue of the Canadian Theatre Review. All three share specific dramaturgical practices. These practical descriptions of applied methods in a choreographic process are valuable for scholars and choreographers who are interested in integrating dramaturgy into dance practices.

Barton’s reflections on his role as dramaturg for creative projects by Canadian dance and theatre companies such as Toronto Theatre Gargantua, Bluemouth Inc., and

Kaeja d'Dance offer insight into this dance dramaturg's imaginative contributions to a variety of choreographic processes. Examples of these contributions include researching and then designing movement and improvisational exercises around established themes, "facilitating strategies" wherein "dancers can discover individual perspectives on the received choreography", and framing audience feedback in constructive ways for performers (2013, 44).

Also in the Dance Dramaturgy edition of the Canadian Theatre Review, Michael Trent and Dancemakers chronicle their experience employing methods of dramaturgical research in the re-creation of a historical event through adaptation. The event, or "object" as Trent perceived it, was a dance performance from the 1970's, which was not archived through video documentation. This process of adaptation "was akin to an archaeological dig" (2013, 65). Michael Trent describes the initial research as "gently brushing away the multiple layers of the dance's known artifacts" in order to establish what he refers to as "the adapted text", or the images, symbols, and known movement vocabularies of the existing source, forming discoveries which he says he and his collaborators responded to through improvisation. The seed of adaptation grew to take on a life of its own, as more decisions and discoveries were made given the immediate stimulus, feedback, and circumstances that presented themselves along the way.

Trent makes a point to distinguish this adaptation project as one that exists within the same medium of dance, from start to finish. In the case of my own thesis research, which also applies dramaturgical research and strategies to adaptation, there is a change in medium, from a literary textual source to the resultant dance theatre product.

There has been an ample amount of scholarship regarding dramaturgy's changing

role and dance dramaturgy, in particular. Two essays on this topic have particularly informed my research interest: Lehman Hans Theis' and Patrick Primavesi's "Dramaturgy on Shifting Grounds", in which the authors analyze dramaturgy's presence in the choreographic process through a lens of technology, and Heidi Gilpin's "Shaping Critical Spaces: Issues in Dramaturgy of Movement Performance", in which the dance dramaturg and author presents theories based on her work with William Forsythe.

In Hans-Theis and Primavesi's article, "Dramaturgy on Shifting Grounds", the authors attribute interdisciplinary shifts in contemporary dramaturgy to innovations in technology and perception. The authors identify a major contemporary challenge for dance artists practicing dramaturgy today and into the future: how are the inherent themes of a dance and the spectator's experience of the dance impacted by the increased use of technology in theatre. They discuss the use and depiction of the human body in mass media and how connotations and perceptions of the body impact an audience's experience of dance. Hans-Theis and Primavesi suggest that contemporary dramaturgy's role is changing to address not only the "elaborated movement" of a dance, but also how certain "physical and spatial relations", such as the distance and positioning of dancers in relation to the audience, influence spectator perception (2009, 5). Lastly, the authors discuss the potential for theatre and dance to be viewed through a political lens, thus exemplifying the multilayered thematic structure a choreography can embody, as well as the complex responsibility of a dramaturgical practice to identify the presence of these themes and to research their origins and associations. My research, in line with this article, involves the changing, rather than the traditional role of dramaturgy, by shifting dramaturgy's translation of text from the language of drama, to the language of dance.

In her essay, “Shaping Critical Spaces: Issues in Dramaturgy of Movement Performance”, Heidi Gilpin, dramaturg for William Forsythe, examines late twentieth century representations of the dramaturgy of movement performance in critical and theoretical fields. Gilpin identifies several contemporary choreographers who have researched dramaturgical incorporation within the creative and rehearsal process, citing Pina Bausch as the first known explorer into this interdisciplinary realm. Gilpin compares the nature of dramatic performance with that of dance, paying special attention to the multidisciplinary content of dance, which she evidences to be more complex than theatre in terms of its number of “performative languages” (1997, 84). Despite dance’s complexity and potential for various interpretations, Gilpin asserts that dance is the least understood by audiences and critics alike, in terms of analysis. While she considers possibilities for this lack of articulation and comprehension, Gilpin ultimately advocates for innovation in dance analysis, citing multidisciplinary approaches as a potential solution to the dance art form’s inherent “longing” for “permanence in any field of representation”(1997, 86). Lastly, the author suggests that efficient analysis and representation of performance, particularly movement performance, is dependent upon the development of memory and reliable documentation, due to the fact that a live performance vanishes from the tangible realm once it is over. In light of Gilpin’s assertions, I believe there is a need for clear documentation of dance dramaturgy practices, in order to foster public recognition of dance’s versatility and potential applications within other fields of study.

Interdisciplinary Choreographic Process

Choreography is a complex synthesis of many separate creative actions, and it often shares compositional elements with other modes of artistic organization and design. The following two essays provide examples, demonstrating 1) a complex aesthetic relationship between dance, art, and language, and 2) the value of establishing universal concepts and shared meanings in the communication between two interacting artistic mediums.

In *Defigurative Choreography: From Marcel Duchamp to Forsythe*, Gabrielle Brandstetter defines the multiple representations of “the figure” in artistic and choreographic language, and then demonstrates how artists deconstruct the preconceived structure of their art form through their own theories and modes of creating. Brandstetter exposes William Forsythe’s complex relationship with texts, words, and forms by examining aspects of his practice in developing his notable works from the late Twentieth Century. The author demonstrates through Forsythe’s own words or selected quotations, how the choreographer seeks to deconstruct existing figures and symbols through a variety of different approaches to dance making, which are often rooted in improvisation. Brandstetter parallels Forsythe’s poststructuralist theories with those of the great early Twentieth Century artist, Marcel Duchamp, whose painting on glass, *The Bride Stripped Bare, By Her Bachelors, Even* is infused with great meaning, beginning with its title. The title of this piece is analyzed as a text that supports the defigurative choreography present in the composition of Duchamp’s art piece. Like the forms present in Forsythe’s choreographies, Duchamp’s title and painting deconstruct the unspoken tradition of a linear, logical narrative. According to the author, in Forsythe’s *Self Meant to Govern*, the

choreographer encourages dancers to form their own language and replace it with traditional ballet code, from which he sources sentences and specific words in developing structured and chance movement improvisations. Forsythe then creates a system wherein dancers are supplied with the prompt of a certain letter of the alphabet, and each letter represents movement terminology in their newly formed “language”. While Brandstetter makes only brief reference to Forsythe’s experience working with a dramaturg in the choreographic process, she sheds much light upon the reasons why this unique working relationship is beneficial in Forsythe’s methodology, which, while rampant with textual and symbolic sourcing, is not itself easily “read”.

In a chapter of the anthology, *Collective Creativity: Collaborative Work in the Sciences, Literature, and the Arts*, Gabriele Fois-Kaschel utilizes the Greek terms 1) mimesis (representation, mimicry), 2) deixis (display, demonstration), and 3) poesis (creation, making). The author posits that these three terms have universal meanings, which transcend categorical and terminological separations of meaning in individual aesthetic forms, thus assembling a basic common language for analysis of synergetic art production. Fois-Kaschel focuses on choreography’s potential for “collective appropriation”, maintaining that, in recent history, “choreography has thus become a paradigm for modern artists, for the literary avant-garde and their precursors, as well as for most of the twentieth century experiments in collective art production.” (2011, 87). Fois-Kaschel examines the presence of mimesis (representation/imitation), deixis (communication/gesture) and poesis (creation/existence) in dance, citing examples of choreographic artists and critics who clearly addressed these forms in their work. These three Greek root words, which are terms often used in literary analysis, are made

accessible to the realm of choreography through Fois-Kaschel's reasoning. In fact, the author cites dance as a supreme example of their clear and active presence in art making. Fois-Kaschel reasons that "by making visible the aesthetic appearance of immediacy, vitality, and universality, dance might turn out to be a better means in the pursuit of organic forms of cognition and meaning than any kind of discursive thought."(2011, 90).

Kurt Vonnegut: Biography and Analysis

This category documents two biographical texts, *Unstuck in Time: A Journey Through Kurt Vonnegut's Life and Novels*, and *And So It Goes- Kurt Vonnegut: A Life*. Both texts informed my literary analysis, dramaturgical research, and choreographic process in this thesis study. A third Vonnegut text I utilized as the source for my adaptation, *While Mortals Sleep*, is a compilation of previously unpublished Vonnegut short fiction from the 1950's, written early in his career. From this recently published collection, I chose the story "Girl Pool" as a source of experimentation and thesis preparation, and the story "Hundred Dollar Kisses", which is the source text of this thesis study.

In reviewing the author's background and potential inspirations behind "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", I selected two differing perspectives on Kurt Vonnegut's life. The first, "Unstuck in Time: A Journey Through Kurt Vonnegut's Life and Novels", straddles the fence between literary analysis and biography, repeatedly addressing aspects of Vonnegut's life and art through the lens of a particular novel. Each chapter in "Unstuck in Time" is dedicated to one of the late author's literary works, citing excerpts of text to support fact and theory regarding Vonnegut's unique outlook on life, naturally

regarded as a product of his experiences. “And So It Goes, Kurt Vonnegut: A Life” is a biography of the man’s life from birth to death, sharing and exploring known facts about his life experiences and family history.

While neither text addresses the collection of posthumously published short stories in which I found the subjects for my pre-thesis experiment and thesis project, both texts do allude to the time period in the author’s life in which these stories were written, framing this time with relevant life events and influences. Along with the documentary video footage from the BBC *Arena* series, in which Vonnegut himself speaks about the motivations behind these early stories, I was able to better assess a sense of tone and purpose, which did translate into the adapted choreography. For example, because these stories were destined for mass consumption in weekly or monthly magazines, they were tailored for popular appeal, while still maintaining Vonnegut’s artistic voice and values. In light of this, I similarly incorporated elements of popular entertainment value into the content of my artistic product.

“And So It Goes” offers an intimate look into Vonnegut’s ancestry, childhood, adolescence, and disastrous entry into adulthood, which is chronicled as a bi-polar transition from the anti-establishmentarianism that contributed to his failure in college, to the extreme conformity and duty required of him as a soldier in the midst of chaos and tragedy in World War II. Vonnegut’s re-emergence into society, then marriage, fatherhood, and a writing career provides the perfect backstory for my work as choreographer turned literary analyst and acting dramaturg. These biographies aided me in making a deeper connection to the text of the literary work chosen for adaptation.

5) Source Materials for Dramaturgical Research:

Source materials which I accessed and utilized in the creative and rehearsal process include 1) Gottfried Geist's 1983 documentary, *Kurt Vonnegut*, for the BBC series *Arena*, 2) a video excerpt from Vonnegut's popular lecture he delivered on the college circuit in the early 1980's, entitled *The Shapes of Stories*, and 3) obscure excerpts of public service announcements from the 1950's era, including topics of feminine hygiene and etiquette, workplace and secretarial etiquette, and the career of court reporting. Elements from these videos created frameworks for movement generation in rehearsal. For example, the elaborate pathways that Vonnegut draws on a chalkboard in *The Shapes of Stories* became a directional pathway that dancers moved through spatially in the artistic product.

Summary

This review of related works gives definition to the rising current of scholarship regarding dance's connection to literary and symbolic forms, dramaturgy's evolving partnership with choreographers' worldwide, and the diverse potential for synergetic research and dialogue within the spectrum of the arts. While I have represented a collection of written works which reveals what topics and foci are trending in the relevant realms of this research, I do believe that dance currently sustains underrepresentation within a network of arts, all of which share common aesthetic principles, and, thus, potential for artistic integration. Because of this, and my personal fascination with creating or referencing real, fictitious, or literary human characters in my artistic process, I wholly embraced the opportunity to establish and share an interdisciplinary connection within the fields of literature, theatre, and dance through my thesis study. As a scholar

who holds degrees in both Dance and English Literature, with a significant background working as a choreographer for theatre, I pursued this interdisciplinary line of inquiry from a basis of experiential knowledge, and with support from the existing scholarship represented in my “Review of Literature”.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Charles Russell suggests that “ a comparative methodology needs to account for the real differences in the media while identifying the affinities that justify the comparison” (2003, 29). In consideration of the need to delineate between the three creative modes of literature, theatre, and dance present in this thesis study, I have clearly separated each individual process within my total methods. Ultimately, this thesis document will provide analysis of the intricate nature of this collaboration, and the impact of this fusion on the artistic product.

The choreographic process is an ongoing one, existing as a constant throughout this study. Each individual component from the involved fields of literature and theatre, included as structured research documents in this Methods chapter under the sections entitled “Structured Literary Analysis”, and “Dramaturgical Research and Application”, yielded unique choreographic impulses, the practical application of which I have documented in the section entitled “Choreographic Process: Rehearsal Documentation”. In order to clearly communicate the structure and timeline of my interdisciplinary research, designed with the aim of creating a dance adaptation of the short fiction, “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, I will outline my general methods for each approach, listed in separate categories: “Literary Analysis”, “Dramaturgical Research” and “Choreographic Process”. After this outline of categories, the structured research documents will follow.

Literary Analysis

I conducted and documented a literary analysis for the Vonnegut short fiction “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, from the book, *While Mortals Sleep*. I completed this in the summer of 2013, during which I also confirmed the casting of dancers to be a part of this process and performance. In reading, I analyzed for meaning, and to discover possible choreographic properties, such as pace, energy, movement, momentum, quality. I also sought to interpret the text’s spatial, emotional, and physical relationships within the frame of the following five categories:

- 1) Character- a person or thing that has distinct traits and/or features, which define he/she/it as an individual entity.
- 2) Setting- physical context, including the historical time period, the geographic location, and immediately surrounding elements of the characters in a narrative.
- 3) Motif- a repeated theme in a narrative or abstract composition which holds significance, either meaningful or conceptual; a recurring element that has symbolic significance in a story.
- 4) Theme- the main idea present within the wholeness of a composition, either narrative or abstract.
- 5) Tone- the attitude and feeling of a composition.

Dramaturgical Research

Dramaturgical research began after the initiation of literary analysis at the end of the summer, and was completed in late Fall 2013. I have listed the steps in this process, below:

1) I read “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, reviewed the literary analysis, took notes, and formed initial dramaturgical analysis, by which I translated the text into dramatic themes.

2) I identified the tone of the story, as an overall vision for the interpretation of the fiction text.

3) I formed a digital diagram identifying main ideas and themes of the text and a digital casebook in the form of a Powerpoint presentation depicting key words and images.

4) I researched the author’s background.

5) I researched the background (time, place, and people) of the story.

6) I found no existing literary reviews or adaptations of the story.

7) I researched related artistic products addressing similar topics or the same “world”.

8) I organized the results of this research and shared it with the cast and collaborators.

9) During the production process, I kept a journal that addressed these concerns:

a) Is the initial tone and vision previously established intact, or altered?

b) How, if at all, are the key images and elements of the story represented?

c) How, if at all, are the author’s intentions represented in this new medium?

10) The last dramaturgical considerations in this process of adaptation were considered in reference to the dance adaptation’s impact on the audience experience. One important role a dramaturg plays in a theatrical production process is that of an unbiased observer, and, consequently, as an initiator of dialogue about potential audience perception. Since I applied these principles myself, as if taking on the dramaturg role, I additionally utilized observations of a third party, in order to assess what Hans-Theis and Primavesi referred to as the “physical and spatial relations” which influence spectator perception (2009, 5).

Choreographic Process

This imaginative process was sparked often as I conducted literary analysis of the short story through a choreographic lens, and solidified into dramatic themes during my dramaturgical research, but the manifestation of embodied choreographic generation was at the start of Fall 2013, when I began rehearsal with the dancers who agreed to be a part of this research and performance. The process of choreographic generation was complete by the middle of February, 2014, when the post-production technical concerns became a focus prior to the performance in early March. Rehearsals took place on the weekend, in a dance department studio space for two hours every Saturday afternoon, from 12-2pm, with some exceptions, for the duration of the Fall term, and into the first half of the Winter term. At that point, studio theatre space was used for purposes of technical and dress rehearsals, which took place on the evenings of Wednesday, March 5th, and Thursday, March 6th.

In developing movement material, spatial, temporal, and visual/audio/theatrical contexts for this dance theatre adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's short fiction, "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", I kept a journal and employed video documentation of my process as a tool to later describe the creative act of generating choreography in response to the text. I also kept an informal catalogue of various movement themes in the choreography, which I titled for memory, based on their inspirational source, function, or quality. These titles gave literary, or textual, significance to the movement itself, and allowed me to write or speak about certain moments in the choreography, in a way that would be clear for any member of the post-performance discussion, and which would be identifiable for those conducting analysis of the choreography from any perspective, or field of inquiry.

The artistic product, itself, is a unique form of literary criticism, as interpreted through the medium of dance. This artistic product was presented at the Dougherty Dance Theatre, on Friday, March 7th, at 8:00pm, and it was open to discussion and analysis from attending students and professionals of any field, including literature, theatre, dance, and cultural studies, whom I invited to the one time performance and post performance discussion. It is my hope that inviting scholars from related fields aids in the promotion of dance as a legitimate and valuable branch of academia with unlimited potential to interact with other areas of study on an intellectual level. In this endeavor, I furthered Heidi Gilpin's advocacy for interdisciplinary approaches to analysis as a solution to the dance art form's "longing" for "permanence in any field of representation" (1997, 86). My resultant contemporary dance work progressed Ellen Goellner and Jacqueline Shea-Murphy's cited "movement" of "cross disciplinary, literary-dance investigations" into the current era, acting as evidence of dance's potential to be an integral participant in collective dialogue and academic research. (1995, 8).

What follows is documentation of the research conducted and applied in alignment with the aforementioned guidelines. I have separated these stages of adaptation into three clear categories, "Structured Literary Analysis", "Dramaturgical Research and Application", and "Choreographic Process: Rehearsal Documentation". These methodologies are collective parts of a total interdisciplinary process, engaged in the creation of my dance theatre adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's short fiction work, "Hundred Dollar Kisses."

Structured Literary Analysis

I. A Structured Literary Analysis Through a Choreographic Lens: Kurt Vonnegut's

Hundred Dollar Kisses (Analysis Completed in Fall 2013)

- A) Character- a person or thing that has distinct traits and/or features, which define he/she/it as an individual entity.
- 1) General Meaning: The characters in this story are not specified to be from a certain time period, but I have limited the period to the late 1950's into the early 1960's, given the fact that there is evidence which indicates that this is the time period in which the author wrote the story. I will now present a general analysis of all incorporated characters in this story. Three characters are in the "present" in the context of the story: a) Henry George Lovell- the protagonist, b) Detective Sargent George Miller- the "present" antagonist, and c) the reporting secretary. The significant characters of the "past events" in the context of the story are a) Henry George Lovell, who, as the main character and narrator of past events, is the only character in the "present" and "past" action of the story, b) Verne Petrie, the "past" antagonist, c) Harry Barker, the martyr or Christ-like character of the story, and d) Patty Lee Minot, the plot/conflict driving character outside the office culture, representing the "anti-woman", "anti-goodness", or anti-Christ of the story. There is also the "chorus" of the past events, which is made up of all of the other undefined characters in the office, including the "phantom", or "imagined" absent character of Miss Hackleman. What follows is my analysis of each defined main and supporting character, according to each of the choreographic

properties. An important note relevant to the performance outcomes in the practical employment of this choreographic analysis is the variable of the individual performers, themselves. Especially because I was working with advanced, trained dancers, as opposed to skilled character actors, individual personalities and energetic styles of movement and expression affect the total portrayal of these applied characterizations and literary themes as well as the decisions I made as a director and choreographer.

2) Choreographic Properties

a) Pace/Energy: An overall pace of this story is understood through dramaturgical research into the time period, which is first generalized, in regard to the temporal perception of the people of that time, as slightly slower than today, due to evidence of a slightly “longer” attention span than those of the current era. Also, perhaps more controlled in quality, due to evidence that suggests there was a slightly greater influence of public/social etiquette and decorum in the 1950’s era. This “slower”, more “controlled” pace and quality may be a dramatically effective “status quo” for the chorus onstage, from which more energetic, sporadic, and generally more specific emotional movement qualities can burst forth in the form of the “highlighted” and more defined main and supporting characters.

b) Movement/Momentum: There are some clear cues for actions, movement, and momentum in this story. The conversation question-and-answer format of the entire story has a back and forth, and overlapping

momentum. The assumed typing action of a reporting secretary has a constant, flowing momentum, with staccato rhythms. The interrogation aspect has a repetitive momentum. The repetitive questioning is likely in the aim of measuring accuracy. A question has a leading, prompting, or pushing action implied in its inherent nature. Each answer may stop the momentum of the questioning action, or it can increase the momentum, or exactly meet the momentum, or drop the momentum in response. The grouping of words, phrases, and sentences of the story often have a repetitive rhythm when read, with the exception of exclamatory statements. Verbs in the story give direct movement cues. Some of these are “threatened, offered, assault, strike, competing, smokes, spends, smears, smathers, gnashes, rub, listening, ringing, sneezed, whined, continue, etc.”

- c) Quality/Emotion: The sense of the characters could perhaps be more controlled in quality, due to evidence of a slightly greater influence of public/social etiquette and decorum. Emotional expression, however, may be potently unique per each individual character, who, in this era of the late 1950’s, early 1960’s, may have experienced less homogenous social influences than the current era, due to greater ties to individual cultures and customs of their families’ countries of origin, as well as less of a global, or “blanketed” influence of media and popular culture. This could translate into more visible, individualized character personality quirks onstage.

d) Spatial/Physical: The “present” action takes place in the small and tense setting of a police office or interrogation room. The “past” action of the story takes place in a spacious, though structurally compartmentalized office setting which is high from the ground, in a circular tower. The circular shape of the office means that there is a slight curve to the aesthetic, and a curve in the pathway of long distance movement/action. The interrogation room has a closed, triangular composition, due to the presence of three people in a confined space. Because a room is archetypically a square, the action takes place in a triangular composition within a square space. It is a triangle inside a square. The tense, volatile, and overlapping nature of police interrogation, and conversation in general, disrupts this concept of definite shape, and creates a constant variable in spatial orientation in the mind’s eye of the reader, as well as the plain visual of this theatrical scene. The physical implications of character will be compounded by the presence of one lady stenographer, represented by two female performers, moving, at times, in exact synchronicity.

B) Setting- physical context, including the historical time period, the geographic location, and immediately surrounding elements of the characters in a narrative.

1) General Meaning: This office environment fosters a sense of efficiency, sharp corners, only revealing frayed edges or complete unraveling of movement, in terms of direction, shape, line, and intention, when an office member, or member of interrogation act in a police office, has a moment of logical solace,

or privacy, away from the gaze of a supervisor or co-worker/equal party or interrogator.

2) Choreographic Properties

- a) Pace/Energy: “Office efficiency” energy is thorough and concise, pace is moderate, and gauged toward optimum productivity. Police interrogation pace and energy could follow that which is found and measured in “Dragnet”, a popular detective television series from the 1950’s, as well as through documentary footage of real interrogation. The first mentioned would be quick and constant, while at times unexpected and explosive, while the latter would be based on an actual occurrence. One actual occurrence of documented interrogation I viewed was conducted in low tones, with steadily applied pressures, and a sense of empathy for the person being interrogated. There were very long pauses where the person being interrogated was left “alone” while still with the understanding that there was the constant possibility of surveillance. This could be represented through long slow pauses of virtual inactivity in silence, contrasted with a steady, low energy rhythm of small, but building pressures.
- b) Movement/Momentum: Adapted momentum of the story could mimic the flow or plot diagram of the story. Plot is a series of related events that present or bring about the resolution of some conflict. Momentum may follow the order of the plot diagram, in terms of the overall scheme of the dance- Exposition, Rising Action (a kind of upward slope), Climax (a kind

of culmination to a discernable, mostly “singular” point/moment, Conflict Resolution (a steep downward hill), and The End.

- c) Quality/Emotion: There is an assumed sense of tension in interrogation, but I believe this protagonist has already accepted that he doesn't care about expectation or convention anymore, in the face of a moral “monster”. He has already broken code, and he has accepted his fate, but feels he has some agency in the fact that his motive was driven by an inner fight between what he views as good and evil. Thereby, emotional quality on his part may be resigned, indignant, honest, unaffected, or adamant, with perhaps some periodic lapses which reorient him with his innate sense of judgment, and the reality of his situation.
- e) Spatial/Physical: The office environment is in a unique “circular tower”, so spatial orientation is circular. Police department is a small, square room. The spatial/physical implications of the Circle Tower office environment could be rounded and arms length apart, with the exception of representations of the office antagonist character of Mr. Petrie, who will not recognize appropriate distance/professional personal space. Within the office circle, are arrangements of cubicle squares. Within the interrogation room, where the office action is described, there is a much smaller, and squarer space than that of the office, and so all the roundness and personal space demonstrations on the part of the protagonist will be done in a more “cramped” environment. The physical space within the established onstage setting is also inhabited by the character of the lady stenographer.

C) Motif- a repeated theme in a narrative or abstract composition which holds significance, either meaningful or conceptual; a recurring element that has symbolic significance in a story.

1) General Meaning: A general motif in this story is the use of threes in composition, and the literal repetition of the number three, as related to multiple facts supplied within the story, for example, Henry is 33, has three females in his immediate family, “everyone in the office is on line 3”, Verne holds up 3 fingers, sometimes Verne Petrie comes back from lunch with three pornographic magazines, and Henry weighs 123 pounds. Because Kurt Vonnegut is a humorist, there is also a repeated use of the comedic rule of three in the rhythm of the conversation. Example: 1) man A states a fact, man B questions that fact, and then man A states the fact again. Example from the text:

A: Cumberbunds

Q: Pardon me? What was that last? Cumberbunds?

A: That’s another thing they have articles on. Cumberbunds.

There is a repetition of names in the story. Both Henry and the Detective Sargent Miller share the name George in their names, which is plainly mentioned. Also, the janitor, Harry Barker, has a first name which is a derivative of the name Henry. It is possible the author is indicating some connection between the protagonist and these supporting characters that drives the plot, and the conversation that makes up the structure of the story. These

three could all be considered the “good guys” in the story. We empathize with Henry and Harry, and the detective is just doing his job, in the aim of serving justice. Around the time this story was likely written, a supercomputer named GEORGE was invented (1957). This was a major interest for Kurt Vonnegut, who spent some years working at General Electric headquarters, and marveling at technological advancements. Personified robots and computers is a recurring theme in his stories. GEORGE, the computer, was built for the special purpose of programming language. Additionally, a simple humanoid robot, also named George, was built in 1949 from the wreckage of a British Air Force Bomber. War, robots, and the contrast between human communication and technology are three recurring themes in Vonnegut’s writing. These themes could have been hinted at through his repeated use of the name George, especially given the proximity of these inventions with the time period in which the story was constructed.

The motif of the stereotypically “ideal” woman, as contrasted with corruption of that image is also repeated, as both a casual reference, and as a main theme and the thrust of the conflict in the story.

There is a repeated use of animal imagery to describe human appearance, feeling, and action in the story. For example: “piggy little eyes”, “front teeth like a beaver”, “colder than a mackerel”, and the description of Verne’s repeated “whining”, which is dog-like in nature. Harry Barker’s angst, demonstrated through the character “showing his teeth, and gnashing them all around”, is also animalistic. This description is a more common way

to describe a wild animal, but here it is used to imply that the character is fighting back raw emotion. Lastly, Henry repeatedly uses the action word “smather” or “smear” to describe his forced exposure to the nude pictures of women. To summarize, clear motifs are 1) The name George, 2) the number three, 3) feminine ideal/corruption 4) animal/human traits, 5) the word “smather” or “smear”.

2) Choreographic Properties

- a) Pace/Energy: The motif of “George”, considered to be a connection between all men, the masculine identity, or the robot GEORGE, could have exaggerated masculine stereotypes, or robotic/machine like functions, so slow and controlled pace/energy, vs. abrupt and quick pace with starts and stops. In the choreography of the artistic product, these elements of energy and pace were put into action. For example, the dancer who represents the main character is compartmentalized like a machine by his dance partner, who represents the detective character in the story. He also performs gestures that represent a contrast between stereotypical behaviors of femininity and masculinity at the start of the dance piece.
- b) Movement/Momentum: The consistent momentum for this story has been determined based on the Question and Answer dialogue structure, and connections to two seemingly unrelated sources, which are coincidental to the time period, characters, and location of the story: Dragnet, a popular detective drama series in the 1950’s and 1960’s which was known for its rapid and steady dialogue, and the Indianapolis 500, a

large circular racetrack which is what I feel the city of Indianapolis is best known for in American popular culture. These influences could inspire circular movements, back and forth movement series between two performers, with few “conversational” pauses. Additionally, the verb “smather” could imply steady and rapid movement in a swirling “S” pattern, or a “figure eight” pattern, which starts high or level, and is driven lower and lower. An appropriate reminder for this motif section is the fact that every choice of action verb that the author has chosen is its own motif, acting as an exact cue for movement and momentum.

- c) Quality/Emotion: Each motif has the capacity for qualitative and emotional embodiment choreographically. For example, it has been suggested that the simple, seemingly abstract act of a repetition in three can evoke a feeling of humor in audiences. Additionally, achieving an absolute absence of emotion in performance of the motif of “GEORGE” (robotics) or “animal” (predator) would also be an emotional/qualitative choice. The motif of feminine ideal vs. corruption could be fertile ground for an exploration of emotional/qualitative dynamics or opposition, as would the idea of the contrast between George, the “every” man, and GEORGE the computer. For example, the abstract representation of emotion vs. absence of emotion, or, more specifically, nurturing and empathetic vs. cold and calculating. Sexual conservatism and romantic mystery vs. unapologetic sexuality and exploitation.
- d) Spatial/Physical: The motif of the use of “three”, implies a triangular

composition, as well as a comedic timing, thus a proscenium configuration of performers to audience spatial/physical relationship, additionally an unevenness, a spatial oddness in the configuration of performers. The motif of the word “smather” or “smear” gives an emphasis on the messiness, or chaotic destruction of an established order, which can be spatially and physically represented through multiple and unpredictable facings of the performers in relation to the audience, perhaps a borderline improvisational “embodiment” by the performers, of what it would be to smear the physical structure of their dance partner into the floor, as though it were a desperate act to save their own lives. This act references the more raw possibilities of the “animal trait” motif, creating a sense of established symbiosis, then unabashed survival, resulting in a depiction of physical carnage.

- D) Theme- the main idea present within the wholeness of a composition, either narrative or abstract.
- 1) General Meaning: General themes in “Hundred-Dollar Kisses” are dialogue, social/legal structure, sexuality/sexual harassment, gender stereotypes, feminine ideal vs. feminine corruption, morality, neurosis/perversion, office culture/etiquette, action vs. consequence, established status quo, “every man’s” plight, unlikely heroes/villains of the mundane.
 - 2) Choreographic Properties
 - a) Pace/Energy: “Office efficiency” energy and pace has already been determined as thorough, concise, moderate, and gauged toward optimum

productivity. These elements of pace and energy were incorporated into the artistic product to reflect the mundane, efficient, and non-expressive form of the office culture through the lady stenographer, contrasted with accelerated pace and tension during the rising action between the main character and the detective, with a constant acknowledgement of a Q&A dialogue rhythm. Feminine ideal and corruption could present itself in slow and mysterious pace and energy, then abstractly “corrupt” itself through unexpected breaks of deconstructed rhythm and tempo. “Every man’s” plight in the context of a theatrical performance, could be well referenced through incorporation of some blues or country music incorporation, which audiences would identify in association with popular perception of that genre of music and its general intention. A sultry blues or female ballad from the era of the 1950’s could also call upon associations of sexuality and sexual tabu. An interesting question for this adaptation is “does morality have a pace, energy, momentum, spatial orientation?” This question is appropriate, given that a sense of base morality is a major theme in this story, and the motivation for the conflict that the protagonist, Henry George Lovell, experiences in the story. Morality could potentially be recognizable as a constant and sure rhythm or pace, while our unlikely hero would show determination and drive, thus a relentless, driving rhythm and pace which has some cohesive or positive resolution in its form.

- b) Movement/Momentum: The unlikely hero has been identified through

driving, directional movements and constant momentum, even in the face of adversity or the obstruction of contact with another character, as well as through noble or “honest” pedestrian gesture. The established “status quo” and the mundane would be well represented through recognizable and unremarkable gestures and slight movements while sitting and reflecting, or walking in a pedestrian manner. The momentum would rise and movements would involve sporadic contact with a “dialogue” partner, would be repetitive and driving as an unlikely hero determines his moral purpose, and would either overlap between two dancers (dialogue partners) or reflect a call and response through either gradually developing or sudden and quick bursts of movement with intermittent pauses. Sexuality and sexual tabu might be present in movement performance as intimate contact between two established “strangers”, or symbiotic, yet unfamiliar subjects. Neurosis can be identified through repetitive, brief movements and momentum of a violent or erratic nature. The theme of “action vs. consequence” has potential for a rich representation through movement and momentum in the contact sphere between two dance partners, as well as a series of seemingly disjointed movements and gestures which, when set in motion one after the other, starts a chain reaction. Also, this quality could be realized through movement and gesture that causes a build in momentum, which resolves in a consequence to the dancer, such as unwanted contact or restraint. The result could even be a lackluster consequence, such as mere shortness of breath or the

absence of a clear result, suggesting futility.

- c) Quality/Emotion: Gender associations in movement can be perceived through emotional qualities, or the suggestion of certain qualities. For example, the male character exuding a passivity or submissive quality, or the female exuding less emotion than the male, or emanating power and control in her performance can cause audiences to realize the power of stereotypes in a non verbal and abstract plane. Such a realization can call upon an existing concept, which is deeply mentally engrained, as opposed to superficial in its impact on perception. The specific relationships between dancers in both duets of this adaptation are 1) the interrogator and the apprehended man, and 2) the two symbiotic halves of one employee/office culture representative. Both relationship dynamics rely heavily on emotional and qualitative aspects of movement. For example, all parties engage in specific facial expression, or a purposeful absence of facial expression. The detective is stern, often with a poker face approach to interaction, at times responding with tolerance, intrigue, calculation, or subtle confusion. The apprehended man, the protagonist and “unlikely hero” of this story and adaptation, must exude apprehension, moral determination, sexual tension, violent reaction, empathy, pity, anger, and pedestrian familiarity, all the while explaining and defending his position.
- d) Spatial/Physical: Themes of feminine ideal vs. corruption, or gender stereotypes can be identified in terms of the proximity in distance or level between a female character and a partner or counterpart. For example, the

act of a man and woman “slow dancing” or “social dancing” in reverse roles, in terms of posture and framing, or a representation of dominance through physical representation in levels and planes, such as a female looming over a male, or simply interacting in a higher level plane with a man. The 1950’s etiquette videos and public service announcements I viewed as part of my dramaturgical research demonstrated that the women of this era were encouraged to seek balance, perfection, organization, exquisite grooming, and to generally exist within the specific guidelines of a patriarchal social code, or established status quo. The two symbiotic halves of one lady stenographer, represented in performance adaptation by two female dancers, create spatial and physical references to the expectations for a woman of this era. They are in exact and close proximity to one another, their spatial properties, for example, the negative space between them and their surroundings stays uniform and predictable throughout performance. They are so close in proximity but never entwine limbs or make eye contact with one another, or physically “interact”. This constant orientation and synchronicity of two visually and physically unique individuals calls upon the era’s gender stereotypes, and may cause audiences to reflect on existing reverberations of these ideas.

- E) Tone- the attitude and feeling of a composition.
 - 1) General Meaning: Dark humor, slapstick, and American folly contrasted with morality, humanity, and hope. These are some descriptors of Vonnegut’s general tone. The author’s tone often echoes a faint nod to popular culture

amidst the timeless plight of “every man”, while presenting a memorable and atypical series of scenarios, which bring this plight sharply to light. In a Vonnegut story, the character’s inner thought patterns are strategically splayed upon the page without apology or explanation. It seems the reader is to assume that the details of this character’s inner life and actions are shared by all humanity. The existing absurdity of untethered reality, as well as man’s earnest but often futile response through attempts at negotiating established social structures, rules, and a revered “status quo” are all fodder for Vonnegut’s absolutist tone. This tone is the stronghold of reason throughout a seemingly random, often “science fiction” approach to storytelling.

Although the setting of this story is somewhat formal in nature, being a police interrogation room, Vonnegut’s tone is informal and somewhat playful, even when framing more serious subject matter. The element of tone references the overall sense or attitude of a work, either literary or theatrical, in regard to both the subject matter and the audience. Vonnegut seems to understand that any American could relate to the protagonist’s point of view. Through the experience of the protagonist, he is speaking to the status quo, and the general moral compass of popular society, expecting that in one way or another, we have all “been there” before. What makes the protagonist an unlikely hero for the audience is his ultimate action of “disciplining” the amoral source of conflict, Verne Petrie. Although the protagonist’s violent action is morally in question itself, the reading “audience members” may say to themselves: “I wish I could have done that.”

In order to accomplish this similar tone and audience reaction in dance theatre performance adaptation, the audience must empathize with the dancer who embodies the protagonist character of Henry Lovell. The consideration of tone in reference to the following choreographic properties will seem more simplistic than in other categories. This is due to tone's overall and cohesive sense, which results in an impact and representation that is singular in nature.

2) Choreographic Properties

a) Pace/Energy: Energetic qualities will have a significant impact on the audience's perception of a piece's tone. For example, overexertion and chaotic energy in a mundane office culture would conflict with the accuracy of this impression, which as I have discussed involves a mostly calm sense of efficiency and only slight urgency. In the story, Vonnegut contrasts the formality of office culture with an informal, playful tone, then deconstructs expectations of this culture with sexually and violently charged conflict development. Pace, representing the aspect of time in a spatially/temporally based art form such as dance, is integral to audience perception of tone. The pattern of "quickness with pauses and overlap" present in a dialogue are represented throughout the adaptation. The unexpected, absurd, and yet violent shift that takes place in the action relayed by the accurately criminal main character, who is describing "just another day at the office", can be embodied in a few ways. For example, this quality could be portrayed as an almost supernatural slow motion timing, or a machine-like, robotic sense of timing, implying an inability to function emotionally in the face of anger and

frustration, etc. Such choices in time would reflect Vonnegut's playful, absurdist approach to telling this story, as well as his general science fiction association.

b) Movement/Momentum: With several different interpretations of how aspects of character, setting, and motif, and theme may be represented through movement and momentum, the job of the choreographer in respect to tone is to gauge the general impression of the whole. For example, while the repetitive, spontaneous, or deconstructive movements of the theme of "neurosis" should be included to achieve an accurate portrayal of the story's vision, and the character's depth, it cannot override the tense, back and forth banter feeling of a detective and suspect dialogue, nor the overarching feeling of "every man" and morality from a standpoint of the popularly established "status quo". So constant erratic movement behavior would not "tell the whole story", or achieve the author's general tone. Similarly, for example, if the tone of dark humor, neurosis, or sexual tabu seems under-represented in the artistic product in its intermediate or final stages, then the choreographer, as director, could add a short scene to the existing duet which embodies this sense more fully. For example, change a movement series to include more intimate contact, or an awkward, slapstick style contact exerted by one dancer against the other dancer's will. Ensuring tone in reference to momentum could entail looking at a nearly finished artistic product, then analyzing the order of different segments for a sense of overall momentum which reflects the plot diagram of the story, i.e. rising action, climax, falling action. Also, a specific

addition could be tacked on to the overall composition, like a reverse waltz, or slow dance to create a sense of moral responsibility mixed with unresolved gender reversal in the conclusion.

c) Quality/Emotion: The dancers' understanding of Vonnegut's general tone, and the tone of the story is key to achieving an appropriate emotional sense.

The dancers and I discussed the story, and watched social service videos from the 1950's era which shared a tone of American folly and human error contrasted with morality and hope. To capture Vonnegut's absolutist, yet playful tone, I played a video of Vonnegut, himself, describing "The Shapes of Stories". Dancers have unique approaches to performing prescribed movement material, and these approaches shape the overall tone. Even with consistent direction from me as the choreographer, dancers make their own choices about quality and emotion, or lack thereof, which they visually and kinesthetically imbue in performance.

d) Spatial/Physical: The science fiction aspect that is consistent in most of Vonnegut's work is seemingly absent in this story, although the charge that the protagonist is facing is bizarre and at first unexplained. While I feel that dance is, inherently, a mysterious and "unexplained" form of storytelling, this aspect of Vonnegut tone may be realized through a supernatural occurrence, such as a chair seeming to slide off stage by unseen forces.

Dramaturgical Research and Application

- 1) Read fiction works, take notes, and form initial analysis.

In reading Kurt Vonnegut's short fiction work, "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", I noted several areas of research interest and artistic responsibility as not only the choreographer, but as acting dramaturg for this dance adaptation production. These notes included the specific location described by the author. For example, the story takes place in Indianapolis, Indiana, and the protagonist character, Henry, works in the Circle Tower, a famous building in this American city. The story takes place in the contemporary era in which it was created. The time period in which "Hundred-Dollar Kisses" was written is estimated to be in the 1950's. The types of office jobs that the characters have is made clear, as well. The story, in a linear sense, takes place in a police department. Organized research of historical and social significances within the story supplied a foundation for developing characterization. In those first few readings of the text, some major themes emerged that inspired further research. For example, in the story there is a significant theme of the 1950's pin-up and pornographic culture, although reflected by the protagonist to be an unseemly and unspoken topic, which warranted research into some relevant images from that era. My initial analysis of the short fiction was that it had some very clear themes that required unearthing. The American values portrayed in this 1950's storyline are not so far removed from the moral code of the country today. I felt a major task for a dramaturg in this production would be to assist the dancers in fully understanding the literary inspired concepts and their particular qualities, such as emotional and social significance. With this understanding in place, the choreographer could assist the dancers with embodying these concepts through movement. Images, videos, and

major themes were compiled into a highly accessible digital dance dramaturgy casebook, which I was able to present to the dancers, by offering verbal information to accompany the audio/visual aid.

2) Establish a general tone or overall vision for the interpretation of the fiction text.

After thoroughly reading *Hundred-Dollar Kisses*, taking notes, and forming a dramaturgical analysis as well as a literary analysis from a choreographic perspective, I had a sense of the tone and overall vision for my dance theatre adaptation. I established an initial tone for the dance piece, with the knowledge that further dramaturgical research and discoveries made in the choreographic process might change my original impressions. With the fiction's unique structure of "a story within a story" in mind, I decided to visually tell the story of the interrogation room in performance, rather than the story which led to the protagonist being interrogated, in terms of setting and characters. The "second story" of *Hundred-Dollar Kisses* is told through the protagonist's choreography in the dance piece. The detective and "the lady stenographer" tell their own story as integral parts in a standardized interrogation process, and as members of society in the 1950's era, while at times commenting on the protagonist's confession, or briefly interacting with it, for purposes of divulging truth and clarity, as would occur in such a legal proceeding. The tone is one of contrast. It is tense and mechanical, yet with outbursts of humanity and expression. The overall vision for the piece is a conglomerate of multiple communication systems, unified by a dedication to truth.

3) Form a text glossary with key words and images.

Key words and images were identified in a visual diagram of the text, and incorporated into the digital dance dramaturgy casebook, as opposed to being isolated in

a text glossary. These visual aids are documented in the Appendix chapter of this thesis document.

4) Research the author's background:

The author's background was researched through biographical text and video documentary footage. The autobiographical texts, "Unstuck in Time: A Journey Through Kurt Vonnegut's Life and Novels", by Gregory D. Sumner, and "And So It Goes, Kurt Vonnegut: A Life", by Charles J. Shields, differed in their approach to discussing the late author. The latter is a purely autobiographical review of known facts about Vonnegut's life and personal attributes, whereas the former combines literary analysis with autobiography, examining Vonnegut through several chosen works, relating each to influential aspects of his life. The documentary footage, which was analyzed for relevance to this choreographic thesis study included A BBC film from the *Arena* documentary series, in which Vonnegut, himself, is interviewed. Also, the dancers and I studied a short video of a lecture given by Vonnegut to a university audience, which found its way into the social media sphere, entitled "The Shapes of Stories". Footage from both sources informed movement choices, and ultimately became a part of the final artistic product. Some visual elements and themes that were emphasized in Vonnegut's autobiography were referenced in rehearsals as structures for initial improvisations, which were then woven into the choreographed content of the dance.

For example, the pathways in a diagram that Vonnegut draws on a chalkboard in his lecture informed improvisational sequences that were maintained in the final choreography. Finally, excerpts of these videos were projected onto a screen for the

audience to consume between choreographic works, during the course of the actual performance.

5) Research the background (time, place, and people) of the story.

An overarching sense of the politics of the time informed some of the choices in characterization, which the dancers layered onto an already densely symbolic movement vocabulary. General information of this political era was provided by myself, as the choreographer and rehearsal director, at the beginning of the seventh rehearsal. Some of the themes discussed, sourced from various encyclopedic volumes available in an online format, were 1950's sentimentality, domestication, the politics of fear, the Korean War, McCarthyism, and the emergence of political image making as a response to the rise of television in the American home.

6) Study any documented reactions, reviews, or existing adaptations of the story.

None were found, perhaps due to the recent release of the story, as part of an anthology of several previously unpublished works by the late author.

7) Look at related artistic products that address similar topics or the same "world".

As acting dramaturg for my own adaptation of a text, I did my own research into relevant movies, dances, plays, fiction, and documentaries which either took place in the same location, time period, setting, or within the same subculture, but I only shared related artistic products with my dancers that I thought would be quickly and easily accessible for them, and which would be relevant to their performance. For example, I showed my dancers a video excerpt from a 1959 episode of the detective drama, "Dragnet", a popular program around the same period that this "police interrogation" themed story was written. I referenced "Dragnet" and videos and images depicting the

fashion of the 1950's time period to make decisions about lighting, costume, and hair design of the dancers. Relevant products of research, such as this, were included in the digital dance dramaturgy casebook.

8) Organize this research and share it with the cast, crew, and collaborators.

I organized dramaturgical research in the form of a Power Point presentation, a digital dance dramaturgy casebook, and I shared this with dancers and committee members. The presentation mostly included images and video clips, and also included the full text, colorfully diagrammed to identify main ideas/themes, action words which may potentially inspire movement themes in choreography, and elements within the text that required or sparked choreographer interest in further dramaturgical research. The printed pages of this digital dance dramaturgy casebook are available in the Appendix of this document.

9) During the production process, keep a journal that addresses these concerns:

I created a journal documenting brief explanation of the choreographic process in several research and rehearsal sessions through the duration of this thesis project. This documentation is represented in this Methods chapter.

a) Is the initial tone and vision previously established still intact?

Here, the "initial tone and vision" refers to my initial vision for the adaptation, as choreographer. The tone I originally imagined for this piece was one inspired by the spirit of interrogation and dialogue; conflict, resolution, confusion, and unresolved tension. I believe this tone remained intact throughout the process of translating textual themes into movement and corporeal themes. My initial vision was realized a bit differently in some areas. For example, I had imagined projected images of mostly nude 1950's pin-up girls,

since the major moral conflict was centered around the protagonist's forced exposure to his co-worker's excessive reliance on pornographic materials. I ultimately decided to portray this concept more purely through movement, or embodiment of the dancers, and aesthetically opted for a more subtle portrayal. The "lady stenographer" characters now slowly remove overcoats at the beginning of the piece, while the protagonist character nervously and agitatedly looks in their direction, then away, during the disrobing. Also, in terms of costume choice, I had considered having the detective character wear a full replica of a vintage Indiana police officer's uniform, but later opted for a more subtle approach, with just a simple sheriff's badge adhered to a suspender. In terms of props, I had considered incorporating a telephone with an extremely long cord paraded across the stage space, then physical manifestations of the protagonist dancer "listening on the phone" were choreographed into the dance piece, and the prop seemed excessive. In terms of sound, I had originally imagined audio of an actual interrogation, or perhaps an old radio broadcast, maybe even from the Indianapolis 500 races, but as I saw that the choreography had successfully taken on the rhythm and qualities of dialogue and interrogation, I felt that the inclusion of like audio would be redundant.

b) Are the key images and elements of the story represented?

Key images in Vonnegut's story are in two categories. This story can be interpreted in multiple ways, of course. The basic structure of the story is actually that of a story within a story. Because of this structure, key images in Vonnegut's story are in two categories. An arrested man is being questioned in a police interrogation room, and the story he tells through questioning takes place in an office, so both of those worlds have their own unique image. The elements that really tell the story are themes both

tangible and conceptual. These elements, when translated from the mind's eye of a reader to a visual, 3-dimensional, and corporeal art piece, change form. In adaptation, this new form affects meaning and perceptual impact for an audience. The main themes for "Hundred-Dollar Kisses" are structure, law, ethics, human suffering, lust, impulse, and communication. Their abstract representational images, in the story, take the form of cubicles, squares, triangles, buildings, human skin and anatomy, telephone lines, weapons, many men, few women, machine-like and animalistic behaviors. The image associated with the question-and-answer dialogue which makes up the basic structure of the text itself is both literal and imagined. The "Q:" and "A:" sections of the actual story text on the page create their own unique visual pattern, and a reader's imaginings of how a mostly efficient question and answer dialogue between a detective and a prisoner manifests visually and viscerally. The average person has limited contact with such scenarios, likely through television, film, theatre, and edited documentary footage. These images are all incorporated into the actual choreography of this dance theatre art piece, through gesture, action, interaction, momentum, rhythm, and energetic corporeal and facial expression. Any key thematic incorporation which may be present in the artistic product through sound, props, costume, or lighting is supplementary to the movement.

c) Are the author's intentions being represented in this new medium?

An adaptation is interpretive, so it can comment on chosen aspects of the story, as opposed to attempting to represent all aspects of the story through a new medium. My artistic product is a selective commentary representing main themes. Certain other related themes and impressions emerged and were made permanent during the complex act of translation into corporeal, movement-based adaptation. It is difficult to guess as to

whether the late author would consider his base intentions for the story as being represented in this new medium. I believe the author's basic intentions in storytelling were to create a popular piece of social commentary, offering human characters with extreme personal differences, contrasting morality and immorality through consequence, and all the while experimenting with a unique question and answer structure of communication. If this belief is justified, then the author's basic intentions are surely represented in my dance theatre piece, *Hundred-Dollar Kisses (an adaptation)*.

Choreographic Process: Rehearsal Documentation

In preparation for the first block of four rehearsals for my dance theatre adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's short fiction, "Hundred-Dollar Kisses", I read a biography of Vonnegut's life, and a biographical literary analysis of some of his other works of fiction. I was actively working on completion of a literary analysis of the short fiction, and had already analyzed the literature for choreographic properties in the categories of character, setting, and motif. I applied my analysis of these essential categories to the first block of rehearsals, aware that the last two categories of theme and tone were ultimately more relevant to creating a sense of wholeness in the middle stages of choreographic development, where I worked toward a cohesive sensibility and conclusion. Prior to the first rehearsal, I also began dramaturgical research into the time, place, and potential background of the characters, as well as the background of certain prevalent motifs, main ideas, and my first impression of the most vital themes within the story. I formed my dramaturgical research into a Power Point presentation, starting with images and a clear, concise description of what each image represented, as well as links to some relevant

videos, such as a 1950's episode of *Dragnet*, a rather dated exposé on the world of court reporting and stenography, and an excerpt of Kurt Vonnegut's talk to college students about "the shapes of stories".

Choreographers can have many different directing styles in rehearsal. A common approach to rehearsal preparation for choreographers is to spend hours in the studio creating movement material that is relayed to dancers through physical demonstration and verbal cues during the rehearsal. My approach is different, in that it is more spontaneous in terms of creation and direction. I come to a rehearsal prepared with researched images, ideas, words, and scenarios, and I spontaneously create movement or observe and direct dancers responding to these cues with movement during the rehearsal. I rely heavily on intuition and chance in regard to decision making in the beginning of the rehearsal process, then manipulate, enhance, refine, or discard created movement material as the choreography progresses. While I can be quite physical in my description of a scenario, often demonstrating my own interpretation of a gesture or action, I equally rely on my verbal cues, specific images, and the dancer's unique embodiment of them as a starting point to then develop further through a dialogue between myself, the dancer, and the source of inspiration.

This documentation of the choreographic process in rehearsal begins on Saturday, October 19th, of 2013, and ends on Saturday, March 1st, of 2014. Each specified rehearsal below is followed by a synopsis of what transpired during a given two hour rehearsal period, which includes some documentation of my preparation, as choreographer, director, and researcher. I compiled this documentation for clarity, from sources of informal journal notes, video footage, and memory.

Rehearsal One: Saturday, October 19th

Preparation for this first rehearsal included multiple reads of the short story, conducting literary analysis for general meaning and choreographic properties, as pertaining to the categories of character, setting, and motif, and an initial compilation of dramaturgical research, such as images and background information related to dramatic themes and symbolism in the story for which I investigated the author's possible intent. The first rehearsal began with a discussion of the plot and characters in the story, and progressed from there into movement. This first rehearsal established the format for the rest. Early on, a logical conclusion was made that because the characters being represented were involved in separate tasks, though linked by location and topic, their corresponding choreographic processes should develop in the same space, but without direct interaction. And so, as choreographer and director, I divided my time in rehearsals between two duets, assigning tasks to one, then working with the other in a more sustained way for a while, making changes and developing existing movement material, then departing to check on progress of the other, and so forth.

The first tasks of this rehearsal process were for duet A, "the interrogation", to establish an introduction of their individual characters through simultaneous, but unique actions, including a more thematically unified motif where the detective literally "stares down" the protagonist. The section ends with the detective beginning to control the actions of the protagonist, as well as more directly interacting, physically and spatially. Duet B, "the lady stenographer" (a synchronized pair which collectively represents one lady stenographer character) had the task of perfecting a motif where they spell the word "Indianapolis", which is the setting of the story, with various points of initiation in the

upper torso and limbs. Duet B also traced the exact allotted dimensions of the “police interrogation room”, or performance space onstage, while practicing the necessary efficiency and accuracy of the court reporting profession through engaging in a very specific and synchronized counting ritual while outlining the space.

Rehearsal Two: Saturday, October 26th

This rehearsal introduced the performers to the initial dramaturgical research I had conducted, delineating themes and potential symbolism in the story, and compiling images and video clips, which might inspire their characterization process. I shared the “Digital Dance Dramaturgy Casebook” at the start of the rehearsal, and we explored themes from the ideas the research yielded. This exploration took the form of a structured improvisation through a combination of physical, qualitative, and emotional embodiment with applied compositional principles, enforced by myself, as choreographer.

The Interrogation duet and the Lady Stenographer duet both created gestures and actions inspired by verbs I chose and ordered from the story. This first set of action words was “signaled, pointing, continue, get off, shut up, smokes, spends, sitting, switch, approximate, assault, whines, smears/smathers”. After the Interrogation group completed this task, which consisted of a set of actions, independent to each performer, which often corresponded or created interaction between the two, I asked them to retrograde, or reverse the movement pathway for the series of action-word inspired movements. After some additional direction, this phrase was set in the choreography. The Lady Stenographer duet’s task and outcome was the same, with the distinction that because two

performers are representing one character from the story, they have to agree on one shared and synchronized set of movements inspired by the allotted action words.

The Lady Stenographer group also established a movement section wherein they run their fingers along the sides of their own faces, which was inspired by a haunting ritual/habit that I have witnessed my mother do in her sleep. I recalled this phenomenon/experience because of the slow and haunting nature of the evolving “lady stenographer” role in this adaptation. This is evidence that real life experiences and memories are often intermingled with the structured or designed aspects of choreography. This integration is intuitional, and part of the artist experience. Because I had such a specific image in my memory of this action of the fingers grazing the sides of the dancer’s faces, I demonstrated for them how my mother used to do it. The dancer’s initial physical translation of this action was not quite accurate enough, in terms of portraying the intricacy and delicacy of the action, so I created a secondary image for them of an ant crawling on their face. These dancers are also synchronized in motion exactly, so I created a specific pathway for this “ant” to travel on their faces, and then let them work together on memorizing the pathway and synching it one another’s movement. The accumulation of movement material from the first two rehearsals was video documented at the conclusion of this second rehearsal.

Rehearsal Three: Saturday, November 2nd

At the start of this rehearsal, I began with some findings included in my digital dance dramaturgy casebook. The Interrogation duet watched an interrogation scene involving some violent action centered around a telephone call, which held real relevance

to the action in the story, as well as demonstrated mannerisms and dialect from the time period range of the 1950's. I believe that the popular concept at the time of this story was that police interrogation was a quick back and forth exchange with little emotion, then a rare climactic outburst of pent up tension. I shared this video and these impressions with duet A, and we then proceeded to integrate the mannerisms as a gestural layer on top of existing choreography. We also set a basic outline of a section in which the characters take turns traveling in and out of a designated "lit" space onstage, referencing the stereotype of interrogators shining light in detainees faces in order to forcibly get them to talk. I had a difficult time creating a traveling pattern and movement for the interrogator character as she moved in and out of the imagined lit space in the moment, and I ultimately decided to take earlier movement material and insert it into that scene, promising to create something different for the earlier section at a later time. Ultimately, that inserted movement material was re-deposited back to where it originally existed in the scheme of the total composition. In the final artistic product, the interrogator simply walks back and forth slowly, in and out of the light, while the protagonist character performs a series of dynamic gestures inspired by his conflict in the story. In this way, once a body of movement material is established, the preceding compositional stages of a rehearsal process can be like putting together an ever-shifting puzzle.

The Lady Stenographer duet watched an informational video from about 20-30 years ago, estimably, in which the court reporting profession is a focus, and there are several scenes showing the actions and articulations of the typing of court reporters, as well as the unique coded language that is involved in the profession. This duet also watched an excerpt from a ladies' etiquette film from the 1950's era, addressing

mannerisms, “bad habits”, and hygiene. This information was mostly geared toward providing fuel for character development, and to solidify the theme of encoded messages and accuracy in the performers’ minds, as well as the suggested female conformity of the etiquette video, which is strongly implied through their painstakingly synchronized choreography. Existing choreography was analyzed and slightly altered in consideration of potential audience perception and basic principles of composition.

Rehearsal Four: Saturday, November 9th

This rehearsal began with a viewing of a 5 minute video that I found online, where the author, Kurt Vonnegut, discusses “The Shapes of Stories”. This video has some distinct choreographic aspects, with Kurt Vonnegut drawing directional pathways of rising and falling action, creating a structured outline, and a free-hand chalk rendering expressing the plot line of multiple story “types” within the designated space of a rectangular chalkboard. The two duets were each assigned one of the undulating pathways for directional cues and level changes, while inserting into these translated paths (from 2 dimensional chalk drawing to 3 dimensional movement) improvisational responses to a new set of action words taken directly from the text of the Vonnegut short story.

In the aforementioned task, we have compounded the Vonnegut symbolic influence with words and abstract design, both derived from his distinct approach to storytelling. The new set of action verbs was: “threatened, offered, obtained, understood, winked, correcting, jumped, blew up, go-straight-to-hell, and nothing”. These compounded pathways resulted in a mixture of original and altered movement, a fusion

of once improvised, and intentionally choreographed material. This task had an additional layer of applying the compositional strategy of retrograde to the established movement series, and so some of the original movements inspired by the action verbs are reversed in performance, as though pressing rewind on a VCR. The final layer of every section of choreography developed is the unique intention and subtle characterization of each performer's role into its execution.

Rehearsal 5: Thursday, November 14th, and Sunday, November 17th

The two duets met individually once, for one hour each, on Thursday, November 28th, and Sunday, November 17th, under my general supervision, to work on composing an order for certain established material, and devising alternate strategies for mechanical kinks in both the partnering between the “interrogation” dancers portraying the protagonist and the detective, and the synchronicity between the dancers portraying “the lady stenographer”. Issues of space, level, shape, and operational efficiency were addressed according to my own taste and knowledge of compositional and choreographic principles of design, and according to the associated themes and characterizations derived from the text.

Rehearsal 6: Sunday, November 24th

We read aloud from a page or two from the story, as well as key phrases of main ideas from the text, as a way to start rehearsal. Repeated established movement vocabulary through the act of performance several times and videoed our current progress to solidify it before the process would be put on hold for over a month due to inclement

weather, and winter break. The cast was scheduled to demonstrate progress through performance and a subsequent discussion between choreographer and thesis committee at a showing, on December 7th, which was cancelled due to inclement weather on campus.

Rehearsal 7: Saturday, January 11th

I began this rehearsal by sharing the political climate of the 1950's decade, highlighting pieces of relevant information derived from my research into this dramaturgical concern of instilling a sense of background, atmosphere, and historical significance for the dancers and myself. Layering the two duets was a major progression of this rehearsal. I viewed the duets being performed at the same time, and made the decision to place the lady stenographers in the foreground of the scene onstage, because their movements were more fluid and gentle and the relationship in this duet was a bit more sterile by comparison to the intensity of the interactive physical dialogue happening between the protagonist and the detective. The latter duet seemed to naturally draw my attention more than the former. While observing the layered duets in action, I made a few mental notes about certain moments that could be better enhanced by slowing down one duet, or reordering choreography for another. These adjustments would ensure that one duet would not overpower the other in a way that would be distracting, or not conducive to the themes being portrayed. I communicated these notes to the dancers at the conclusion of our rehearsal and we came up with an initial plan of adjustment. Sound was also layered onto the total collage. During this rehearsal, an impromptu audience of passersby watched our layered duets in performance. My discovery of a popular blues

song from the 1950's era, appropriately referencing the interrogation setting in its title, "Don't Start Me To Talkin", and its chorus, "I'll tell all I know", was also played.

Rehearsal 8: Saturday, January 18th

In this rehearsal, one dancer was ill and Walter Kennedy, of the University of Oregon Dance Department, came to watch. Walter is a member of my thesis committee. The aim of this rehearsal was to practice the established choreography and prepare to present the choreography for initial feedback from the total committee. Walter and I met later in the week, when he suggested a bit more coaching in terms of acting and characterization for the dancers. I agreed that while the dancers had already taken on some of the essence of their characters, there were moments in the choreography, and at points in their interaction, where this embodiment needed more enhancement. It was my hope that offering the dancers another experience of my own dramaturgical research into documentary footage of actual interrogations, as well as providing additional coaching, would improve their performance. Walter and I also discussed our observations of the existing choreography on the whole, considering potential movement and compositional scenarios, which could be added to the beginning of the piece. We agreed that an opening scene which conveys the distanced, alienated, and official nature associated with matters concerning civilized questioning by law enforcement could potentially act as a foundation from which movement could evolve. Such a structured starting point to the piece would allow for the movement to abstractly tell the confessor's story without confusing the basic relationship between the characters onstage. The general goal of this performance enhancement is for the audience to consistently experience the established

“world” of the adaptation, which is an Indianapolis police interrogation room. A final consideration of mine, which I shared with Walter in this discussion, was my desire to better represent the element of the protagonist’s discomfort with being repeatedly exposed to sexual images depicting women. I had an idea surrounding an existing part of the dance’s introduction, when the two dancers representing the lady stenographer character actually remove their coats and hang them, and complete a gesture as if punching a timecard, and preparing to sit down to work. My thought was to emphasize the dancers removing their coats slowly, creating some tension surrounding the idea of exposure and sexuality, while the male protagonist character nervously looks at them, then away, repeatedly while waiting in the interrogation chair before the detective enters.

Rehearsal 9: Saturday, February 1st

This rehearsal was divided into two parts: a choreography rehearsal with the dancers, and a performance and discussion session with my thesis committee observing and providing feedback.

Choreography Rehearsal

The first part was an hour of implementing ideas sparked by Walter’s and my observations and discussion. There was already a concept in place that had not yet been fully realized, but rather was outlined in the rehearsal process, which involved the protagonist character standing in an isolated “lit” square section onstage and storytelling through movement or minimal gesture and expression while the detective character crossed in and out of the light at different unexpected points, as though listening and calculating an approach to questioning. The dancer that represents the

interrogated protagonist role and I met for a half hour the Friday previous and developed some actions and specific gestures to embody specific key phrases from the story. In this first part of the rehearsal, we set the beginning of the dance according to my conception, with the lady stenographers removing their sweaters slowly and the male protagonist looking on with discomfort. Then the detective enters, takes the interrogation chair away, and the protagonist goes on to tell his story through gestures while the detective slowly crosses the space behind him horizontally, back and forth, until standing directly behind the protagonist, where the existing choreography starts. To enhance the feeling of an interrogation room, I applied my dramaturgical research of police interrogation room documentaries as a point of inspiration for some sound effects to serve as audio before and after the Sonny Boy Williamson song, “Don’t Start Me To Talkin”. The sound effects included the sound of a door opening and shutting just before the detective enters the stage space, and the rapid ticking of a clock timer, to hint at the presence of a high pressure situation, such as an interrogation.

Performance and Discussion

The second part of this rehearsal was the performance showing and subsequent feedback and discussion with my thesis committee, comprised of the Chair, Dr. Jenifer Craig, Walter Kennedy, and Shannon Mockli. I have broken the main ideas and suggestions of this dialogue into the following bullet points.

- Concern about stage right placement of the scene in regard to audience perspective.

- Concern about the connection between the two layered duets in terms of onstage placement, facing, lighting. The duets are supposed to be involved in the same process, though different and slightly distanced, they may, in theory, be in the same “room” together.
- Suggestion to invite UO Theatre Arts director, John Schmor, into a rehearsal as an additional catalyst for developing characterization in the dancers.
- Suggestion about adding texture to the existing ease and grace of the lifts (moments of partnering where one dancer lifts another off the ground) in order to imply a more specific kind of interaction, i.e. struggle or uncertainty.
- Suggestion about the abrupt introduction of one section of audio, to be adjusted through volume control/audio engineering.
- Affirmation about the general success of the piece, which consistently holds interest, sparks inquiry, and entertains.

Rehearsal 10: Saturday, February 22nd

Director John Schmor, of the University of Oregon Theatre Department, came to assist in directing the dancers in the embodiment of character, and offer suggestions relevant to acting. John gave direction regarding facial expressions of the dancers. He suggested that the dancers representing the lady stenographer purse their lips as an act of mental concentration, and encouraged the detective character to be more bold, haughty, and seductive.

Another committee saw an obvious reference to *Film Noir* in the dance. *Film Noir* describes highly stylized Hollywood cinema that is centered around crime. I agree that

films such as these were an influence in the creation of the adaptation. John also suggested that the male dancer who represents the main character of the story should maintain a constant emotional and facial expression of angst and confusion, to achieve a stronger impression.

Dress Rehearsal Committee Showing: Sunday, February 23rd

In this dress rehearsal, my thesis committee was represented by Jenifer Craig (Chair) and Shannon Mockli. A complete run through of my MFA concert program was shown, including sound, costume, and projection elements, but without lighting design. After the private showing, my thesis committee provided valuable insight on the duration of certain themes in the adaptation, and suggested that the dance and the projection somehow overlap, an idea that I implemented in the final performance.

Jenifer and Shannon offered insight into their experience as spectators, and their interpretations of certain movement concepts. For example, I shared the textual inspiration behind the detective and protagonist characters crawling over to the lady stenographer characters and both groups turning to acknowledge each other. The textual significance was a moment where the protagonist tells the detective that he does not want to repeat a crude expression with a lady stenographer present. After hearing the inspiration behind the movement concept, my thesis committee mutually shared that they did not associate that movement concept with the intention that I described, and each of them had somewhat different experiences. This latter exchange of information was quite interesting, but not surprising, because dance is not definitive. As an art form, it is open to multiple interpretations.

Analysts specific to each field of the arts have unique methods of developing criticism that creates new meanings and interpretations of a given work for the benefit of the academic and popular public. The concept of synergetic art production, or collaboration, challenges these existing methodologies, and opens avenues for innovation in all involved fields. That is the hope of this interdisciplinary and truly synergetic thesis study, in which my aim is to not only explore each individual interpretive methodology from literature, theatre, and dance, but also to demonstrate how the act of choreography can synthesize all three disciplines through the medium of movement. I will assess the unique synthesis created through the collaboration of these individual methodological approaches to interpretive adaptation in the Evaluation chapter of this thesis document.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION

The self-reflective evaluation of this thesis project is categorized into assessment of the three methodological approaches within this whole interdisciplinary process of synergetic art production: Literary Analysis, Dramaturgical Research, and Choreographic Process. In evaluation of each method, I seek to answer three questions: What is the contrast between my thesis project proposal, and what actually happened during the project's execution? What limitations, challenges, or roadblocks occurred during my process, if any, and what were my approaches to negotiating these obstacles? What questions initiated by this interdisciplinary thesis study have been answered, and what questions remain ongoing?

In order to evaluate my interdisciplinary process, I primarily rely on my own literary analysis, compiled dramaturgical research, and the documentation of my choreographic process, all included in the Methods chapter of this thesis document. I also refer to my journal entries, notes, and video documentation of rehearsals. Throughout this process, I consulted experts in the respective fields of literature, theatre, and dance, and their feedback has also contributed to my assessment. The literature expert was James Godley, a colleague as well as a PhD student and instructor of English Literature at the University of Buffalo, who read and provided feedback on my completed literary analysis. Professors L. Forsgren, Michael Najjar, and John Schmor of the UO Theatre Department, who I interacted with in a graduate dramaturgy course in Fall 2013, and through collaboration in the final stages of production, functioned as my theatrical consultants. My thesis committee, comprised of three professors in the field of dance,

provided feedback to me on choreographic elements, and the overall artistic product at two different points in its development. My interaction with these individual experts, and in discussion formulating these thesis concepts, aided in my overall perception of this interdisciplinary thesis project in its many stages, ultimately contributing to my understanding and evaluation of events.

A final consideration in the evaluation is the thesis performance and a 20 minute feedback session, which followed the presentation of the artistic product, and in which audience members shared thoughts and asked questions. All of these discussions have been documented, and reviewed. I will now evaluate my completed interdisciplinary approach to adaptation by answering predetermined questions under three methodological categories. My answer to each question will provide one or two specific examples from my experience in conducting this thesis study.

A) Structured Literary Analysis

- 1) An assessment of the alignment and contrast between what this thesis study proposed to do, and the reality of what happened during my process:

Last spring, when I defended a thesis prospectus to my dance department committee, I proposed to conduct a structured literary analysis, through a choreographic lens. I proposed to analyze Vonnegut's "Hundred-Dollar Kisses" for meaning, and for choreographic properties, such as pace, energy, movement, momentum, quality, and for spatial, emotional, and physical relationships within the frame of the following five categories: Character, Setting, Motif, Theme, and Tone. I did conduct and document a

literary analysis within these proposed parameters, though I joined a few of the individual properties into pairs, because of their familiarity, for example “momentum” and “movement” were listed as one category, “Movement/Momentum”.

One consideration which I had not accounted for before conducting this analysis, was that certain aspects within the “Character, Setting, Motif, Theme, and Tone” categories would be relevant to discuss in relation to multiple properties, while other aspects might only be relevant for discussion in one or two, thus my increased attention to certain repeating points of analysis might influence my choreographic impulses more than those points which functioned as lesser repeating variables. For example, listed under “Setting”, the consideration of the office building and the interrogation room locations in the story inspired imagery and archetypes that provided information for every choreographic property in the analysis, whereas another aspect of “Setting”, the general location of Indianapolis, Indiana, only registered as potentially impacting the properties of “Pace” and “Quality”. A more specific Indiana-related image of the Indianapolis 500, an association I made independently, addressed additional properties such as “Spatial Relationships” and “Momentum”.

Upon reflection, the aspects of the analyzed story that were repeated in most or all categories primarily impacted choreographic choices in the later rehearsal process. This observation seems logical to me, in that the greater thought required in analyzing for multiple and complex choreographic properties should logically leave a greater impression than those aspects and ideas that were less involved. In the future, a choreographer would need to clearly choose and document which elements from the story to represent choreographically prior to direction in rehearsal, in order to control this

influence. I approached “Hundred-Dollar Kisses” rehearsals with a blanket intention of infusing the information derived from analysis into spontaneously created movement concepts, rather than facilitating a set plan. This was not the case for the preceding thesis experiment, *Girl Pool*, also an adaptation of a Vonnegut short story, where I supplied dancers with a highly specific score for structured improvisation prior to the first rehearsal. Since *Girl Pool (an adaptation)* and *Hundred-Dollar Kisses* emerged from two different inspirational sources and compositional strategies, the pieces are unique from one another. However, they do share a common artistic voice, due to the fact that both concepts stem from the same author and choreographer.

- 2) Limitations, challenges, or roadblocks that occurred during my process, and my approaches to negotiating these obstacles:

One limitation, which arose early on during my second reading of the story, was in regard to casting. Due to the fact that I had a limited number of advanced male movers to cast, I had to make some decisions about how to retell such a male dominated story through a mostly female adaptation. I decided that I would tell the story of the interrogation room for a few reasons, but one reason was that this choice allowed me to interpret the voiceless, minimal presence of a lady stenographer character, who is briefly mentioned in the dialogue. I went further in deciding to represent this character through two synchronous female dancers. I then applied gender reversal to the other significant male role in the story, the interrogating detective character, while keeping the protagonist character male, as he was in the story.

This choice to interpret the fiction as being dominated by women was justified by the fact that a major theme in the story is the antagonist's obsession with sexualized images of women. The antagonist also creates the catalyst which brings the protagonist into contact with a female center-fold who represents the corruption of the 1950's soft feminine ideal because she is sexually bold and emotionally void. In this mostly female adaptation, it was an obstacle to represent another prominent theme in the story. This theme was the large presence and size of the originally male antagonist, who is absent in the adaptation, as compared to the small size of the protagonist main character, who is the focus of the adaptation. These themes of opposition and size were represented in a few ways. Firstly, the size difference between these two opposing males was integrated into choreography where the protagonist character behaves as though he is staring from the toes to the head of the much taller, imaginary antagonist, as though "sizing him up", then falling to the floor as if becoming very small.

Additionally, the antagonist's size and his threat of over-exposing the protagonist character to sexualized images of women was represented by the subtly sexual presence of three strong female characters onstage, whose movements clearly demonstrate that they are acting in concert to get a confession from the protagonist, thus implying a "3 against 1" kind of threat in the onstage action. While born out of realistic limitation, my choice to focus on the under-represented female characters in this story, as well as my gender reversal of the authority figure of the detective lent to this adaptation functioning, in part, as literary criticism through a feminist and gender studies lens.

- 3) What questions initiated by this interdisciplinary aspect of my thesis study have been answered, and what questions remain ongoing:

In relation to literature, the question still remains as to why scholarship on this subject of dance's relationship to the field has not been actively pursued by dance, cultural studies, or literary scholars, with the exception of a few current essays, leaving Jacqueline Shea-Murphy's twenty year old *Bodies of the Text* volume as still the most comprehensive examination, well into the twenty-first century.

In order to create a tone for my choreographic interpretation of the short fiction and the world in which the story itself was created, I first needed to articulate my own impressions. What impressions did I have about Vonnegut's literary tone, as a choreographer facilitating a kind of collaboration with the late author? This was one of the questions I sought to answer in this thesis study, and I did, coming up with the following critical assessment.

In his stories, the author unapologetically portrays the "kookiness" of the human condition, compounding all its joys and pains into whimsical, often science fiction approaches to story telling. Themes of absurdity, untethered reality, as well as the American man's earnest but often futile response to life's uncertainties through attempts at negotiating established social structures are all fodder for Vonnegut's absolutist tone, which acts as the stronghold of reason amidst strings of unlikely scenarios. While I articulated my own impressions of the author's tone, the magnitude of Kurt Vonnegut's contribution to American literature is a multifaceted question that I hope will be explored in continued analysis.

B) Dramaturgical Research and Application:

- 1) An assessment of the alignment and contrast between what this thesis study proposed to do, and the reality of what happened during my process:

In my prospectus, I proposed to read “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, review the literary analysis, take notes, and follow certain prescribed steps in conducting dramaturgical research. In following these prescribed steps, I was able to form an initial dramaturgical analysis regarding the translation of the text into dramatic themes, establish a general tone or overall vision for the interpretation of the fiction text, form a text glossary with key words and images, research the background (time, place, characters, and author) of the story, study any documented reactions, reviews, or existing adaptations of the story, look at related artistic products that address similar topics, organize this research, and share it with the cast.

I read Vonnegut's posthumously published "Hundred-Dollar Kisses" three times, each time noticing new details and imagining their potential in a theatrical, proscenium performance context. I imagined potentials in a visual manner, as if from the viewpoint of an audience member who is sitting very close to onstage action. Concepts I considered initially had to do with overarching or main ideas and messages in the story- morality, humanity, isolation, forced association, office culture, sexuality, and a David vs. Goliath theme of a small moral man fighting an immoral giant. For example, Vonnegut says through the protagonist's voice that the antagonist "is what is wrong with the world".

- 2) Limitations, challenges, or roadblocks that occurred during my process, and my approaches to negotiating these obstacles:

My initial vision for translating themes and images derived from further dramaturgical research was, in some aspects, ultimately realized a bit differently in some areas within the actual artistic product. A dance theatre adaptation is primarily a movement based art piece, and so some of the theatrical indicators involved in translating the text for the stage posed a threat to the strength of the choreography to stand on its own. For example, I had imagined projected images of mostly nude 1950's pin-up girls, since the major moral conflict was centered around the protagonist's forced exposure to his co-worker's excessive reliance on pornographic materials. I ultimately decided to portray this concept more purely through movement, or embodiment of the dancers, and aesthetically opted for a more subtle portrayal. The "lady stenographer" characters now slowly remove overcoats at the beginning of the piece, while the protagonist character nervously and agitatedly looks in their direction, then away, during the disrobing. Also, in terms of costume choice, I had considered having the detective character be in a full replica of a vintage Indiana police officer's uniform, but later opted for a more subtle approach, with just a simple sheriff's badge adhered to a suspender. In terms of props, I had considered incorporating a telephone with an extremely long cord paraded across the stage space, then physical manifestations of the protagonist dancer "listening on the phone" were choreographed into the dance piece, and the prop seemed excessive. In terms of sound, I had originally imagined audio of an actual interrogation, or perhaps an old radio broadcast, maybe even from the Indianapolis 500 races, but as I saw that the

choreography had successfully taken on the rhythm and qualities of dialogue and interrogation, I felt that the inclusion of like audio would be redundant.

- 3) What questions initiated by this interdisciplinary thesis study have been answered, and what questions remain ongoing:

Throughout my thesis study, I compiled images, video footage, and informational links into a digital dance dramaturgy casebook, which, in part, functioned as a journal of my progress in this thesis study. I also documented rehearsal events, which aided me in drawing conclusions regarding the what factors in the thesis project timeline may have contributed to certain artistic choices, and ultimately, the resultant nature of the artistic product. For example, at the middle stage in the choreographic process, with a good deal of movement material having been generated, I started to recognize more clearly the commentary I was making through my artistic product. This commentary was developed not only from the actual story text, but also the learned social and political aspects of the 1950's time period. The commentary also explored certain universal truths of the human condition, which were indicated through the plot and characters created by Kurt Vonnegut, but which I interpreted for greater significance.

It was during these middle stages of the interdisciplinary process, that I conducted an interview with an expert in dance dramaturgy, and the head of the innovative Dance Dramaturgy graduate program at Canada's York University, Dr. Darcey Callison. During this time I was also auditing a Dramaturgy course at the University of Oregon Theatre Department. In speaking to Dr. Callison about dramaturgy's evolution in the field of

dance, and my background in theatre based dramaturgy, he cautioned strongly against acknowledging a clear relationship between dance and theatre dramaturgy, explaining that dance dramaturgy is so unique that comparing it to its theatrical predecessor can lead to misinterpretation. Ever since this intriguing conversation, in the midst of my own active dramaturgical research, I have been asking the question: how do we know the real differences between dance and theatrical dramaturgy if we do not document and communicate our processes as choreographers in plain language? While there are phenomenological and ethereal aspects to the act of movement creation, I believe there are often more accessible ways for creators to share their approaches, than that which I have seen in recent scholarship. While the Canadian Theatre Review's recent 2013 Dance Dramaturgy edition includes some of the most candid accounts of dramaturgy/dance relationships, including two essays from Darcey Callison, I believe the need for accessible scholarship on this subject is still an ongoing need.

C) Choreographic Process: Rehearsal Documentation

- 1) An assessment of the alignment and contrast between what this thesis study proposed to do, and the reality of what happened during my process, including any limitations and their subsequent solutions:

In regard to the documentation of the choreographic process, I originally proposed to develop movement material, spatial, temporal, and visual/audio/theatrical contexts for a dance theatre adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's short fiction, *Hundred-Dollar Kisses*, keep a rehearsal journal, and employ video documentation of my process. These forms of

documentation functioned as reference tools to aid me in later describing the creative act of generating choreography in response to the text. I also kept an informal catalogue of various movement themes in the choreography. I diagrammed a visual scan of the pages of the story, "Hundred Dollar Kisses", from the actual book "While Mortals Sleep". I diagrammed for choreographic properties, like movement abstraction, and dramaturgical properties, such as research interests, main ideas within the literary source, and action based images. These correlated to the choreographic categories in my structured literary analysis – energy and pace, emotion and quality, movement and momentum, and spatial, directional, and physical components. After its completion, the diagram was selectively utilized as part of the choreographic process. I made thoughtful choices about what sections of diagrammed text would function as cues for action or direction, based on my interpretation, as choreographer. These choices functioned as an abstract dance score of action words, themes, and phrases.

- 2) Limitations, challenges, or roadblocks that occurred during my process, and my approaches to negotiating these obstacles:

Early on, a logical conclusion was made that because the fictitious characters being represented in this dance theatre adaptation were involved in separate tasks, though linked by location and topic, their corresponding choreographic processes should develop in the same space, but without direct involvement. And so, as choreographer and director, I divided my time in rehearsals between the two duets of the “interrogation room”, assigning tasks to one, then working with the other in a more sustained way for a while,

making changes and developing existing movement material, then departing to check on the progress of the other, and so forth. This back and forth approach in the rehearsal space was an obstacle, which was perhaps impossible to fully overcome. I know I missed some opportunities for direction and more concentrated focus on certain aspects of the rehearsal process for both duet groups, though I did my best to accommodate. Such was the challenge of choreographing a symbiotic duality, each with its own distinct function, though both parts work in concert toward the same aim.

- 3) What questions initiated by this interdisciplinary aspect of my thesis study have been answered, and what questions remain ongoing:

One of my primary aims in creating an interdisciplinary choreographic process involving methods from literature and theatre, was to visibly and clearly broaden dance's connection to not just other fields of study, but these particular fields which are more recognized, more common, and more popular forms of artistic expression, consumed by the American people on a regular basis. I wanted to share the resultant work with an audience that ranged in population from people not very familiar with choreographic studies to those who are active professionals in the field. I also wanted to include some representatives from the realms of literature and theatre in my audience, to see if they felt the resultant work was accessible and relevant to their respective fields. Additionally, I wanted to speak as plainly as I could about the nature of the choreographic process. I did so by clearly naming specific movement themes from the piece, and discussing the imagery-based link to the literary text, which inspired its inclusion in the dance, while

being clear about the constant impact of compositional and aesthetic principles on my choreographic choices. In order to be clear about the choreography's relationship to the adapted text and the author, I included excerpts of the adapted stories in the program, and presented the work along with video excerpts of the author speaking about his creative process. The feedback I received from the audience, in the form of questions and comments, as well as my own perceptions about the overall accessibility of the choreographic work, confirmed that this "question" of whether choreography in performance could be tangibly linked with literature had been answered in the affirmative. In light of the richness of the literature/dance relationship, which has been illustrated in this thesis study, why is there not more documentation and discussion of choreography functioning as literary, social, political, or cultural criticism? Another question that remains ongoing is in regard to the dance and theatre relationship. What makes a choreography, "dance theatre", in this era of contemporary fusion? Where is the line drawn? How can we better expose theatre scholars and directors to the vast range of possibilities in expression through movement, or dance scholars and choreographers to the strength of introducing theatrical themes into movement, in order to increase potential for meaningful collaboration?

Throughout this thesis document, I have provided evidence that synergetic art production is possible, because of an inherent link between all arts, especially dance, literature, and theatre. For example, while literature and dance are linked by a multitude of aesthetic qualities, literature's impact is different, in fact greater, than dance's, and may remain so in the future, because of the tangible permanence of the artistic product (a book), as opposed to dance's impermanence, as an art form whose product (a live

performance), is tangible one moment, then gone the next. Perhaps developments in screendance, a medium that also has potential to portray dance as a multifaceted vehicle for commentary and criticism, will affect this question of permanence in the future.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In *Collective Creativity: Collaborative Work in the Sciences, Literature, and the Arts*, Gabriele Fois-Kaschel provides a theoretical framework for assembling a basic common language between individual aesthetic forms, for the benefit of synergetic art production. Fois-Kaschel offers the greek terms of “poesis” (creation), “memesis” (representation), and “deixis” (demonstration) as a possible universal translation between artists of all fields. It is my assertion that movement, as opposed to any derivative of verbal language, is the quintessential universal communication system, able to mingle meaningfully with all other arts. Fois-Kaschel also recognizes dance’s power to transcend the need for like terms in interdisciplinary discourse, stating: “choreography has thus become a paradigm for modern artists, for the literary avant-garde and their precursors, as well as for most of the twentieth century experiments in collective art production” (2011, 87). While dance has the profound capacity to communicate what words cannot, I feel there has been a need for plain language in the realm of dance scholarship. It is my hope that this thesis documents an understandable creative process and that I can make a practical difference in my dance community through publishing and sharing the practice and results of this work.

The artistic product of this research, *Hundred Dollar Kisses (an adaptation)*, was performed on March 7th, 2014, before an audience of seventy people, including representatives from the fields of literature, theatre, and dance. The content of the program included performance of both the subject of this thesis study, *Hundred Dollar Kisses (an adaptation)*, and the preliminary practice test of this thesis study, *GIRL POOL*

(*an adaptation*), as well as projected video excerpts of author, Kurt Vonnegut, describing his own creative process. A question-and-answer session followed the performance, in which I attempted to clearly answer the insightful queries offered by the audience, with the help of a few selected dancers. It was through these thoughtful questions and observations from an educated audience that I received evidence of dance's inherent ability to spark multiple interpretations and multiple modes of thought, through the undefined nature of a single complex movement.

While it is a primary goal for me to discuss my creative process with reasonable clarity, I understand that part of the need for this structure in discourse stems from the inherently ethereal nature of the act of creation and the dance art form, itself. Some of the aims of my multilayered research into the adaptation of this short story involved exploring the past and deciphering a deceased author's artistic intention, as it existed 60 years ago. I was pleased when an audience member used the word "mystery" to describe her experience of the artistic product during the question-and-answer session. The presence of an essence of "mystery" in this resultant dance piece was an indicator that my ghostly collaboration with the late author and the human characters from the historical time period of the 1950's had successfully been interpreted through adaptation. The dance adaptation was a form of literary criticism, offering alternate perspectives from that which was presented in the original text. The movement and theatrical concepts in this artistic product were derived from my own analysis of the story, and so the artistic product reflected my choices, as writer, dramaturg, and choreographer. The apparent themes, which resulted in performance, were a comparison between popular detective drama, *Film Noir*, social culture of the 1950's time period, and a focus on feminist and

working class points of view as a critical translation of the story. These specific essences were noted by many audience members and members of my thesis committee, and yet each movement concept within the adaptation yielded its own set of possible interpretations. While I had success in clearly communicating choreographic ideas during the post-performance discussion, the conclusion is that art is marked by multiplicity and mystery. Synergetic art production, or collaboration, offers many methodologies and many points of entry into analysis and interpretation.

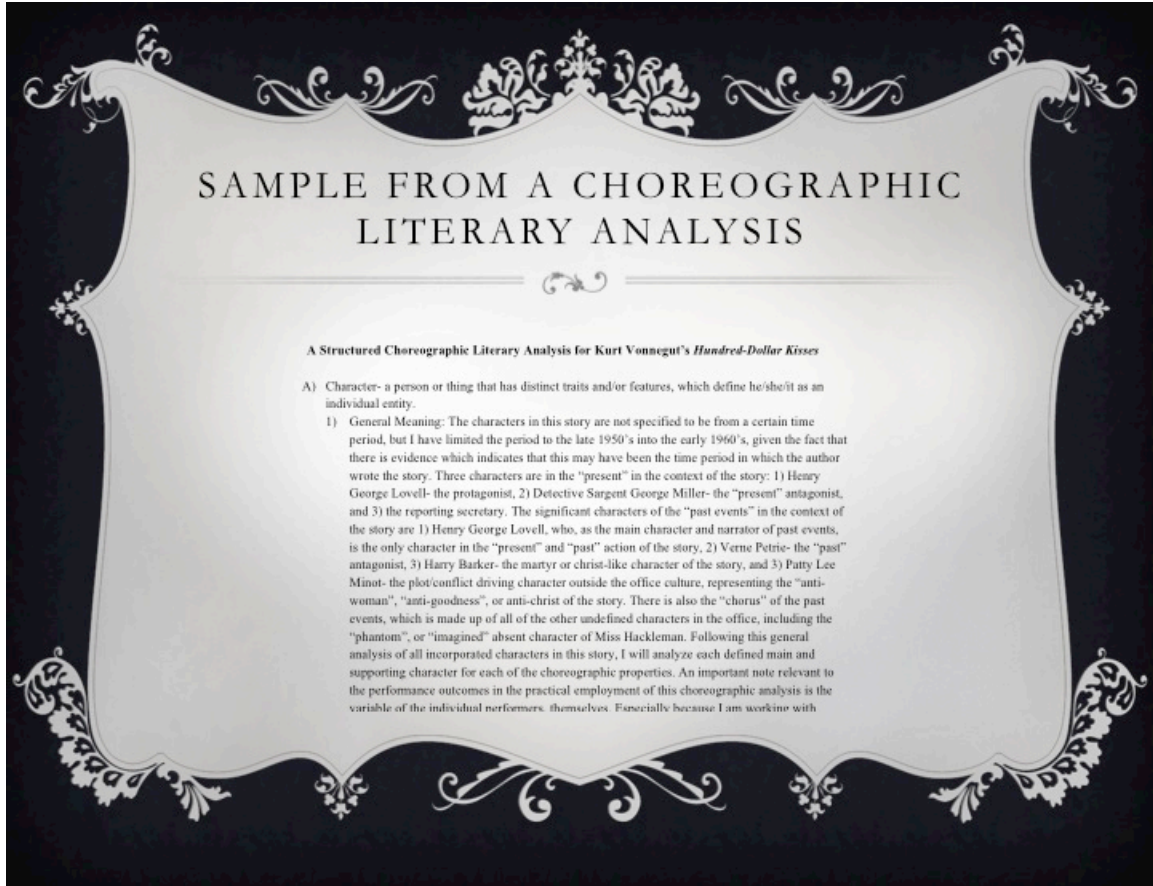
The spectrum of human movement is a rich canvas and the human body is a potent vessel. A dance theatre adaptation, when presented in a structured context, in direct relation to its source of inspiration, does function aptly as literary criticism. Any isolated dance art piece, even that which is strongly characterized by theatrical elements of costume, sound, and emotional expression, such as in the case of “Hundred Dollar Kisses (an adaptation)”, is subject to a myriad of theoretical connections, associations, and lines of inquiry from an interdisciplinary *audience*. With this in mind, I present my process and product to serve as an investigative example of ways to effectively apply literary analysis and dramaturgical research to the creation of an original dance theatre piece.

APPENDIX

DIGITAL DRAMATURGY CASEBOOK POWERPOINT SLIDES



A visual aid for discussion of the literary analysis:



**SAMPLE FROM A CHOREOGRAPHIC
LITERARY ANALYSIS**

A Structured Choreographic Literary Analysis for Kurt Vonnegut's *Hundred-Dollar Kisses*

A) Character- a person or thing that has distinct traits and/or features, which define he/she/it as an individual entity.

- 1) General Meaning: The characters in this story are not specified to be from a certain time period, but I have limited the period to the late 1950's into the early 1960's, given the fact that there is evidence which indicates that this may have been the time period in which the author wrote the story. Three characters are in the "present" in the context of the story: 1) Henry George Lovell- the protagonist, 2) Detective Sargent George Miller- the "present" antagonist, and 3) the reporting secretary. The significant characters of the "past events" in the context of the story are 1) Henry George Lovell, who, as the main character and narrator of past events, is the only character in the "present" and "past" action of the story, 2) Verne Petrie- the "past" antagonist, 3) Harry Barker- the martyr or christ-like character of the story, and 3) Patty Lee Minot- the plot/conflict driving character outside the office culture, representing the "anti-woman", "anti-goodness", or anti-christ of the story. There is also the "chorus" of the past events, which is made up of all of the other undefined characters in the office, including the "phantom", or "imagined" absent character of Miss Hackleman. Following this general analysis of all incorporated characters in this story, I will analyze each defined main and supporting character for each of the choreographic properties. An important note relevant to the performance outcomes in the practical employment of this choreographic analysis is the variable of the individual performers, themselves. Especially because I am working with

Image of story location, circa 1950's:

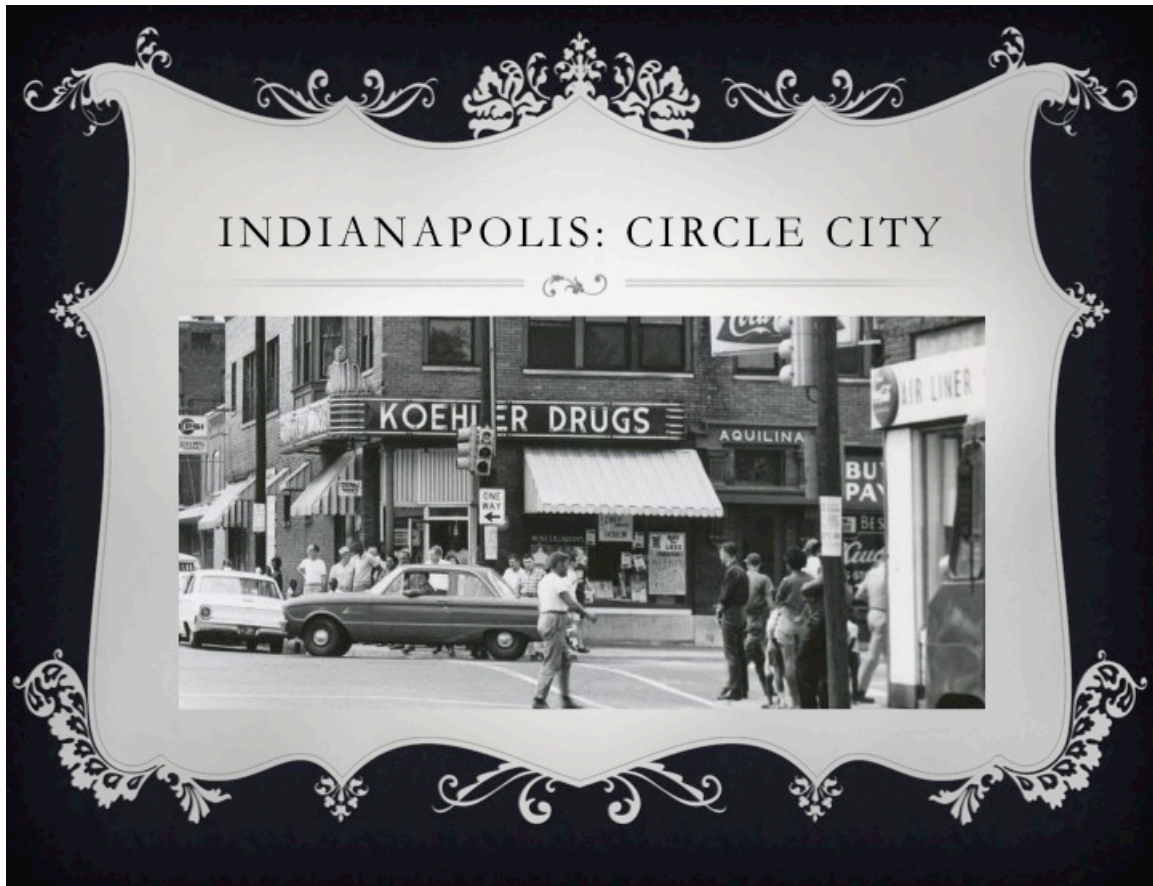
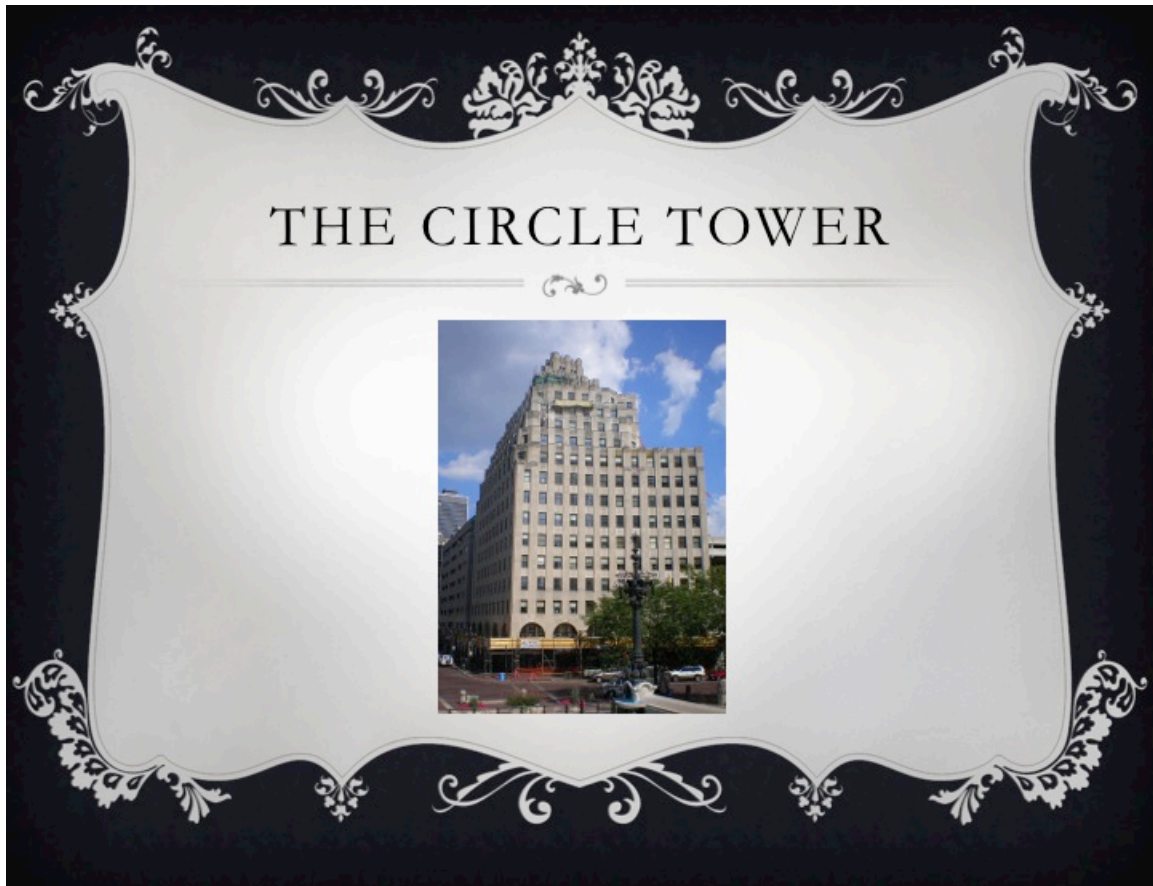


Image of major landmark for the story's location city:



Location of protagonist character's place of work:



Theme and actual events relevant to the story's location and time period:

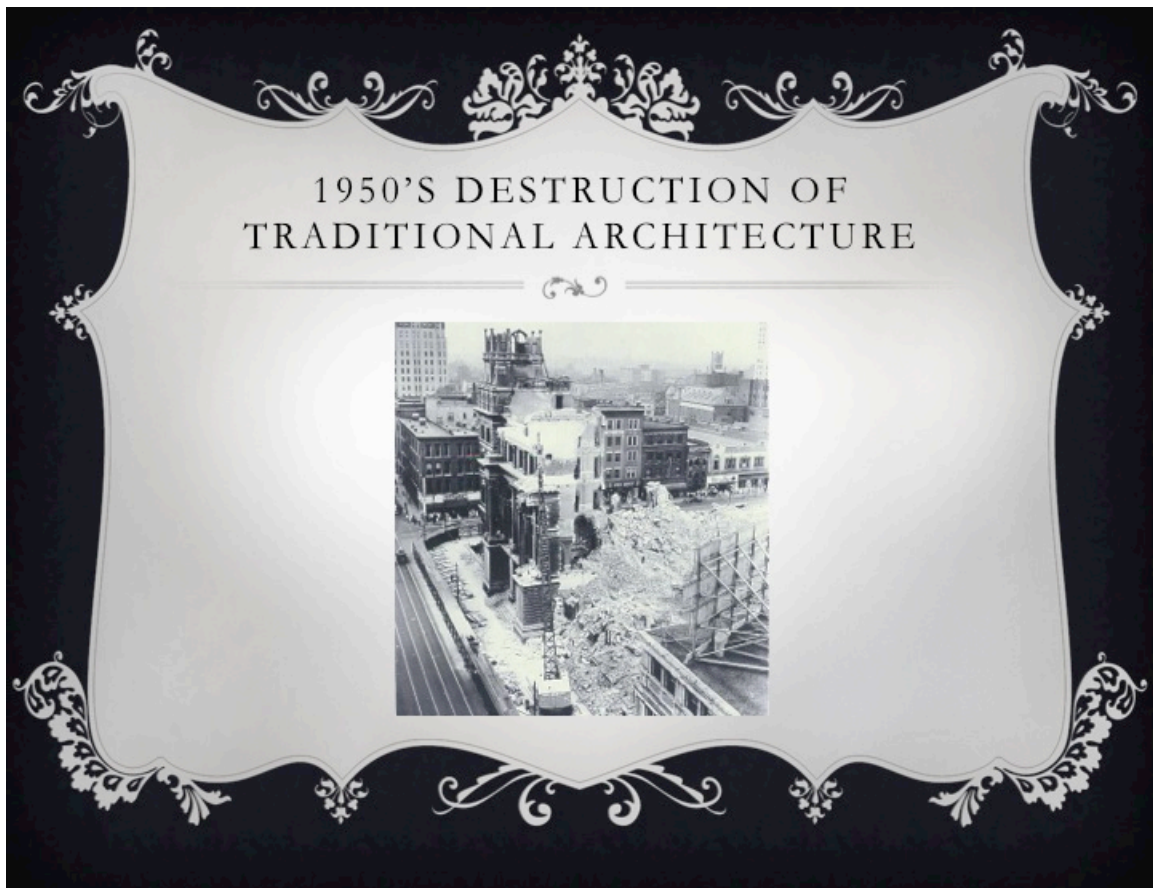


Image of an Indiana man in the 1950's, used as a visual for "Henry" character:



Image of male twins exhibiting dynamic expressions, used as inspiration for “Henry”:

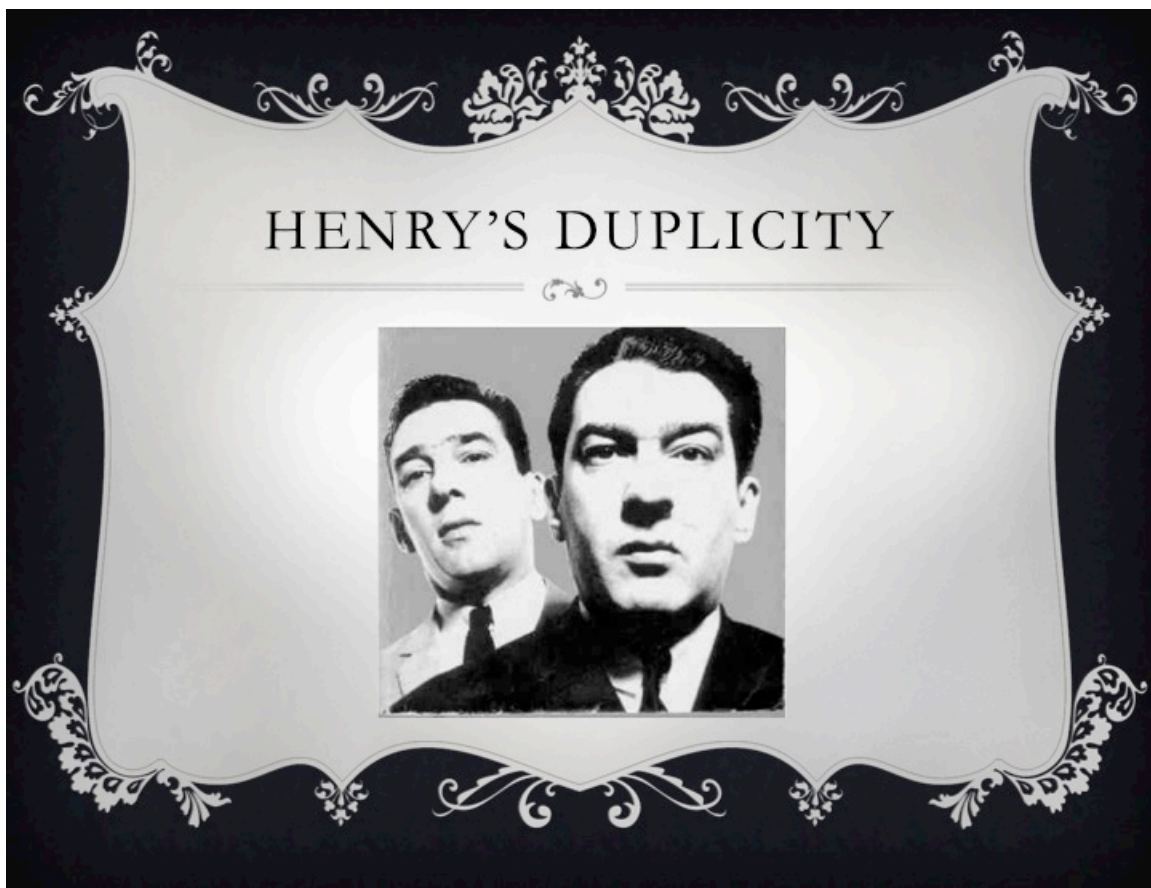


Image of Larry Flint with pornographic magazines, referencing character, Verne Petrie:



Pornographic image of the 1950's, referencing a major source of conflict in the story:



Image of a secretary of the era listening through use of an invented contraption:



Advertisement announcing the “Secretary of the Year”, 1950’s:



Joan and Patricia Miller, reclusive Hollywood twins; an image for “Lady Stenographer”:



Image of an Indiana police officer alive during the era in which the story was written:



Invention of the era, may have inspired Vonnegut's repeated use of the name "George":

GEORGE THE HUMAN ROBOT

The Pilot Officer Makes a Human Robot

WHAT MAY BE A PROTOTYPE of the push-button robot who will fight man's wars for him in the future has been built by National Service Pilot Officer Anthony Sale, stationed at R.A.F., Debden. George, the name he has given his mechanical life-size junior Frankenstein, is seen in the accompanying picture walking for his master, who is controlling him remotely by radio from the Morse transmitter in his hand.

Made of duralumin and aluminium the robot, whose "feet" are on wheels, can be made to walk, turn his head, move an arm and sit down. Pilot Officer Sale, who designed and built it himself in his spare time (it took a month) does not want to talk too much about the mechanism of his invention until he has patented it. It is, however, electrically powered with a 12-volt supply from motor cycle accumulators, and cost £14 to make.

To his creator, George is no novelty. Pilot Officer Sale has been making robots at his home in High Wycombe since he was 15. George is the fifth—and the most successful. He will operate up to 30 feet from his controls, "but," says Pilot Officer Sale: "I haven't dared let him out of sight round a corner yet."

George is wired for sound and will answer questions put to him. But the voice, at this stage, is that of his master speaking into an R/T microphone. Now he is working on Robot No. 6. This electronic genius will be entirely self-actuated, will be able to avoid obstacles and even reason



Image used to inspire characterization of the female dancer portraying the detective role:



Image used to inspire characterization of the female dancer portraying the detective role:

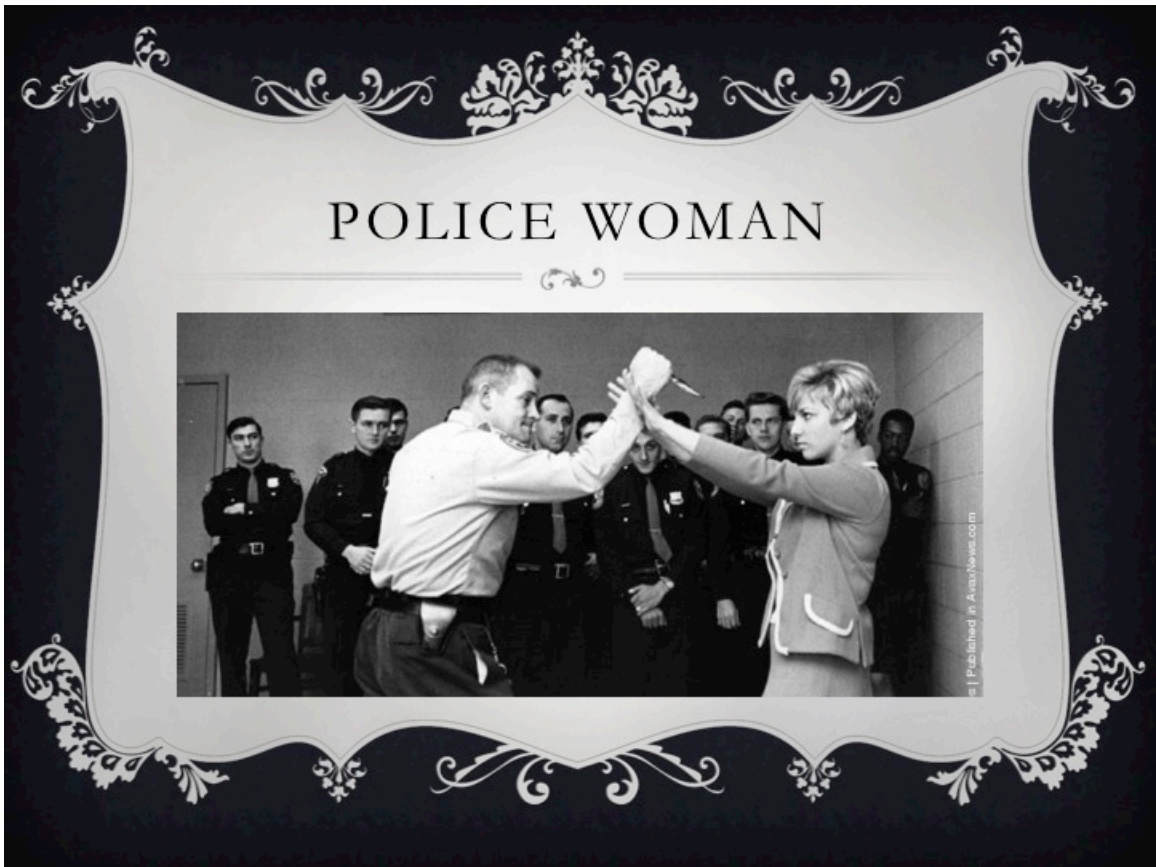
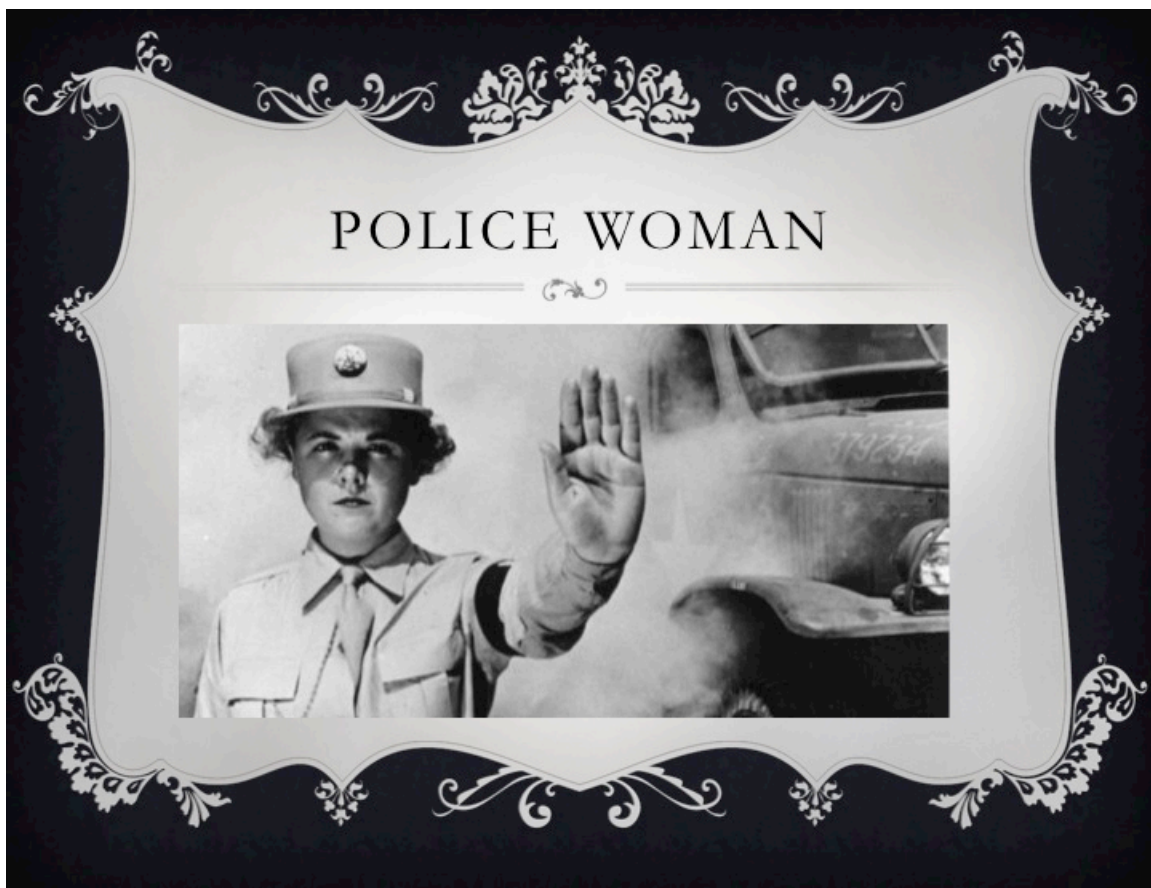


Image used to inspire characterization of the female dancer portraying the detective role:



Dragnet television series, links to video excerpts:

1950'S DETECTIVE DRAMA

❖ [Video Link](#)



The image is a decorative slide with a dark background and a light-colored, ornate frame. At the top, the text '1950'S DETECTIVE DRAMA' is centered in a serif font. Below this, there is a decorative horizontal line with a small flourish in the center. Underneath the line, the text '❖ [Video Link](#)' is displayed. To the left of the main frame, there is a small, square, black and white photograph of a man wearing a fedora and a suit, holding a sign that reads 'JUST THE FACTS, MAN'.

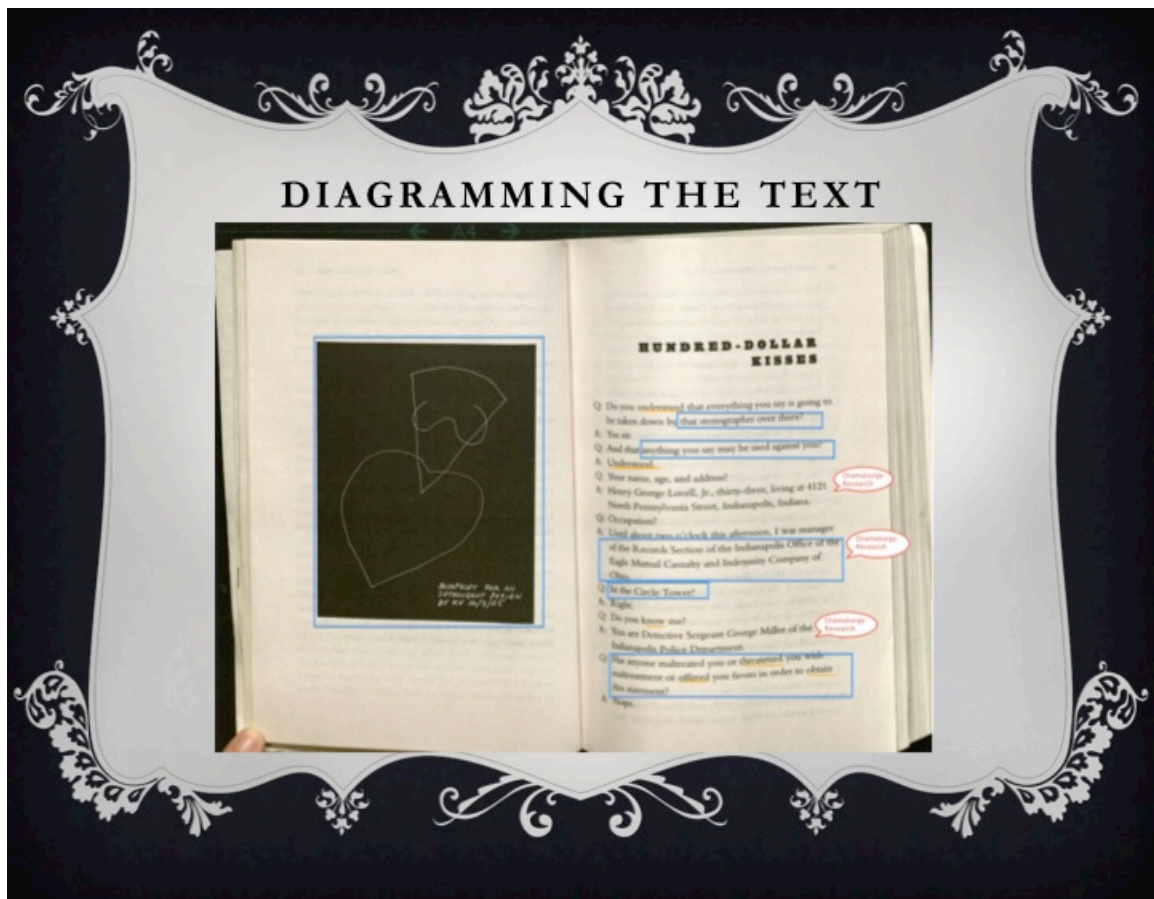
Image of the author:



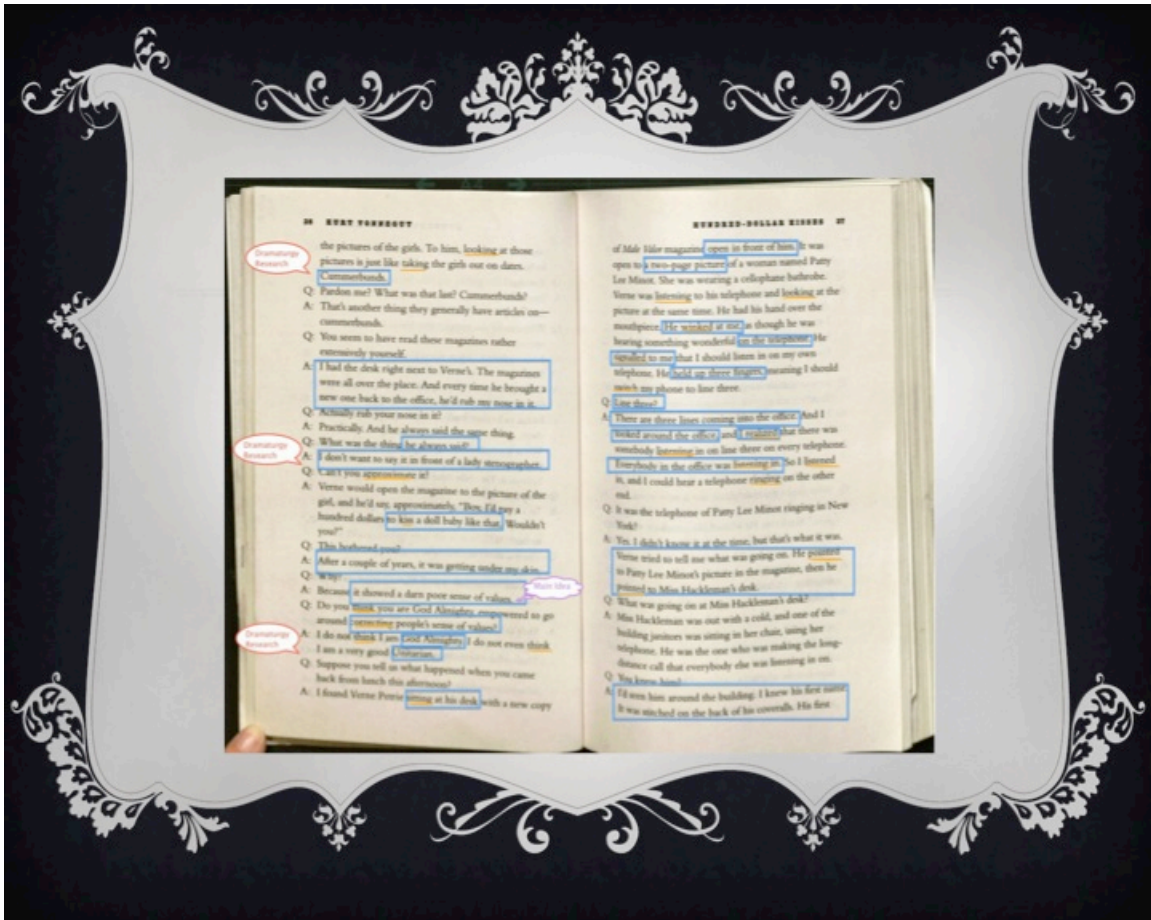
Image and links to documentary footage of the author describing his creative process:



This digital diagram of the text highlights sources in the text for choreographic properties, dramaturgical research, main ideas/central themes, and action words/phrases:







the pictures of the girls. To him, looking at those pictures is just like taking the girls out on dates.

Commenbando?

Q. Pardon me! What was that last? Commenbando?

A. That's another thing they generally have articles on—commenbando.

Q. You seem to have read these magazines rather extensively yourself?

A. I had the desk right next to Verne's. The magazines were all over the place. And every time he brought a new one back to the office, he'd rub my nose in it.

Q. Actually rub your nose in it?

A. Practically. And he always said the same thing.

Q. What was the thing he always said?

A. I don't want to say it in front of a lady stenographer.

Q. What's your approximation?

A. Verne would open the magazine to the picture of the girl, and he'd say, approximately, "Now, I'd pay a hundred dollars to kiss a doll baby like that. Wouldn't you?"

Q. This bothered you?

A. After a couple of years, it was getting under my skin.

Q. Why?

A. Because it showed a darn poor sense of values.

Q. Do you think you are Fred Astaire, empowered to go around correcting people's sense of values?

A. I do not think I am Fred Astaire. I do not even think I am a very good dancer.

Q. Suppose you tell us what happened when you came back from lunch the afternoon?

A. I found Verne Perse sitting at his desk with a new copy

of *Mid-Week Magazine* open in front of him. It was open to a two-page picture of a woman named Patsy Lee Minor. She was wearing a telephone booth.

Verne was listening to his telephone and looking at the picture at the same time. He had his hand over the receiver. He wanted to say, though he was hearing something wonderful on the telephone.

He ought to say that I should listen in on my own telephone. He held up three fingers, saying I should watch my phone to hear three.

Q. How three?

A. There are three Jews coming into the office. And I looked around the office and I realized that there was somebody listening in on line three on every telephone.

Everybody in the office was listening in. So I listened in, and I could hear a telephone ringing on the other end.

Q. It was the telephone of Patsy Lee Minor ringing in New York?

A. Yes, I didn't know it at the time, but that's what it was.

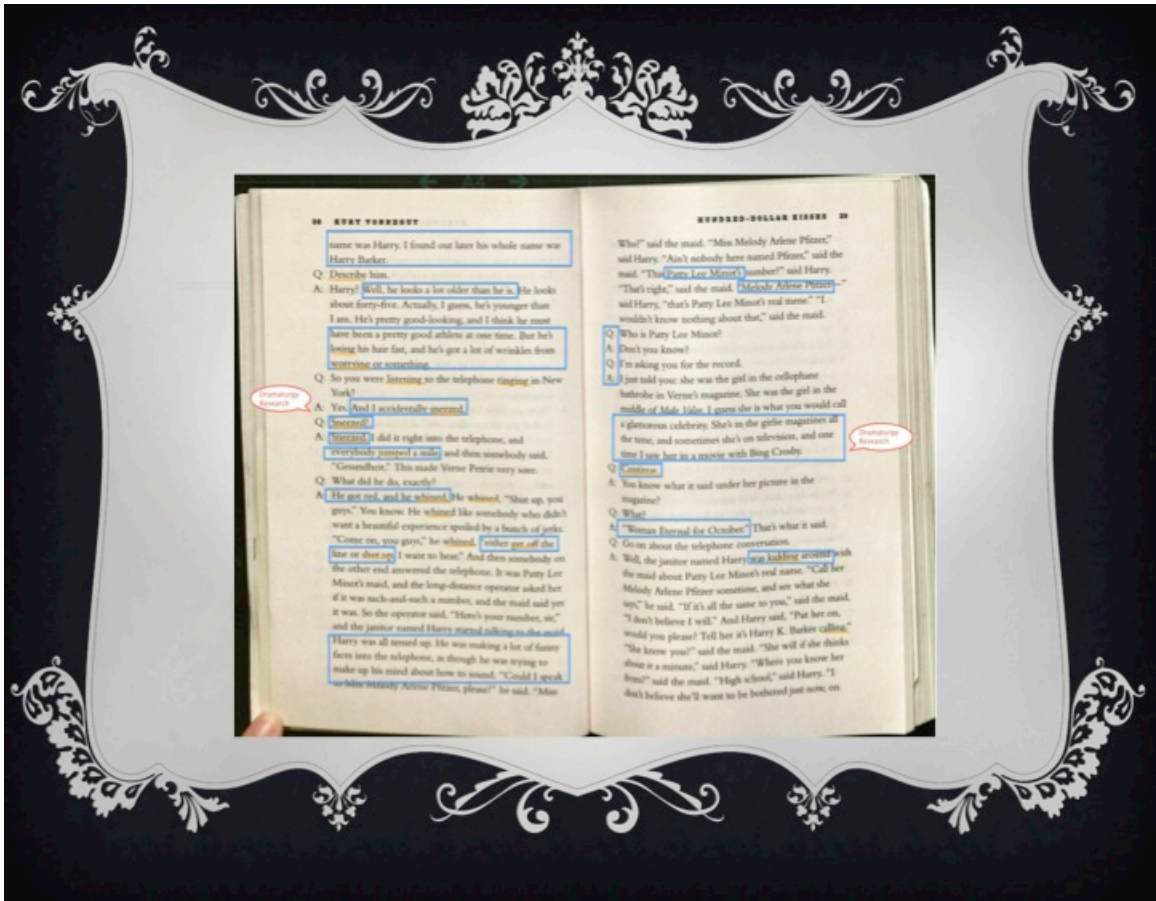
Verne tried to tell me what was going on. He pointed to Patsy Lee Minor's picture in the magazine, then he pointed to Miss Hackleman's desk.

Q. What was going on at Miss Hackleman's desk?

A. Miss Hackleman was out with a cold, and one of the building janitors was sitting in her chair, using her telephone. He was the one who was making the long-distance call that everybody else was listening in on.

Q. You know him?

A. It was him around the building. I knew his first name. It was stitched on the back of his coat. His first



name was Harry. I found out later his whole name was Harry Barker.

Q Describe him.

A Harry? Well, he looks a lot older than he is. He looks about forty-five. Actually, I guess, he's younger than I am. He's pretty good-looking, and I think he must have been a pretty good athlete at one time. But he's losing his hair fast, and he's got a lot of wrinkles from worrying or something.

Q So you were listening to the telephone tapping in New York?

A Yes. And I accidentally overheard

Q Something

A Nothing I did it right onto the telephone, and everybody around I mean and then somebody said, "Goodness!" This made Verne Perrie very sure.

Q What did he do, exactly?

A He got red, and he whined, he whined. "Shut up, you guys." You know. He whined like somebody who didn't want a beautiful experience spoiled by a bunch of jerks. "Come on, you guys," he whined. Other got off the line or shut up. I want to hear." And then somebody on the other end answered the telephone. It was Patty Lee Mince's maid, and the long-distance operator asked her if it was such-and-such a number, and the maid said yet it was. So the operator said, "Here's your number, etc," and the janitor named Harry started talking to the maid.

Harry was all tensed up. He was making a lot of funny faces into the telephone, as though he was trying to make up his mind about how to sound. "Could I speak to Miss Melody Arlene Pflanz, please?" he said. "Miss

Who?" said the maid. "Miss Melody Arlene Pflanz," said Harry. "Ain't nobody here named Pflanz," said the maid. "The Patty Lee Mince's number?" said Harry. "That's right," said the maid. "Melody Arlene Pflanz," said Harry. "That's Patty Lee Mince's real name." "I wouldn't know nothing about that," said the maid.

Q Who is Patty Lee Mince?

A Don't you know?

Q I'm asking you for the record.

A I just told you: she was the girl in the colophonette in Verne's magazine. She was the girl in the middle of Mad, Mad, Mad. I guess she is what you would call a glamorous celebrity. She's in the girls' magazines all the time, and sometimes she's on television, and one time I spw her in a movie with Bing Crosby.

Q Common

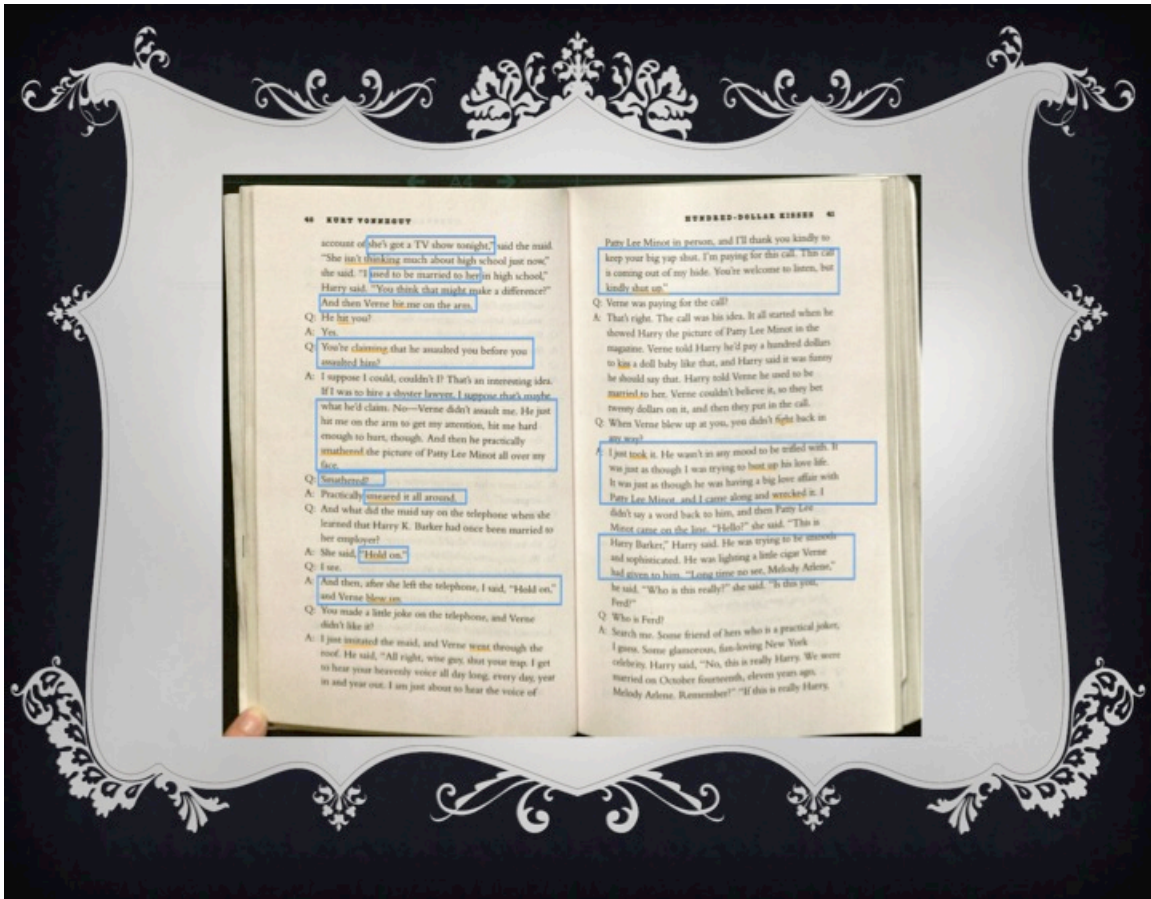
A You know what it said under her picture in the magazine?

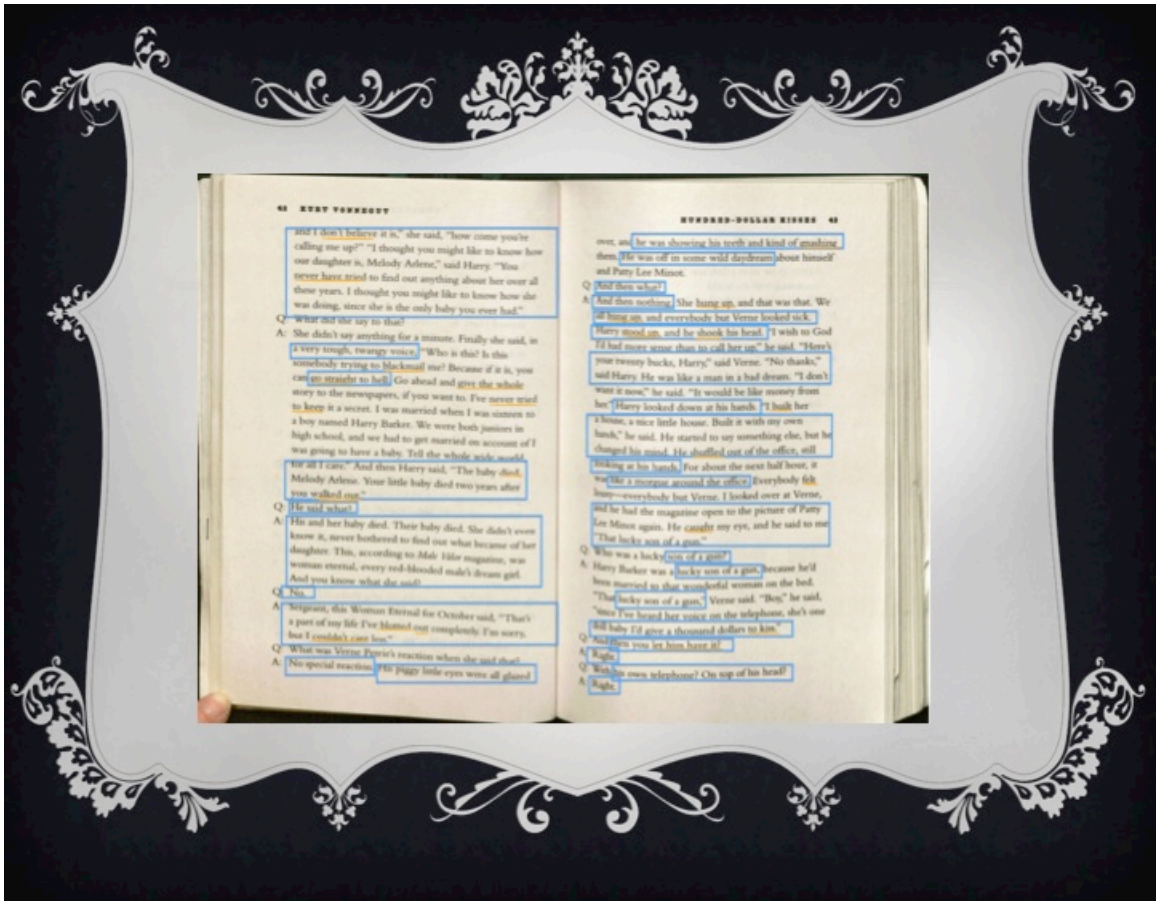
Q What?

A "Russian Emerald for October." That's what it said.

Q Go on about the telephone conversation.

A Well, the janitor named Harry was talking around with the maid about Patty Lee Mince's real name. "Call her Melody Arlene Pflanz sometime, and see what she says," he said. "If it's all the same to you," said the maid. "I don't believe I will." And Harry said, "Put her on, would you please? Tell her it's Harry K. Barker calling." "She knows you!" said the maid. "She will if she thinks about it a minute," said Harry. "Where you know her from?" said the maid. "High school," said Harry. "I don't believe she'll want to be bothered just now, on





and I don't believe it is," she said, "how come you're calling me up?" "I thought you might like to know how our daughter is, Melody Adams," said Harry. "You never have tried to find out anything about her over all these years. I thought you might like to know how she was doing, since she is the only baby you ever had."

Q "What did she say to that?"
A She didn't say anything for a minute. Finally she said, in a very tough, twangy voice, "Who is this? Is this somebody trying to blackmail me? Because if it is, you can go straight to hell! Go ahead and give that whole story to the newspapers, if you want to. I've never tried to keep it a secret. I was married when I was sixteen to a boy named Harry Barker. We were both juniors in high school, and we had to get married on account of I was going to have a baby. Tell the whole wide world."

Q "What did she say?"
A And then Harry said, "The baby died, Melody Adams. Your little baby died two years after you walked out."

Q "He said what?"
A "He and her baby died. Their baby died. She didn't even know it, never bothered to find out what became of her daughter. This, according to Mel Hill magazine, was woman eternal, every red-blooded male's dream girl. And you know what she said!"

Q "No."
A "Not again, this Women's Journal for October said, 'That's a part of my life I've blotted out completely. I'm sorry, but I couldn't care less.'"

Q "What was Verne Paper's reaction when she said that?"
A "No special reaction. His piggy little eyes were all glazed

over, and he was showing his teeth and kind of grinding them. He was off in some wild daydream about himself and Patsy Lee Minors."

Q "Did she when?"
A "And then nothing. She hung up, and that was that. We all hung up, and everybody but Verne looked sick. Harry stood up, and he shook his head. 'I wish to God I'd had more sense than to call her up,' he said. 'Here's your twenty bucks, Harry,' said Verne. 'No thanks,' said Harry. He was like a man in a bad dream. 'I don't want it now,' he said. 'It would be like money from her.'"

Q "What did he do?"
A "Harry looked down at his hands. 'I built her a house, a nice little house. Built it with my own hands,' he said. He started to say something else, but he changed his mind. He shuffled out of the office, still looking at his hands. For about the next half hour, it was like a morgue around the office. Everybody felt lame—everybody but Verne. I looked over at Verne, and he had the magazine open to the picture of Patsy Lee Minors again. He caught my eye, and he said to me, 'That lucky son of a gun.'"

Q "Who was a lucky son of a gun?"
A "Harry Barker was a lucky son of a gun, because he'd been married to that wonderful woman on the bed."

Q "Lucky son of a gun?"
A "Verne said, 'Boy,' he said, 'you've heard her voice on the telephone, she's one of the best I'll give a thousand dollars to him.'"

Q "Did she ever let him hear it?"
A "Right."

Q "What was Verne's reaction when she said that?"
A "Right. He was like a man in a bad dream. On top of his head!"

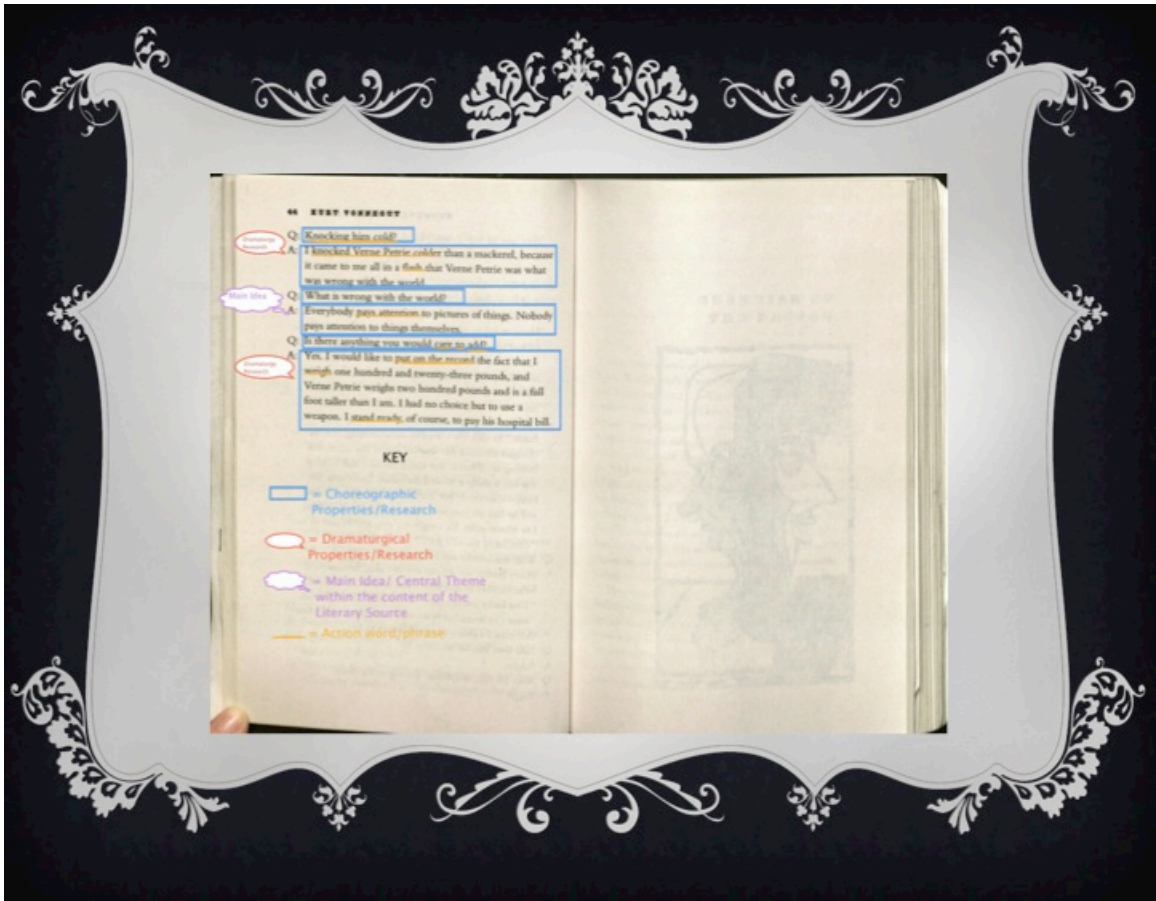
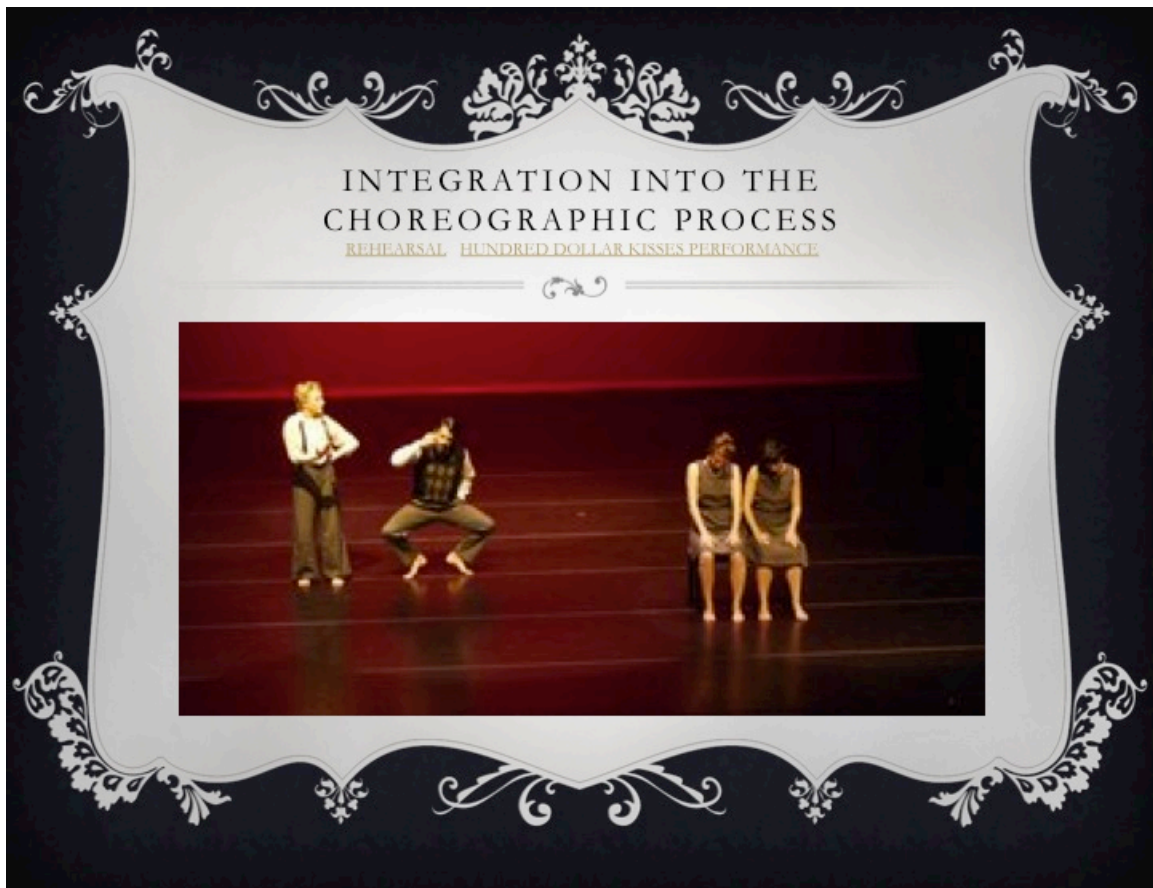


Photo and links to video footage of “Hundred Dollar Kisses” rehearsal and performance:



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