Culture and Playback Theatre

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In the past 4 years, I have been involved in Playback Theater in both the U.S. and Japan. This paper consists of my experiences, findings and thoughts as a result of having the unique perspective of doing Playback Theater in two very different cultural contexts and societies.

**Culture and Playback Theater**

It is difficult to explain culture. Culture is an experience in a context. Culture is the air we breathe, the language you speak and hear and a way of understanding the meaning of the language. Culture is a way of thinking, a way of being, a manner of being with other humans, a notion about how to live and to die.

We use the word culture often in American society, however, culture and cultural influences are often unrecognized or unappreciated (Sue, 1991, p54). The concept of culture has been defined by social scientists in many different manners. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) suggested that culture is the pattern of behaviors transmitted by symbols that represent the distinctive
achievements of human groups; culture can also be seen as the set of rules and norms that promote stability and harmony within a society (Gibbs & Huang, 1989); Banks (1987) defines culture as the behavior patterns, symbols, institutions, values, and human products of a society.

Playback Theater has been introduced to different countries and cultures and used for self-empowerment, community building, and social change. Playback Theater is akin to a chameleon, which adapts to its environment and culture, to serve its purpose of peace making. Playback Theater has intrinsic forms, tools, and basic structural function of bringing people together; however in practice, Playback is fully influenced by a culture and the people within the culture.

I believe that once Playback Theater is introduced to a country or a community, the Playback Theater ÒchameleonÓ naturally changes its colors so that the people can breath, look, touch, feel, project their own cultivated identities, and experience this form of theater with a sense of being safe within their own context.
Axelson says (1998):

The cultural core of any group is primarily a set of techniques for satisfying needs, for solving problems, and for adjusting to the external environment and to each other. Thus, from the psychological viewpoint of adjustment, culture is the traditional way of solving problems – it is simply the responses that have been accepted because they have met with success (p404).

The culture is an embodiment of history and how people learned to resolve problems. Growing up in the snow country, Niigata, in Japan, I never saw my neighbors confronting each other. Confrontation was a taboo given the harsh reality of the winter in Niigata. When winter arrived, they had to help each other with the shoveling of snow so that their roofs did not collapse under its weight. Conflict avoidance was practically a necessity for their survival. In the U.S., a nation valuing
independence, people learned to speak up and in doing so, learned to fight for their rights and freedoms. This behavior is encouraged.

Life and routine evoke emotions, some emotions are encouraged, such as shame by Japanese culture and perhaps self-righteous anger by the American culture, to keep the society functional and contained. In the research by Markus and Kitayama (1991), Japanese people are thought to have an interdependent self and people in the U.S are thought to have an independent self. However, I believe that no culture is limited to one type of self-construal. Very few people will maintain one kind of self-construal throughout different circumstances. Two self-construals may be thought of as poles of a continuum along which people and cultures are plotted rather than as dichotomous categories (Shimizu & Levine, 2001, p33,).

How is Playback Theater influenced by culture in the U.S and in Japan?
Diversity in Playback Theater

In the U.S.A.

Diversity is a very American word. People in this country use it in politics, schools, the work place, arts and within the community. Diversity may mean your socioeconomic background, country of origin, sexual orientation, race, or the color of skin. Having Diversity is very encouraged in this country. When I hear this word, I often get filled with doubt and a sense of caution.

The use of this word makes me uneasy sometimes because of its overuse, without cultivated awareness. Often, I come into a situation where people look at me, an Asian woman, and a few other people of color in a group, and make comments about how great it is to have diversity. When we use the word, diversity, I believe there is a sense of responsibility that should accompany it. People take a look at my appearance and get satisfaction because it meets the code of Good things to have in this society, but
without ever getting to know me, nor the country I came from, nor the history of Japan, nor how I have been treated in the U.S. as an immigrant. Strange thing is that people recognize me but never see me. Diversity often seems to serve the idea of diversity but not a genuine interest in the diversity of the people themselves.

I truly believe that embracing ÒdiversityÓ is not such an easy process. It is not about having an African American, Latino, or Asian person present and to be satisfied with it. It is about unlearning. It is about humbly unlearning what we know already, and learning what we do not know. Embracing diversity in a true sense takes extreme courage, an open heart, the breaking down of our defenses and a willingness to unlearn.

When discussing the benefits of having people of color in a playback company, I notice people often mean having members of different physical appearance.

Pierre vanden Berghe (1967) defines race as:

The human group that defines itself, and/or is defined by other groups as different by virtue of innate or immutable characteristics. These physical characteristics are in turn
assumed to be intrinsically related to moral, intellectual and other non-physical attributes or abilities. *A race therefore, is a group that is socially defined on the basis of physical criteria.*

I believe that in talk of diversity, there is a risk of overlooking a *person* within those colors and appearances.

It is interesting to emphasize people of color in the playback company because we want to have a company, which reflects various people in our society. Having ‘diversity’ in the company also allows tellers and audience members to *project and assume related experiences between themselves and the particular actor they choose.*

It was a truly interesting experience when I was invited as a guest actor to perform for Playback for Change in Philadelphia. It was a performance done by people of color for a 'people of color' audience. I was chosen to be a teller’s actor in one story. An African American male teller in his 50’s told a story about being discriminated against, yet keeping his dignity, as a young person. It was a powerful story. Would he have told the story if there was
a mixed audience? I think he may have chosen not to. There was a rhythm of energy in the audience members that were very similar to each other. It became a safe place that each one of us did not have to worry about standing out or worrying about offending anyone. There was a common theme of all of us being “minorities” in this society.

When Sakura Playback Theater Company did our 2nd annual public performance in April, I invited quite a few Japanese friends to come to the show, and even though as a conductor I have done my best for everyone to tell stories, it seemed difficult for Japanese people in this mixed group of an audience to raise their hands. They are not used to raising hand in public. How the motivation to tell a story is formed, and how quickly or slowly the will to take action and tell a story varies among different races and people with different personalities. Further, in some cultures such as Japan, raising a hand is not an encouraged behavior.

The Playback For Change did a series of three performances: a performance by caucasian company for caucasian audience, a
performance by people of color for people of color, and a finally a performance for the mixed audience. It showed that the company had time to be patient with each audience group, and created a space for everyone, and finally integrate the community by performing for the mixed audience. I believe that if we decided to do a performance for Korean people living in Japan, perhaps, the same approach might be necessary for them to speak out without fear. Then, integration happens (having both Korean and Japanese audience) after. Understanding the culture of the audience and making a conscious effort as a company is an important lesson I learned from Playback for Change. It is a courageous approach but creates safe spaces for different groups in any society to cultivate a true acceptance of each member of the society.

Since diversity is often discussed in the Playback Theater world in the U.S. I feel strongly about educating myself and promoting the true awareness of this word within company members by allowing members to educate each other about our history and culture, and at our performances for different
populations. This requires a deep interest in people, patience, and again, unlearning.

In Japan

What is diversity in Japan? Diversity in Japanese is ÒtayouseiÓ. In the Japanese Playback Theater world, this word is unheard of. When I asked Kayo san, a leader for Playback AZ in Japan, about tayousei, she told me that the main ones are age, gender, and occupation. They seem to explore ÔdiversityÔ in looking at differences in individuals. In Japan, diversity exists where housewives and working women mingle together. Diversity is there when you have a salaried man, a free-lance painter, and a student within the same Playback Theater company. Diversity exists when we have men and women together in the audience. AZ did a performance with a theme of stories "between people and pets" at the Veterinarian Conference. Performing for an AIDS conference, or performing for public schools is the
Japanese process for developing ÒdiverseÓ audiences. As stated before, the American concept of diversity does not exist in Japan. Being a ÒminorityÓ in the U.S. has helped me to identify non-Japanese people in Japan. There are women from neighboring Asian countries who work in Japan doing Òmizu shoubaiÓ, club entertainment. Also, some non-Japanese women are brought to Japan through the "marriage-arrangement-business" to marry Japanese men in rural areas, hoping for more stable life. Discrimination towards the Korean population and aboriginal people in Japan continues. The awareness or effort to serve different races and ethnicities in Japan seems minimal, and might require more education.

McCormack (2001) states:

Contemporary Japan has constructed a system for the exploitation of Asian women that is in some ways analogous. Just as estimates of the numbers of wartime comfort women range from 100,000 to 200,000, so today a figure of at least 100,000 is put on the number of women from neighboring Asian countries who are employed in the Òwater tradesÓ (mizu shoubai) as entertainers in nightclubs, snack bars, or karaoke lounges. Many of them enter Japan illegally, drawn by false promises of employment, but they quickly fall into
the clutches of a violent, organized human trafficking in
which rape, forced prostitution, and sexual slavery are
common. Matsui Yayori, the Japanese journalist and long-
term Southeast Asian correspondent for the major national
daily paper, the Asahi, estimates that there are probably
40,000 such contemporary comfort women in Japan. Many
are from Thailand and the Philippines, with somewhat
smaller groups from other countries such as Taiwan, China,
and Korea (p179).

Another group are women who come to Japan to marry Japanese
men, hoping for a more financially stable and better life.

A second group of Asian women has been brought to Japan in
the past decade as marriage partners for young men of Japan’s
isolated rural communities. There are 1,000 Japanese small
businesses involved in matching the demand of the
depopulated Japanese countryside with a supply of brides
from Southeast Asia, Korea, and China and this in effect has
become another commodity market, highly lucrative at about
four million yen per head, more or less equal to what the
family of a Japanese male would normally expect to pay
toward a wedding. Though some of these relationships
succeed in bridging the gap of language and culture, and they
carry a potential for opening Japanese rural and mountain
communities to a fresh and direct sense of Asia through the
creation of crow-border family networks of cooperation and
understanding, in fact the common assumption is that the
women will submerge and negate their Asian identity as a
condition for entry into Japanese society, and that their
children will be nothing but Japanese. The experience of many
of these women is isolation and discrimination (McCormack,
2001, p179).
I imagine that being in Japan as a foreigner must be a challenging experience. There is a strong sense of Japan being a one race nation-homogenization of one group of people. The concept of race is never talked about and does not exist in the consciousness of most Japanese residents.

Articles Fourteen and Fifteen proscribe discrimination as political, economic, or social relations Òbecause of race, creed, sex, social status, or family origin.Ó In Keeping with the universal spirit of Constitution as a whole, these rights attach, according to the English text of the Constitution, to Òall peopleÓ. However, that provision was drastically diluted in the Japanese text, where Òall peopleÓ was translated as Òall Japanese citizens.Ó The experience of Japan’s aboriginal inhabitants (the Ainu) or of women, foreign residents in Japan (especially Koreans), outcast residents (burakumin), etc., is that such guarantees have been worth little in practice. The aboriginal peoples, for example, struggle, thus far in vain, to assert their claim to relatively minor things, such as the right to fish the rivers of their homelands, let alone even begin to assert any rights to land. The government of their country does not recognize the Ainu as negotiating partners. The negotiations in Australia leading to the recognition of aboriginal land rights (the Mabo legislation) in December 1993, and the apology by the New Zealand prime minister in May 1995 for nineteenth-century aggression and deprivation of land of the indigenous Maori inhabitants, were therefore of great interest to the Ainu
people, although these events were only minimally covered in Japanese media (McCormack, 2001, p201).

Aside from the afore-mentioned populations, there are homosexual or bisexual people, children who live as a ÒainokoÓ (mixed child), born between Japanese women and American soldiers in Okinawa, and many others. Where can these non-Japanese people and/or unrecognized people tell their stories? How can we provide Òall peopleÓ an equal opportunity to tell their stories?

Japanese Playback AZ began performing for schools focused on Ijime (bullying), in the hope of cultivating awareness of equality via story telling in a small circle (in a class room).

In the future, I hope that there will be a company which consists of both Japanese and non-Japanese people in Japan. Also, I hope that people of different sexual orientation are encouraged to participate. Mainly, the current playback
theater companies in Japan serves the Japanese population.

In Japan, there is a saying, Òthe nail that sticks up will be pounded downÓ. This means that anyone who thinks and behaves in any way different from the historically sanctified Japanese norm will be beaten into conformity. I remember as a schoolgirl the fear to raise my hand, to avoid Òsticking outÓ. If I said too much, there was a mixed air of curiosity, a feeling of judgement and uncomfortability from my classmates in the classroom.

De Mante (1997) says:

Because the Japanese were isolated from other people during most of their history, and were ruled for nearly a thousand years by successive military dictatorship that were based on enforcing both political and cultural conformity, they developed an extreme sensitivity to any variation in the Japanese Way. Any attitude, behavior, or appearance that varied even to a minor degree from what they were used to – and automatically expected – was regarded as anti-social and un-Japanese (p132).

Playback Theater first serves as a self-discovery process for the people who practice it. Performing Playback Theater
in Japan can be a non-comformist thing to do. Performing in a Playback Theater may have been a “nail that sticks out” experience for many Japanese people. I imagine that it must have been truly an amazing experience for most Japanese playback practitioners to learn its OK to stick out, to raise a hand, or to be on stage, and to hear their own voices over the crowd. Practitioners in Japan are learning to tell their stories for the first time. It is scary, challenging, unusual, out of the norm. Most Japanese Playback practitioners express a sense of debt to Playback Theater, in how it changed them, served as an eye opener, and as a personal-growth experience. It might take more time to reach the non-Japanese or unrecognized populations mentioned above in Japan, however I believe that the awareness for both self-development and of “others” can happen simultaneously for Japanese people through more education and workshops encouraging awareness in this issue.
Concept of *En* and Playback Theater in Japan

In Japan, *deai* (first meeting between people) is considered to be a most valuable experience and has a lasting meaning even though it occurs just for a brief moment. We also do not know how the *deai* (meeting) will effect us in many forms for the rest of our lives. Therefore, each moment is encouraged to be fully experienced. Each person, and each encounter is encouraged to be experienced with the deepest respect. This concept was well reflected on the theme of the International Playback Theater Conference held in Japan in 2003 as Ichigo Ichie.

In Japan, we use a word *Go-en* very often. It means connection. It means that there has been an invisible thread between people or events leading them to their contact or culmination. De Mante (1997) defines *en* as follows:

Buddhism, imported into Japan from China some 1500 years ago, had profound effect on the way the Japanese view human relationships, personal as well as business. Unlike Christian
Philosophy, which taught that all relationships should be based on humanized principles of love and respect on one hand and fear of God’s revenge on the other, Buddhist philosophy took a cosmic approach and taught that relationships were a matter of cause and effect. The existence or non-existence of a relationship between individuals or companies, as well as the reason why a relationship exists or the possibility of a relationship developing, are expressed in terms of en which basically means “connection” or “relationship”. If there is en, a relationship already exists or can be developed. If there is no en, relationship and one cannot be developed. In other words, en is both cause and effect, and without it nothing happens (p22).

This concept of *en* is in the air in the Japanese society—in every space, every encounter, every moment in Japan. A tired person encounters a flower and is moved by the flower’s simple manner of beauty and its simple focus on life. This is *deai* (meeting) due to *en* (a pre-existing connection). Through this *en*, a person might gain strength to keep going with life. There are different *deai* that happens due to *en*. A *deai* between a person and nature. A *deai* between a person and a person. A *deai* between a person and a situation. A *deai* encourages a moment of self-reflection and give opportunity to meditate on his or her own meaning.
of life. The fact that I am there sitting in the circle with AZ players when I visit Japan is due to en. Every teller that comes up and tells his or her story is there as a result of en. Trains get delayed and audiences come to the performance late, all effecting the stories, due to en. And since en is both cause and effect, we would never know what each event or encounter meant. However, there is a deep humility and total trust in letting go. Whatever is happening is for a reason. I find this part of Japanese culture very beautiful and empowering since it teaches us to let go. I often become moved by Japanese people who live with this sense of en. In viewing life through en, everything happens for a reason. Mitsuo Aida, a Japanese calligrapher, truly believed that suffering a very abusive mother was en. His mother's abuse, in turn guided him to walk a compassionate path that was the opposite of her.

Japanese Playback AZ’s trust in each encounter in each moment, and an appreciation for each show, even some with
a bitter-aftertaste is deeply rooted in their cultural belief in en. The AZ members are appreciative and their positive attitude in trust has taught me to trust. I also feel truly honored that I have had an en to work with them.

**Implicitness and Explicitness of tellers in Playback theater**

I have been fortunate to stand on stage as a playback player both in Japan and the U.S. My task is the same: to listen to the teller and the essence of the story. In the Japanese language, we use the word ÒkumitoruÓ for listening, a verb that means sifting up something from water. A story is told, and in the story, there is a dense essence. My image of ÒkumitoruÓ is that I put my hands together to make a container and put my hands down into the water, and by carefully lifting my hands, the essence remains in my hands.

In practicing Playback Theater in two countries, I notice the differences in languages, tellers’ mode of expression, and
audiences’ reactions to playback theater, and my being.

As Japanese conductors conduct the story, many tellers describe their feelings indefinitively, yet provide rich texture in a subtle way. Japanese tellers often do not identify emotions so clearly. They are not used to that. They describe the situation and their position in the situation. In Japanese society, people are used to be asked for their ÒthoughtsÓ instead of ÒfeelingsÓ. This becomes a challenge as a conductor wants to get the sense of their experience not their thoughts on the experiences of the story. We have a lot of ways of describing feelings without naming them. A teller might say it was like a Òfuwa fuwaÓ feeling. *Fuwa fuwa* inspires in every Japanese person an image of a feather flying in the wind, or a white cloud and its’ softness. A Japanese teller would not say ÒI was excitedÓ or ÒhappyÓ but instead might use the word Òfuwa fuwaÓ. Japanese actors visualize the image and Òsift outÓ the meaning of *fuwa fuwa* and play it back. Japanese tellers often do not reveal their subjective emotions so it becomes the company members’ job to sift the
direct emotion from a more indirect description of the story.

On the other hand, in the U.S., tellers often can articulate their subjective emotions by saying, ÒI was angryÓ or ÒI was shockedÓ. As an actor, I am listening but also trying to also listen to something that was not expressed in the tellers’ language. The experience might not be as simple or direct as Òbeing angryÓ or ÒshockedÓ but also something else.

Practicing Playback Theater in both countries, I realize, as I listen to a story, I am not really paying attention to the literal words or the expression of the tellers, but I am tuning in to something behind the words, something hidden, but of great importance. I expose my being and absorb things that are explicit and implicit.

My trust in something hidden, and perhaps universal has also allowed me to become bold in my approach as a player. I believe in the energy that my body creates when moving. As I hear a story in English, sometimes a Japanese word or image will come up in my mind. I learned not to hesitate to use them when appropriate.
for the enactment. My trust in the audience, their ability to focus on the essence of a story, has grown in step with a greater trust in myself. The pulse of this heartbeat, shared among diverse cultures in two nations, has grown more solid; steadier along side the progression of my Playback journey.

**Personal Journey to Playback Theater**

I was born and raised in Japan until 18 years of age.

It is 13 years that I am in this country.

I came to this country on my own, without a family.

I spoke no English and leaned to speak and hear meanings behind the language.

I miss Japan when I am in the U.S.

I miss New York when I am in Japan.

I have someone I love in New York.

I have family and friends I love in Japan.

I feel intense sadness about my life.
I feel complete happiness about how I have lived my life until now.

I have compassion.

I believe in peace.

I can understand stories in English.

I can understand stories in Japanese.

I can discern their Essence.

I left my country as if escaping. I literally did not know how to go on living when I was 18. Losing all of my hair at the age of 13 became a starting point for my identity as an outsider. I no longer looked the same as everyone else. In applying to three high schools at the time, I was turned down by two of them because I wore a wig and a big hat. Schools had uniforms and I could not fit their dress code looking the way I did. I was told by teachers and family members not to complain because the school’s harmony was more important than accepting a student who looked different.

At the time, as of all of my peers were applying for prestigious universities in Japan, I knew that there was no university or
college to which I could belong. I knew that some people have been filtered out due to different reasons; no arm, no leg, no hair, no father, no money, etc. I did not want to go on to study at an university which consists only of students accepted by the society through “the code of being normal”. I wanted to be valued for who I was.

When I came to the U.S. I was immediately attracted to Theater and later psychology. I met a few people who guided me and respected me. I also experienced an ever shrinking self-esteem due to the language barrier. Communicating in English was extremely challenging. I also began to notice that people in this country perceived me as “an Asian”. I grew up for 18 years in a country where everyone was harmonized in one race. At least, that was my reality at the time. We were Japanese. All of a sudden I came to a country where words like minority, white, black, Asian, and Latino existed. I learned that in this country I am called a minority, and because of it, I would be treated as one who belonged to a certain category. People made assumptions
because of my appearance as a Japanese woman. As a person growing up in Japan where there was only one race visible, coming to the U.S was a strange experience in terms of being a ÒminorityÓ in this country. I remember that simple thing like walking on the street in the U.S became an extremely exhausting, and stressful experience. In Japan, I would walk and come across a glass door in public and I used to see ÒmeÓ in reflection. It was simple. Now when I walk, I see myself and an Asian woman in the reflection. Learning that people project certain images and stereotype due to my appearance, I learned to see me as others perceive me. As I began to see two ÒmeÓ, I became very tired of being in a public place in this country. It became a burden that my existence was now in a category besides ÒmeÓ.

Being a foreigner in this country is an unstable experience due to immigration. What type of visa you possess or do not possess decides what classes you belong to among non-U.S citizens in this country. When encountering another foreinger, a question like ÒDo you have a H-1 visa, F-1 visa, Artist Visa, E-visaÓ decides
the relationship. A lot of abuses come out of just a mere fact of not having a green card or being a U.S citizen. After being a student, real struggles began as a foreigner in this country for me. Employers who sponsored me to be in this country knew they had power to hire me for below average wages. American employers knew that I needed their sponsorship for me to breathe air in this country. My conditional status meant that if I was fired or quit my job, I had to leave the country within 10 days of the resignation or I would be deported. And that is what happened. I decided to leave this country in 1999, after being in America for 7 years, because I felt I was losing my dignity as a human being just to stay in this country. I spent three months in Japan without knowing what to do. I felt depressed and did not know if I could survive Japan again. The fear of losing hair haunted me again.

I believe that my first 7 years in the U.S served me in becoming aware of my interests, and path, and to get away from my country of origin. I loved theater, psychology, and I learned to see myself from different perspectives. I needed to not be in Japan
to have all the awareness of ÒmeÓ in a different context.

I came back to the U.S. with an acceptance letter from NYU in drama therapy program. I was ambivalent to return to the U.S. because I felt I had been hurt enough especially with the struggle with visas. I perceived being in America a very negative and extremely lonely experiences as a foreigner in this country.

After being introduced to Playback Theater within the NYU drama therapy program, I asked Jonathan Fox if there was anyone doing Playback Theater in Japan and I would like to contact that person. I remember getting the interplay magazine and looking at this Japanese woman with a big pair of glasses many times. She appeared intellectual with a hint of pride. I was intimidated and scared to contact this person. What if she brushed me away? I remember asking Jonathan to write a formal letter of recommendation. This woman was Kayo san, who later have become my mentor and helped me to embrace Japan again. She changed my life.
Visiting the AZ practice was a nervous experience for me. Would they judge me, or like me? I attended their 2 days workshop with AZ players and I felt that I wanted to tell my story of hair loss and my escape from the country. Being able to tell my story to a group of Japanese people was a cathartic moment. I could not stop crying. They cried with me. Until I met AZ, I did not know that there were people in Japan who had room for stories. It was an eye opening experience. The whole new positive experience flew into my life due to this ÒIchigo IchieÓ. This experience encouraged me to breathe in Japan again, with the trust that I will not suffocate as I had when I was 18.

Playback Theater became a vehicle for me to develop an awareness that when there was room for story, there is a room for breathing. People need to breathe to live. We need a place to tell stories to keep living. It has become my strong passion to learn about this form.

When I took practice course, I knew I had to create my company. I did not have a purpose or strong mission statement but
I just felt I had to. When 9.11 happened I realized that I had no place that I could express my story. Feeling lost and extreme loneliness, I remember just sitting around union square listening to a man with the guitar. I remember walking into a church and walking out of the church feeling even more lonely. I wanted to create a village for myself. I founded Sakura Playback Theater Company in July 2002. Being a leader gave me whole another experience as a playback practitioner and a human being.

I also realized that being a leader, I am limited in what I can say, and dealing with projections from the company members, managing a company often do not allow me to tell my stories.

Leaving my country of origin and living in the U.S made me experience being an outsider and develop empathy. I learned not to judge because I have been misjudged wrongly. I have been isolated. I have cultivated a flexible heart to listen, and feel for someone comes from different place. I will not exchange my experience for anything else. My heart became my tool.
Conclusion

This world is inhabited by all kinds of people. They are isolated by land and water, religion, customs, habits. The mind and hearts of these people are much alike. Under sudden or stressed emotions, they blossom forth or explode in riots, fights, dance song, prayer. At such times, they become one mind, one heart. And the world vibrates with the intensity of their feelings. Emotions, angers, laughter. Gandhi ji.

As I write this paper, I am just finishing up my two years of running the Sakura Playback Theater Company. The last two years led me to experience frustration, anger, strongly touching emotion, and humility. I learned many lessons, which I never imagined I would learn when I was just a member of a group. By writing this paper, I wanted to reflect my deai with playback theater, and the ideas and discoveries I encountered while involved with Playback Theater in both Japan and the U.S. Being in two countries performing Playback Theater integrated my disparate selves, my leadership style and my life. Embracing two countries within my heart has enriched my life.


Miller, Alan S. & Kanazawa, Satoshi (2000). Order by Accident:


