

# **DRAMATIC CONFLICT: EXPLORING INTERACTIVE THEATRE AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL FOR ADDRESSING ISSUES OF HETEROSEXISM IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to determine the impact of interactive theatre on college students in regard to heterosexism and/or homonegativity. Students experienced the presentation of an interactive scene utilizing Forum Theatre techniques and exploring heterosexist/homonegative issues. The research question was considered in terms of both positive and negative influences on audience members and performers. Fifty-seven students participated. These students were comprised of three cohorts: heterosexual audience members, LGB audience members, and the actors who had performed in the scene. Methods of data collection included group interviews, survey responses, and observation. The data demonstrated that when students engaged with the performance, the presentation impacted one or more of the participants' multicultural competencies. These competencies consisted of an expanded knowledge about the consequences of various intervention strategies; an increased awareness of oneself, one's surroundings, others, or oppression in general; the acquisition of tools that were found to be helpful in facilitating dialogues about oppression; and/or an increased willingness to take action against oppression.