Radical Welcome in Youth Performance Spaces on Chicago's South Side:

The Child as Hungry, the Child as Village, the Child as Visible

by

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ABSTRACT

My project maps assets of welcome in the built environment in youth performing arts spaces. What signifiers reveal how a physical space conceptualizes the child, reflects professed theological claims, and cues youth to practice ownership and experience belonging? I explore the cultural capital that emerges from the sites and I assert theological implications of the findings. Through mixed qualitative, quantitative, and arts-based methods, I employ asset-based and cultural mapping tools to collect data. I parse theories of space, race, and capital. Half of the ten sites are faith-based; others make room for practices that participants bring to the table. Therefore, I discuss theologies and theories about racialized, religious, public, and arts spaces. My research shows that one ethnographic task for the arts groups is unearthing and embedding neighborhood legacy. I source fifty-six written youth questionnaires, forty youth in focus groups, staff questionnaires, parent interviews, and observations across fourteen months at ten sites. Interpreting the data required that I reconceive multiple terms, including "youth dedicated," "partnership," and art itself. The research codes spatial, relational, economic, temporal, and comfort-level assets. Observed assets include strategies for physical safety, gender inclusivity, literary agility, entrepreneurship, advocacy, and healing. Analyzing data showed the sites as conceptualizing the child in three change-making areas: the Child as Hungry, the Child as Village, and the Child as Visible. The Child as Hungry emerged because participants self-report myriad "feeding" physically, spiritually, and artistically at each site. Youth participants at each site maintain a Village presence, and each site offers a manner of gathering space that signifies Village responsibility. Each site carves space to witness the child, contrastingly with other spheres—so much so that

being a Visible Child becomes a craft itself, added alongside the fine art. Child theology is the primary theoretical lens that I use to contribute to and intersect with performance studies theory, critical race theory, child drama, and childhood studies.

DEDICATION

Kinfolk and kindred by blood, by faith, and by art inspire and weave this work. My faith families at Trinity United Church of Christ, God Can Ministries UCC, and Ktizo UCC have all accompanied me along the journey. Classmates and faculty at Chicago Theological Seminary planted and nurtured seeds that guided me through one labyrinth and into another. I mostly learned what art and faith together can do from Ethel Jean Jackson and First Baptist Church in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where I witnessed and received radical welcome as a child.

Youth in spaces across Chicago: in summer camps, afterschool programs, drama ministries, and arts integration programs challenged me to learn more and propelled me to write what follows. Sister-friends Asantewa and Tabitha "Sankofa-ed" me along the path, and Joe, Andy, and Fatemeh walked alongside. Lindsay and Vanessa, Tanisha and Adama and Phyllis, all shepherded my little one so that I could breathe sometimes.

My family of origin: my parents, Dr. William Trent and Mildred Trent, and my sisters, Dr. Sonja Trent Brown, Raynika Trent, and Maryka Trent Baraka, are all walking angels of the here and now. My family of love, my Noah, disrupts the normative and reminds me daily of my call. He brings me ever closer towards purpose and grace.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project exists because the youth sites agreed to participate. Each site imagines space for youth to exercise and practice and live into their being-ness. I thank the staff and leadership at KLEO, St. Anselm, University Church, Sunshine Gospel Ministries, Firehouse Community Arts Center, Rebirth Poetry, Global Girls, ETA, Arts Incubator / Teen Arts Council, and Free Street for opening their spaces to me.

My committee members each propelled me to aim for action and agency as outcomes for my work. Dr. Stephani Etheridge Woodson, Dr. Alan Gomez, Rev. Dr. Sharon Ellis Davis, and Dr. Natalie Carnes, you have modeled scholarship within and beyond the academy in ways that I will practice. Thank you.

I acknowledge the Forum for Theological Exploration, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict at ASU, and the Graduate College at ASU for support, mentorship, and widening my network of peers, colleagues, and opportunity. These organizational supports helped me have time and tools to trust what I commit to these pages. Each shared precious resources with me, and for this, I extend deep thanks.

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CHAPTER 1

GENESIS

As we close rehearsal with a committed and rambunctious group of nine 8-to-12-year olds, the littlest one politely asks if she might call her mother. Still verbally sharing rehearsal notes, two of us escort her into the tech booth to the phone. She dials, and after someone picks up, the sound of her voice halts our planning.

"Who 'dis?" she says, in a deeper-voiced shorthand vernacular that we've never heard from her. Apparently, the person responds in kind, and she answers, "'Dis Grace." (Not her real name). My colleague and I smile at the code-switch. I take it that she has called the church where her family has some leadership, and not her home, where she would know everyone by voice and they would know hers as well.

"Tell my mama come pick me up."

She listens; so do we. Presumably, the other voice asks where she is.

"My studio."

The voice on the other end of the line doesn't know what that is...and neither do we. We make eye contact over her head, eyebrows raised and quizzical.

"MY STUDIO!!" she shouts. "Tell her I'm at MY STUDIO!! Tell my mama come pick me up!"

Studio?

…Her studio?

We're at a YMCA on the Near West Side. We've never called it that. Where'd she even learn that? It's a public place—it's not even a Y with a fitness center that requires membership to come in. It has a daycare, a playground, a local artisan gift shop, a

rehearsal hall, a theatre, a community meeting room with a kitchen, a computer room, and office space for regional YMCA administrators. What part of any of that makes it a 'studio'—whatever that means to her—that belongs to her? That she calls her own?

For sixteen years, my mind has returned to the moment when Grace claimed a nondescript urban YMCA as her own. I have always wanted to know more about what granted her permission to take possession of the space, and I have always held that moment in stark contrast to other settings where I worked with youth: companies with thriving, well-populated programs where children performed on top of crowded adult mainstage sets that had nothing to do with the story the children told; generous parochial schoolhouses with kind clerics and sterile classrooms; overscheduled park districts where every user's charge was to leave no trace. Alternatively, in this YMCA, a plan taped on the floor of the rehearsal room and on the stage could remain for weeks for the children. Costumes and makeup remained in front of their own name in their own spot in the dressing rooms. A fridge in the [way too tiny, I admit] green room could hold a drink or snack for tomorrow, and for the day after that. Were these structures of time and storage the cues that Grace used to name the Y as her artistic home, or was it something more?

Research Question(s)

Grace's story resonates deeply with me, and therefore, I investigated this phenomenon of a child claiming ownership of a performance space. I wanted to know how or why it happens. I brought some assumptions to this study, and those assumptions then triggered my research questions. First, I posited that a physical space can perform welcome in the midst of contextual and environmental violence. Second, I further posited

that some youth-dedicated performance spaces message that youth can inhabit that space with a sense of belonging, and I wanted to know if and how that message differs from ways that youth inhabit spaces that are nomadic, borrowed, or shared—and otherwise not 'owned'. Third, I brought to the study a ministerial stance that looks for theologies embedded in lived experiences and human interactions. Thus, I argue that youth performance spaces perform according to the underlying theology of the space-makers and participants in the context. Fourth, I assert that an artistic home for youth offers heterotopic counterpoint to otherwise hostile public spaces—whether those public spaces are adult exclusive spaces, require adult accompaniment, manifest neighborhood gang activity, or are spaces of unwelcoming local commerce. For example, coffee and ice cream shops within the boundaries of my study exhibit signage that prohibits more than three to five youth at a time inside the shops during lunchtimes and afterschool. Furthermore, even spaces without visible signage are often patrolled sites where black youth encounter police who question their purpose and presence. I argue that accessible youth dedicated performance space matters; that such sites benefit Chicago's South Side, and that such sites extend a unique and radical welcome.

Primary Research Question:

"*What signifiers reveal how a physical space conceptualizes the child, reflects professed theological claims, and cues youth to practice ownership and experience belonging?*"

- Epistemologically, what signifiers in a performance space cue youth to practice ownership of that space?
    - What signifies "artistic home" for youth?
    - How do youth performance spaces "perform" and how do they welcome?

- What factors frame ideal sites to situate youth dedicated theatre spaces?
- Are there ways that youth-dedicated space uniquely feeds or shapes the art produced there?
- What does sustainability look like for the signifiers in such a space?
- What cultural capital emerges, and how does it help youth navigate violence?

Secondary Research Questions:

• What are the Christological and theological implications of how youth performance spaces conceptualize the child?

- What is the overt, implied, or presumed role of faith in the site's practice?
- Who is the child at the center of participant and site theology?
- How does the space situate the child in a doctrine of humanity?

To explore my primary and secondary research questions, I interrogate the semiotics of how space performs specifically with youth theatre spaces on the South side of Chicago in mind. An underlying question of safety and welcome resonates at every point of my research process: Where are South side youth allowed to be?

Exploring the questions yielded data that I placed in dialogue with theory and theology. I mapped the data and the dialogue into the image below. The chapters that follow unpack the groupings in the image.

Figure 1. Radical Welcome: Conceptualizations of the Child from the data analysis, Child Theology Loci, and Observed Spatial Signifiers

Context

I surveyed eight adjacent neighborhoods on Chicago's mid-south side by what the census calls "community areas." Chicago has seventy-seven of these areas, and they are almost consistent with what most Chicagoans would recognize as neighborhood boundaries. These areas permit my study to use census data in larger chunks than the nearly nine hundred census tracts that Chicago has. While the census data tracks by community area, Chicago operates politically by ward, with aldermen at the helm of area resources and networking. Given that distribution of power, I also reference five ward resources and impacts as part of the archive, so that the project resonates with and reflects arts activity in additional ways that Chicago residents would recognize. Gerrymandering means that wards do not mirror neighborhood boundaries and are hardly adjacent, even

within themselves. I connect maps to the “who benefits” history of boundary differences, since my research shows that one ethnographic task for the arts site youth is unearthing and embedding neighborhood legacy that would otherwise erase when political shifts redraw the civic lines.

The first map below colorfully shows the nine directional regions of Chicago, and within those nine regions, the map names the community areas. The community area section titles are the names that Chicagoans use to describe where they live. From just below center right of the map, or using the yellow coding, the eight Community Areas of this study include:

1. Oakland
2. Kenwood
3. Grand Boulevard
4. Hyde Park
5. Washington Park
6. Woodlawn
7. South Shore
8. Greater Grand Crossing

I exclude the north-most areas of Douglas, Armor Square, and Bridgeport, as well as the west-most area of Fuller Park. Douglas holds numerous high-rise communities and includes Illinois Institute of Technology, several hospitals, and a lot of commerce. The institutional anchors in Douglas generate residential turnover by definition. Proximity to downtown makes Douglas consistently vulnerable to both gentrification and abandon. The other three areas are west of the Dan Ryan expressway, which has well-documented

history of how it separates and divides neighborhoods by income. In the next map, Wards 3, 4, and 5, plus parts of 6, 8, and 20, cover those eight community areas.

Figure 2. Map, Chicago's community areas grouped by color by "side." (Fitzgerald 2008)

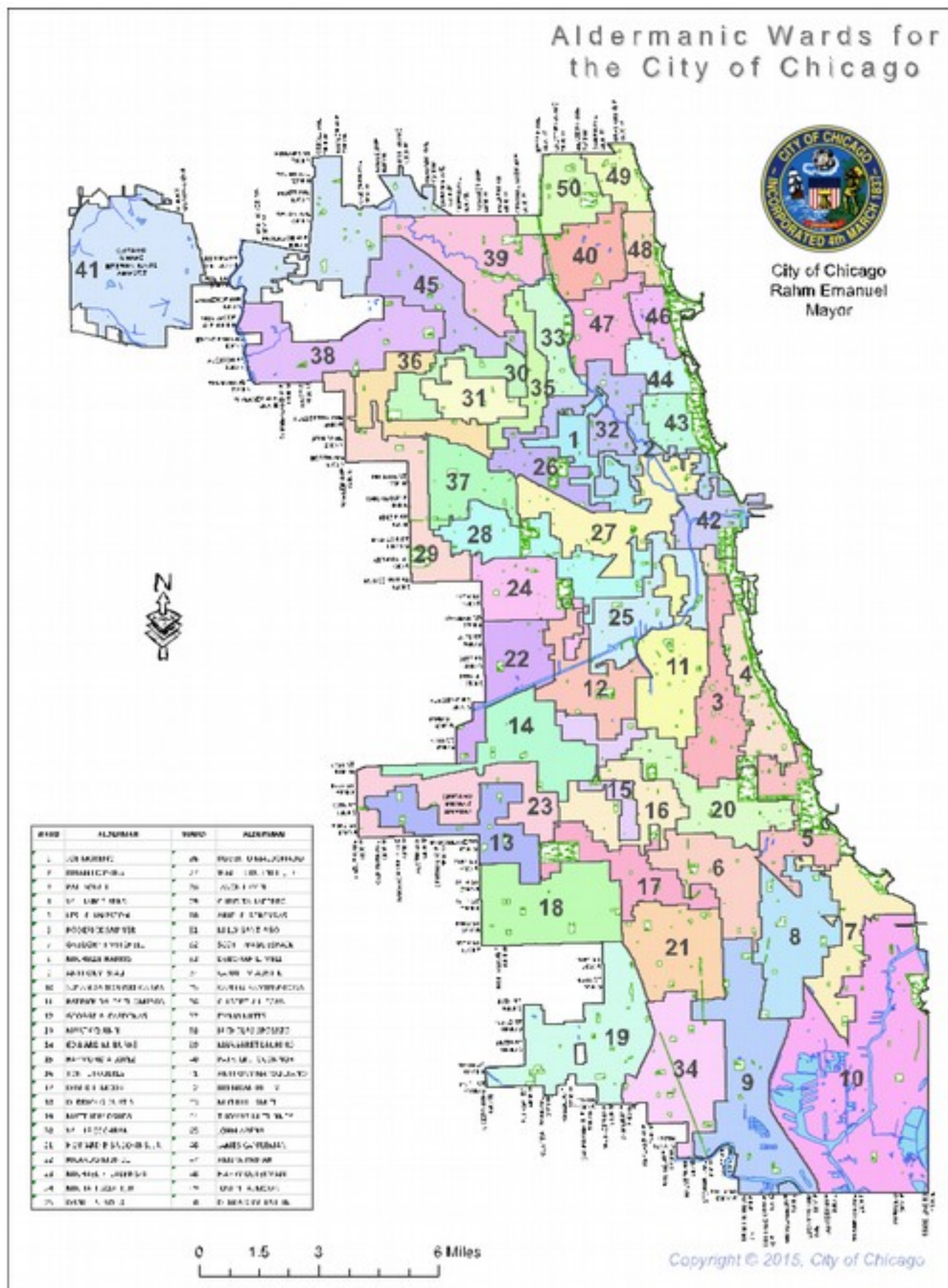

Figure 3. Aldermanic Ward map of Chicago. (City of Chicago 2015)

Churches, libraries, park districts, city colleges, universities and more offer their spaces for arts activity. To build and contextualize this geographical archive I use multiple sources including:

- *Ingenuity*, the internet site documenting arts programming for Chicago Public Schools, *Ingenuity* currently maps arts education in Chicago public schools with *artlook*, a model innovative and interactive online resource. *Artlook* categorizes art in public schools in four disciplines: dance, music, theater, and visual arts (Ingenuity 2016). While I exclude schools as available and accessible arts spaces, *Ingenuity* aides my research because the online map contextualizes my research sites amidst arts education in neighborhood schools. The map reveals that the overwhelming majority of in-school arts programs on the south side stem from companies that reside downtown, north side, or west loop—not on the south side.
- Community development committee reports including:
    - Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), an initiative of the Ford Foundation that "equips struggling communities with the capital, strategy, and know-how to become places where people can thrive" (LISC 2015).
    - Quality of Life assessments from the New Communities Program all offer demographic data and partnership histories. The New Communities Program is one model of community development strategy that LISC practices. Quality of Life assessments are a set of findings that the New Communities Program studies report.

- In addition to overall economic and demographic census data that describes the community areas in my study, I also use data from the NEA Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) and the General Social Survey (GSS) to contextualize youth activity in the neighborhoods of study within their geographic context as well as alongside national data when helpful. Economic assessments such as resident income brackets, arts participation fees, neighborhood revitalization, and access to transportation all impact current youth arts activity as well as proposals for sustaining youth-dedicated space.

Sampling Strategy

I sought research sites that met the following criteria:

1. Within the geographic boundaries
2. Neither public nor private school-based
3. Created work beyond or in addition to giving lessons
4. Presented developed or devised work beyond or in addition to recitals
5. Practices word-based arts – theatre, drama, poetry, in whole or in part
6. Cost-free, scholarship, or service avenues for access
7. Faith-based (I adjusted to half of the sites faith-based, to increase the sample)
8. Makes claims of offering alternative space expression
9. Questions and discourse of communal counter-narrative as part of the enterprise
10. Youth-dedicated (my sampling process quickly transformed this criteria)

I identified sites for my study by working through the Southside streets in groups of ten blocks each to survey the density of options. Because many spaces offer multiple and interconnected fine and performing arts disciplines, I inclusively surveyed all youth arts spaces. Strategies for identifying these sites began in August of 2015, when I spent a week in Chicago to scout sites. My August field research, plus residing from 43rd to 67th across twenty-five years, and online strategies together culled a list. Densities ranged

from three to thirty arts program spaces in each block of ten streets, with the 50s and 60s streets having the highest densities as I summarize in the chart below.

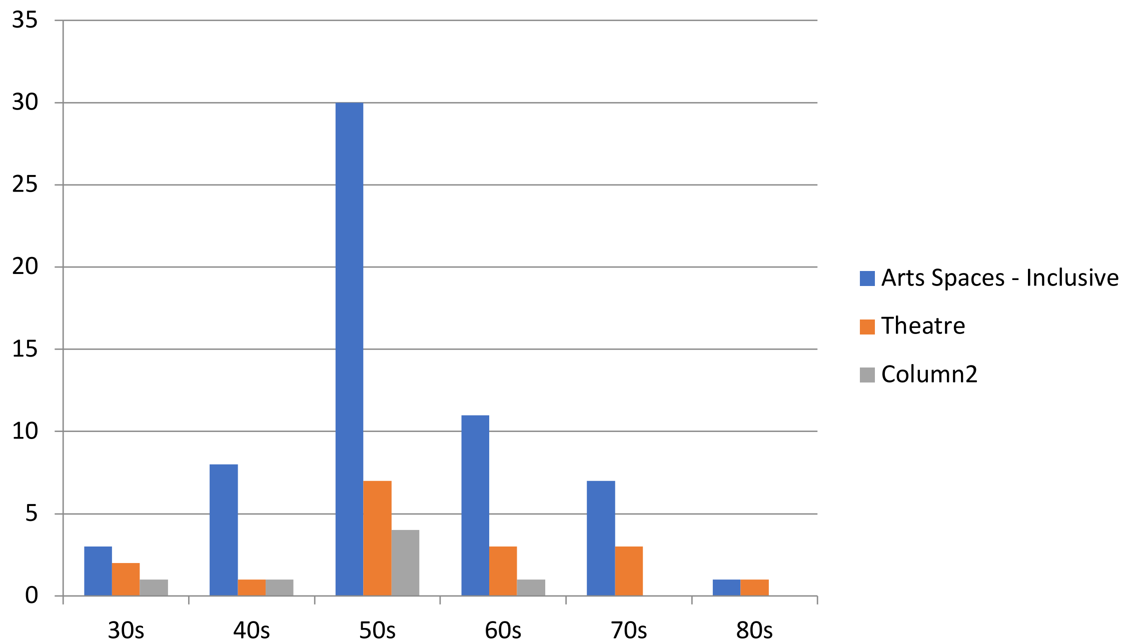

Figure 4. Densities of Youth Arts Spaces, Streets 30s to 80s, East of the Expressway

From 51st to 63rd streets, University of Chicago facilities skew youth arts programming high, as does the collective of six seminaries (plus corresponding churches) within a one-mile radius.[1] However, once I included only theatre and spoken-word sites, the list dips below ten spaces. The spoken-word sites where the work presents as performance poetry added enough to have a geographic sampling for the study.

I exclude Chicago public schools as sites for the purposes of this study. The process surrounding school attendance, especially for magnet and selective enrollment

[1] The seminaries planted near the University of Chicago in the past century to share in the university resources and eventually, to form a collective of theological schools. The seminaries (Lutheran, Catholic, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Unitarian, Baptist) all describe choosing to cluster on their websites.

schools, constellates complex formulas of home address (with race implied), economic class, test scores, sibling legacy, and more. I have neither an articulated critique nor a proposal for a better process. I accept that school lotteries operate as best they can amidst manipulations of privilege networks. In any case, schools as they currently function—even and especially arts schools and arts *charter* or *magnet* schools—are not accessible and available spaces for arts activity. Even a thriving arts school serves only its student body. Furthermore, I argue that most public schools are not youth dedicated spaces in Chicago. School closings (i.e. forty-eight in 2014), the triggers for routine teacher union votes to strike, and the October 2015 indictment of Chicago Public Schools CEO for federal crimes of kickback schemes all exemplify that students rank low on the list of priorities. However, the Dyett High School hunger strike in the autumn of 2015 may most reveal how contested a space the Chicago public schools are. School activists and local parents refused food for thirty-four days in a standoff with school administrators, the Board of Education, and the mayor in effort to reopen Dyett as the only open enrollment neighborhood high school for families in a part of the city lacking and needing this option. Now, in 2018, CPS will close all four of the remaining open enrollment neighborhood high schools in the Englewood neighborhood. Schools in this context belong to government and employees, not the students.

I study a demographic of youth whose epistemologies develop in a context of violence. Violence becomes an epistemological frame, whether by experience, by avoidance, or by representations in media narratives. I select organizations particularly according to their claims of offering alternative space and expression. Educative outcomes are both givens and byproducts of social change arts work. I build on the

foundations of Robin Bernstein, whose analysis shows how American childhood was raced as white, and James Evans, Jr., who details the patriarchal theology that denies African Americans the universal parenthood of God, to say that the black child has to recover distance not only in after school hours but from forced metaphoric criminalized distance from God, and that distance pervades the secular unconscious. Youth dedicated arts spaces combat that distance in premise and I am quantifying the practice.

To address my interdisciplinary audiences and to practice pastoral care with my research, I introduce Chapters 2, 3, and 4 with sermonic witness. The scripture thread reflects the faith-based nature of half the research sites, reflects my own academic and congregational preparations that undergird this project, and additionally reflects colloquial and invisibilized characterizations of the United States as having or not having a faith foundation. I dramaturgically exegete the sermonic texts. As research outcomes, the homilies strategically document and report the data.

Site Descriptions

I have ten research sites. I inventoried the Built Environs at all ten sites and collected one to three staff questionnaires and/or interviews. Additionally, at three sites, I attended rehearsals or workshop sessions, conducted focus groups with youth participants, collected written questionnaires from youth, staff, and parents, and interviewed parents and staff. I attended performances and events, sometimes in multiple, at seven of the ten sites. Two of the ten sites, one faith-based and one not faith-based, are aspirational peers beyond the geographic boundaries. The comparative sites offer models to help advocate for accessible youth arts spaces on the South side.

Faith-Based Sites

KLEO, an acronym for Keep Loving Each Other, is the multi-arts annex to Life Center Church of God in Christ in the Washington Park neighborhood. The center is named for the minister's daughter who was killed in a domestic violence incident. Three blocks from the revitalized Green Line train, along the 55th / Garfield Boulevard bus line, KLEO seems self-aware of its prime real estate. The generational legacy seems to radiate from the property and outward down the sidewalks. The properties are something more than modest but not at all grand; rather, the buildings interrelate with their surroundings in ways that telegraph the church's prestige. For example, the parking lot that fills the corner quadrant at 55th and Michigan—un-gated—is painted with basketball keys and rimmed with hoops. A passerby can read three standout messages: (1) the courts are available to anyone, (2) the church welcomes youth to play ball, and (3) the community and congregation presume that drivers and players alike will observe some etiquette. The setup reads as respect on the block. Other signals include murals on the sides of nearby storefronts. The murals help KLEO loom larger than its own properties. Inside, the reception area offers a library on the east wall, a grand piano piled with fliers, and reception desks. Beyond two offices is the gathering space where KLEO hosts LYRIC Open Mic on Tuesdays. After passing through to the kitchen, stairs lead to the basement technology room, classroom, and game rooms.

Figure 5. KLEO West Wall Mural

Figure 6. KLEO Main Entrance.

St. Anselm Catholic Church converted its convent to a multi-arts youth facility. The center now houses the Washington Park Youth Enrichment Program and partners with Urban Gateways to offer arts programming, as well as with One Summer Chicago to offer jobs to youth artists. The facility has a writing room, a visual arts studio, a computer lab, a sprung floor mirrored dance studio, a small music room theatre, and a board games lounge. Stairwells bear painted inspirations on the walls, and the faces of the steps bear bright primary colors. The convent is part of a larger Catholic church campus with a Rectory, schoolhouse, and sanctuary building. The site lacks a large green space, so the parking lot to the south becomes the playground. In some years, members garden in the small green space along the north side of the building.

Figure 7. The stairwell in the convent building.

Figure 8. Dance studio in the convent building.

University Church sits in the University of Chicago campus area in Hyde Park. In addition to the main sanctuary, the complex houses a café, recording studio, theatre, visual arts studios in the attic spaces, and hosts a wide range of campus and community programming, including Open Mic and guest artists. The church has also been sanctuary space for immigrants, and the current pastor has a thriving spoken word and rap career. Church property includes Disciples Divinity House, a scholars' program and communal living residence that hosts seminary and divinity students.

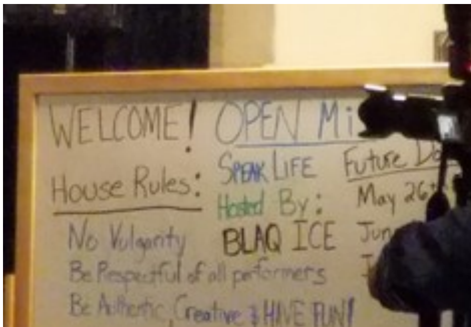

Figure 9. Open Mic board.

Figure 10. The performance space at University Church.

Figure 11. Sound Studio at University Church.

Sunshine Gospel Ministries is a community resource complex in Woodlawn, with youth programming and arts spaces as well as entrepreneurial initiatives that include Greenline Coffee shop and affordable housing. Comprising almost four blocks, thrift store space, afterschool sites, small business incubator, and a baby-toddler play-space are tentacles that surround the primary youth programming spaces. Sunshine has also had several recording artists on staff who add spoken word and rap to the youth offerings.

Figure 12. Sunshine Main Offices Storefront.

Figure 13. Sunshine's coffee shop across the street from the main offices and youth space.

Figure 14. Sunshine's business incubator between the coffeeshop and the teen space.

Aspirational Peer: Firehouse is a visually stimulating renovated former firehouse that is part of the Lawndale Community Church ministries and initiatives on the West Side. Murals across the bricks and the red garage door, plus along the alley-facing wall of the business next door, add color to the block. The vintage building is set off from the main street and yet is still on it, at a 30-degree angle off Ogden, one of Chicago's famed diagonal streets. Visual disruption stands out here; the colorful murals disrupt the façade while retaining the Firehouse doors. Painting greets participants and visitors immediately ascending the stairs and then celebrates urban arts on the walls of the media room, poetry venue space, hallways, and the kitchen window counter that reveals the full-service kitchen. The hip-hop arts space is both far enough from and just close enough to the main church building. Neighboring church properties include a health clinic, workout facility, coffee shop, child care, and more.

Figure 15. Firehouse front façade

Figure 16. Firehouse entryway steps.

Non-Faith-Based Sites

Rebirth Youth Poetry is an award-winning performance poetry group that rehearses at both the home and the workplace of one of the parent coaches. The home is a three-story brownstone in the Grand Boulevard neighborhood on the south side, and the workplace, which also in part sponsors the group, is the Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago on the Woodlawn end of campus. Logan houses academic programs in the arts and also presents arts on campus. Rebirth teens coach younger tween poets, associatively named Reborn.

Figure 18. Central stairwell to the home rehearsal spaces.

Figure 17. Post-performance lunch at Logan Center.

Figure 19. Finals at the Auditorium Theatre.

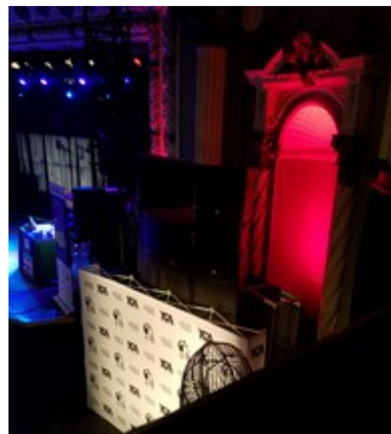

Figure 20. Semi-finals at The Metro.

Arts Incubator is a University of Chicago off-campus multi-arts community building in Washington Park. In addition to an intergenerational theatre for social justice project and annual summer theatre programming, the site hosts visual artists in residence, a woodshop, an art gallery, and affinity groups such as Assata's Daughters. The building anchors a multi-partnered initiative called ArtsBlock, which stretches from a block east of KLEO, mentioned above, past the Green Line train tracks to what users call "The Muffler Shop," an annexed, muralled, nameless space that used to be…a muffler shop.

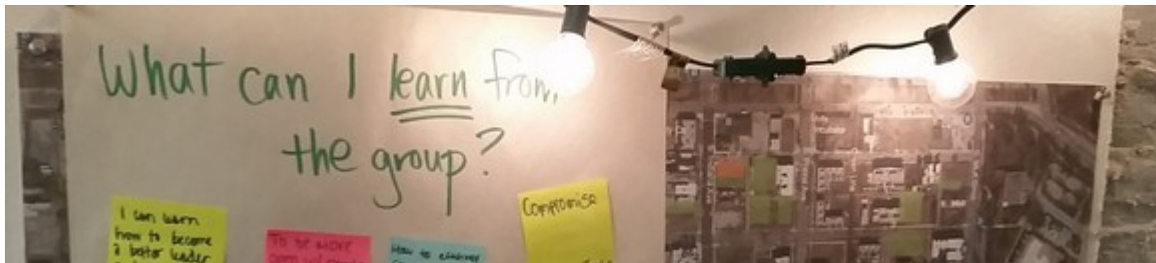

Figure 21. An idea wall in the Teen Arts Council basement workshop space.

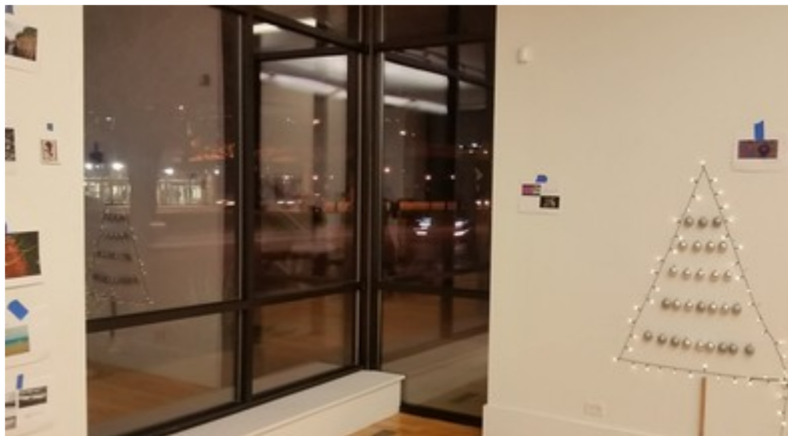

Figure 22. A view from the exhibit gallery to the Green Line station.

Figure 23. The Muffler Shop.

ETA is a professional theater with rich legacy of training artists. The exposed brick lobby has wood pillars and exposed ductwork much like upscale art galleries and loft spaces. The theatre company historically uses the lobby as an event space (i.e. receptions, meetings) as well as a visual arts gallery where work is for sale, which meets a need in its Grand Crossing neighborhood. Recovering from a fire, the company built what was to be a temporary stage in the south end of the lobby until the renovations on the mainstage were complete. However, after a youth graffiti project on the walls of the lobby stage, the company plans to maintain the new stage as well, as it uses little of the exhibit spaces.

Figure 24. ETA street view.

Figure 25. ETA youth stage in the exhibit gallery and reception space.

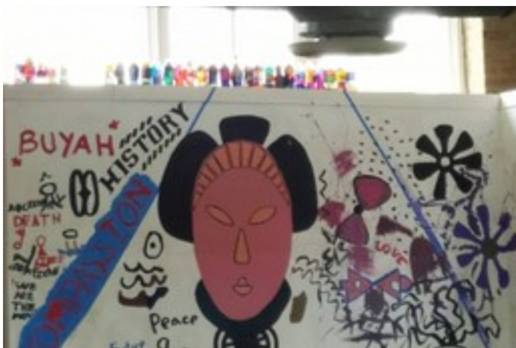

Figure 26. A close up of the mural on the stage walls.

Global Girls is a theatre and dance program committed to international engagement, travel, and exchange with girls. The series of three storefronts in the South Shore neighborhood both echoes and foreshadows neighborhood business, entrepreneurship, and revitalization—the block would benefit from more small business neighbors. The entry storefront houses staff desks in the front and central areas, and a kitchen in the back. The middle storefront, called the Little Studio, includes storage at the rear. The third storefront is the Big Studio, which has a pipe to hang light instruments for small showings, plus other AV equipment. Both Studios have wood floors and mirrors. Outside, a triangular yard anchored by an altar like tree becomes session space and cafeteria on warmer Saturdays and during summer programs.

Figure 27.
Global Girls Studio. Street view of the three storefronts.

Figure 28.
The “Big Studio” at the Global Girls space.

Aspirational Peer: Free Street resides in the attic spaces of Pulaski Park, a Chicago Park District field house just north and west of downtown that anchors a residential block and has surrounding green space for sports. Free Street spaces include an open lobby area, a staff office, a Green Room/workshop space, and a theater. Pulaski Park is near a bustling intersection of three major streets that form six corners. The three arteries unite a wide range of ethnicities, and nearby areas have had their struggles with gentrification. Youth in the program practice as teens in a neighborhood saturated with club-like arts venues and vintage shops.

Figure 29. The Green Room chalk map of the United States, drawn while watching the 2016 presidential election in the space.

I describe the demographics surrounding each site most efficiently by using the Chicago public school Tier system. The system has meaning locally because the Tiers synthesize census data. Six major factors that comprise the four-level Tier rating are:

1) median income of families in the tract

2) ratio of homeowners to renters

3) marital status of heads of household

4) language spoken in the home

5) educational attainment of adult residents within each tract

6) standardized test scores for schools within the tract

I value using the Tier ratings to contextualize my research alongside impactful and vested concerns for the communities where the sites reside. More than half of the sites report that participants live in the site zip code, and many of the 56 youth participants report walking to their site. Though participants may have tested or lotteried to attend public school elsewhere, or may attend private school, the zoned school rating[2] nevertheless contextualizes what the site offers the locale. Tier 1 represents the areas with the 25% lowest median incomes and educational attainment. Tier 2 describes the next 25%, the Tier 3 25% follow, and Tier 4 is the highest income quartile. In the chart, I also note where One Summer Chicago or After School Matters help sustain the programs. One Summer Chicago is a summer jobs program for youth ages 14 to 24. After School Matters pays participation stipends to teens year-round.

	Socioeconomic CPS Tier	**Zoned School rating**	**After School Matters**	**One Summer Chicago**	**Public Transit**
ETA Theatre	1	2 K8 2 HS	x	x	<1 block
Firehouse/Tha House Church	1	2 K8 2 HS	x		<1 block
Free Street YouthTheatre	4	1+K8 2+HS	x		2 blocks
Global Girls	1	2+K8 2 HS	x	x	< 1 block
KLEO	1	1 K8 2 HS	x	x	<1 block
Rebirth Poetry/Coach Home	3	2+K8 1&2 HS			<2 blocks
Rebirth/ Logan	2	1+K8 2+HS			<1 block

[2]The Chicago Board of Education's five-point School Quality Rating includes levels 1+, 1, and 2+ schools with Good Standing; level 2 schools requiring Provisional Support, and level 3 schools, requiring Intensive Support (Chicago Public Schools 2018).

St. Anselm/ WPYEP	1	2+K8 2 HS		x	<2 blocks
Sunshine Gospel Ministries	1	1+ K8 2+HS			<1 block
Arts Incubator	1	2+K8 2 HS	x		< 1 block
University Church	4	2+K8 1+HS	x		2 blocks

Figure 30. Sites, Zoned School Rating, Program Supports, and Public Transit

My resulting table reflects factors that emerged as distinctive amongst the sites and / or apart from sites I excluded. I didn't bargain on After School Matters supporting seven of my sites, and then One Summer Chicago having supported youth at four. This is a significant finding on multiple levels. The two programs emerge as integral to youth arts occurring in my research sites and in Chicago at all. Seven of the eleven facility addresses (eleven includes both Logan and the coach's house for Rebirth) are in Tier 1 areas; one is Tier 2, and one is Tier 3. One of the Tier 4 sites is a church on the University of Chicago campus, and the other Tier 4, one of the two aspirational peer sites, is in a Park District building just north and west of downtown. The programs charge minimal or no fees, however the concept of "opportunity cost" does matter, and One Summer Chicago and After School Matters help sustain participation. I embarked on this research hoping to find assets for sustainability. As an artist and arts teacher, I am glad to find that youth are learning to be paid for their work. My research identifies entrepreneurship as an asset at the sites, and the youth development asset measures from National Research Council and National Academy of Sciences identify vocational skills as a developmental value.

My sample sites differ from my original conceptions of what would qualify for my study. First, I remained committed to excluding school sites, so that eliminated some

theatre groups that I hadn't realized were school-based. Secondly, I hoped to include fee free groups only. Two of the sites do solicit fees, however they are minimal. At one of the fee sites, costs can be supported at one site through child care services, and the other site offers scholarships.

Methodology

I engaged a mixed methods approach to the study. Across the disciplines of performance studies, childhood studies, and child theology, I operated from a transformative worldview. By transformative, I mean that I chose methods, tools, analyses, interpretive strategies, and applications that derive from scholarship and research that confront social oppression and marginalization (Cresswell 2014). I also practiced a convivial research that seeks direct action as an outcome. My findings offer tools for self-advocacy for participating sites.

• Key Terms

I allowed that different sites may merit different applications of my key terms, according to the site signifiers, and additionally, I expected—and found—that the qualitative data would also transform how terms apply. I offer the term "youth dedicated" as an example. For me, the term initially conjured a space that only youth utilize, fully outfitted for youth. Yet, in some sites, youth dedicated implied a transformable, flexible space that youth regularly adapt and access. Moreover, a third understanding of youth dedicated manifested as a strategy for embracing a space upon arrival—in the way, for example, that guest athletes, or poets, or choirs might arrive at a familiar genre of venue that is intimate with their craft and find that the venue performs as "home" space. I quantitatively defined "youth dedicated" as a space physically and temporally reserved

for youth use. I sought to qualitatively define "youth dedicated" as one outcome of the qualitative data from my interviews and participant observations. Prior to my study, I defined "youth dedicated" in terms of hours and resources reserved for youth use. I now define it in terms of how youth experience the space as legitimizing the work that they create there.

I defined "artistic home" as the primary or sole place where the youth artist (a) creates theater or spoken word and (b) exhibits some allegiance. I defined "ownership" as expressing a sense of belonging and / or practicing leadership. As described above, "child theology" situates the child as the starting point for theological inquiry and then explores systematic theological doctrines (i.e. Christology, sin, humanity, eschatology, etc.) with the child at the center of interpretation and thought. I engaged "doctrine of humanity" as a concept of liberation that acknowledges the whole self. I defined practical theology as the bridge from theological reflection to the practice of ministry with people.

• Key Tools

My tools for collecting quantitative data included statistical analysis of census data, written questionnaires, and maps of geographic and demographic descriptive data. To explore what the spaces provide to youth and the surrounding locale, I inventoried the built environment for each site. I sought to quantify data in the following categories:

- Spatial – i.e. sq. footage, proximity to public transit, visibility and ease of access
- Relational – i.e. proximity to staff, other programs, services
- Economic – i.e. industry-standard equipment; maintenance, cost
- Comfort – i.e. places to sit, hang out, study, store shared or personal belongings
- Time – hours reserved / available for youth use

In written questionnaires, I gathered multiple types of data, including quantitative. Sample questions that ask for quantitative responses included how long youth have been attending the program, how youth arrive at the site (walk, public transit, drive), and whether the site is their primary activity or primary arts engagement in particular. Data about the built environment and data from the questionnaire identified signifiers in the space, and I observed and interviewed youth through qualitative and arts-based methods.

I visually represent the findings about signifiers in the built environments in the "Radical Welcome" concentric circles above (page 7). Generated maps that traced the paths that youth travel to their theatre experiences help me discuss my questions surrounding sustainability and ideal sites to situate youth dedicated space. Maps of the gaps between theatre and spoken-word performance spaces contextualize the significance of my study.

I included strategies from Johnny Saldaña's methods in *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* among my qualitative tools. After collecting data through interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups, alongside my observations of participant behavior in the spaces, I analyzed the data for indicators of belonging and ownership. I code qualitative results into frames of assets for each site that represent Spatial, Material, Relational, Economic, Programmatic, and Civic capacities, as defined in the work of Kretzmann and McKnight at the ABCD Institute for Policy Research. I framed coded data in terms of the National Research Council / National Academy of Sciences personal and social developmental assets for youth. Faith based organizations frequently employ both of these asset-based rubrics, so these analytical tools aided me in contributing research that such groups could source and relate.

Qualitative

- Interviews – both group and individual; staff, youth, guardians, invested parties or "shepherds" of the spaces
- Participant Observation:
  - Program sessions / Classes / Rehearsals
  - Meetings (i.e. production or board)
  - Special events (i.e. gala fundraiser)
  - Down time, if kids have access outside program hours
  - Walking to or from the site with youth

Arts-based (as contextually appropriate or permissible)

- Facilitate drama exercises such as Values Statements and Image work for further data.
- Photographically document signifiers – this includes both me taking photos as researcher, and also collecting photos as a response to a questionnaire, as a type of data that I collect.

I interviewed 9 staff persons across the sites and collected 9 staff written questionnaires. I observed 29 rehearsals, performances, meetings, workshops, or festival events, both at sites and in guest spaces. I was fortunate to have three richly informative parent interviews that yielded robust data for analysis, though months of significant staff diligence aspired for more. I collected 56 youth written questionnaires and held three focus groups involving 40 youth. Two focus groups offer arts-based data through image work, while a member of the third focus group responds to the project with a spoken-word piece as an arts-based outcome. I inventoried the built environs at each of the ten sites. Lastly, I include three non-staff, non-parent, non-youth "encounters" in the data. I entered the data into Nvivo, a software program that offers organizational and visual strategies for analyzing data. The sunburst image below, generated in Nvivo, reflects the number of data sources and events that I was fortunate to have. The widths of the pie slices show the volume of coded data in each event.

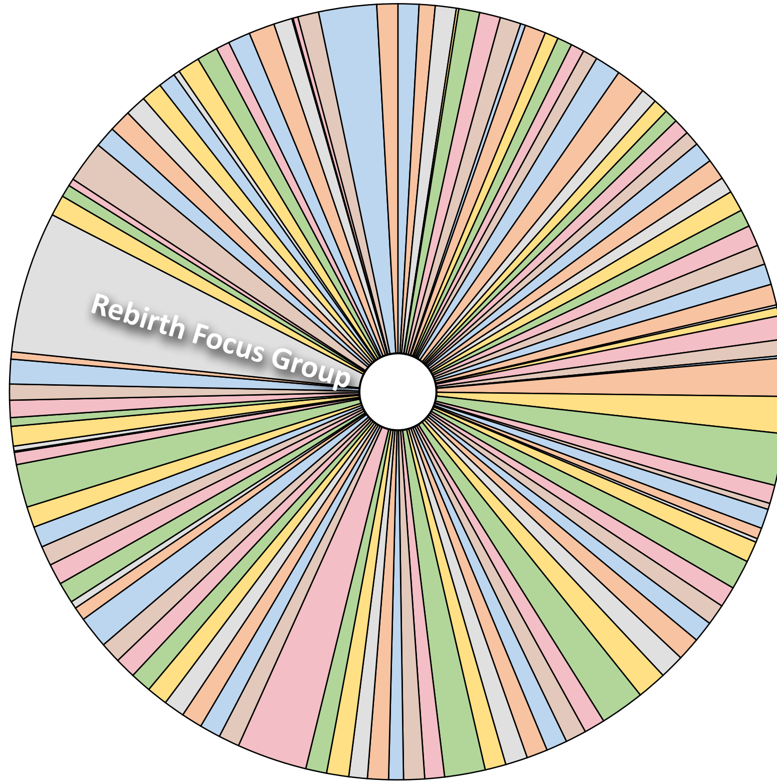

Figure 31. Visual of Nvivo Data Events.

• Analytical Tools

- Coding
- Asset-based mapping, ABCD Institute for Policy Research (internal)
- National Research Center/National Academy of Sciences developmental assets (youth)
- Ecological Framework for Community Cultural Development Capital, Etheridge Woodson (external)
- YALSA Teen Space Guidelines

Fascinatingly for me, additional literature on youth spaces and ownership comes from the Young Adult Library Services Association. Beginning in 2011, YALSA curated formal Teen Space Guidelines, a nine-point outline layered with sub-points to illumine and support the overarching goals of how to create spaces that welcome teens, facilitate their organic engagement with one another, and offer them a sense of ownership of the

space. The detail of the YALSA plan offered a kind of "checklist" that helped inform my study. The YALSA nine-point teen space guidelines, concisely, are:

1.0 Solicit teen feedback and input in the design and creation of the teen space.
2.0 Provide a library environment that encourages emotional, social and intellectual development of teens.
3.0 Provide a library space for teens that reflects the community in which they live.
4.0 Provide and promote materials that support the educational and leisure needs of teens.
5.0 Ensure the teen space has appropriate acceptable use and age policies to make teens feel welcome and safe.
6.0 Provide furniture and technology that is practical yet adaptive.
7.0 Ensure content, access and use is flexible and adaptive.
8.0 Ensure the virtual space reflects 21st century learning standards.
9.0 Provide digital resources for teens that meet their unique and specific needs.

The final three points are the Guidelines for Virtual Space, and all nine guidelines have detailed sub-points that are library and technology specific. I use the YALSA guidelines as a measure because library spaces are a successful and accessible resource model in Chicago. I appreciate the kind of reflective work that YALSA shares, and the site boasts how to follow the Guidelines "on a dime"—affordably. Public libraries are the kind of institution that has long considered its services across communities, and within the boundaries of my study and around the city, Chicago public schools are losing library spaces—or retaining the spaces but releasing the librarians who steward them. Libraries manage to hold both educative and community-engaged commitments in tandem.

I apply the YALSA guidelines to all ten sites. Half the sites are multi-age across children and teens. St. Anselm's Washington Park Youth Enrichment Program skews the youngest as a K-8 program that has 13-15-year-olds as only ten to fifteen percent of participants. However, the jobs programs such as One Summer Chicago that both employ

teens from the neighborhood as well as arts teens from other programs, make St. Anselm a site for teens at the next level, who still require equipped space for employment training. In that sense, the YALSA guidelines applied to teens as both participants and as staff at the sites. This measure led to data observations beyond the entrepreneurial impulse and visioning to the logistics of professionalism and maintaining employment. Staff at Firehouse, St. Anselm, and KLEO specifically discussed employability in interviews apart from the entrepreneurial goals.

Civic publics are programmatically intentional, i.e. require witnesses, as Etheridge Woodson paints in her work. I stand on her work to describe *where* the work takes place. In a meta sense, I write about the first tool of improvisation in the theatre: establish "Where" the scene happens to shape space for the narrative. I reflect the stakes of constructed environs in a Meisner improv, or an Entrances and Exits exercise. The exercise of transformation, of using a prop for something that it is not—each of these manifests imagination. I submit that the physical space can reflect divine imagination embodied—divine for the spaces that believe it so, and then I admittedly read in a theological framework, a "what does the space believe / say about God" into the others, as theological anthropology and story theology support in pastoral care.

I tread yet refrain from trespass, in that I take ownership of the reading, and I use the child theology framework along with the self-reported data to describe the messages of the space. I attach tenets of theories and frames: i.e. I frame as materialist the commitment to feed children, whether the program self-describes as materialist or not, because the youth participants self-reported the impact of being fed and the filled need as facilitating the wider activity and intent. One interviewee in a faith context reported

meeting the "felt need" for signifiers that qualify as "material" needs (Jackson 2016). Thus, while I do not impose a belief on the institution, I do reflect the perceived impact that the data offer, and in that way, pull out the assets and meanings that youth, staff, and parents report.

• *Interpretive Tools*

- Child Theology
- Performance Studies
- Childhood Studies
- Semiotics
- Green space and sustainability

I further reflected on the data alongside concepts of green space and sustainability. Safety and sustainability consistently accompany one another in community development reports in Chicago, such as the LISC and New Communities Program reports that I included in my archive. My primary research question asked what the youth dedicated space might uniquely provide to the surrounding locale, and investigating the question required that I consider the built environment within and surrounding the space. I reflected on my data in dialogue with neighborhood goals of safety and sustainability because demographic descriptions, quantitative data, and qualitative data surrounding youth participants' relationships with the spaces raise questions of safety and sustainability. In my past work with the green movement in Chicago, I encountered activists who focused on green space in the built environment as a public health benefit that reduced crime. Studies show that green space can relieve mental fatigue, promote a sense of safety, and strengthen social ties (American Planning Association 2003). Furthermore, green space + art supports walkability, which also makes a neighborhood feel more safe. Thus, descriptive and qualitative data that reflected

experiences of green space and sustainability at a site in the study did, for example, ground one locus where I applied Foucault's heterotopic theory. By interpreting my data with language of sustainability, I learned how sites in my study disrupt desert gaps, to place my research in dialogue with the work of community development groups named in my archive section, and to engage research that hopefully advances action.

Arts-based data: I expected all of the data, and the arts-based in particular, to yield key findings when I analyzed through the rubric of the Young Adult Library Services Association's Teen Space guidelines. The guidelines describe structuring "physical and virtual space dedicated to teens, aged 12 to 18" (YALSA 2011). Contextually to the neighborhoods of my research, key aspects of the library space guidelines that I found analytically applicable for youth theatre spaces included goals of teen input, language of welcome and safety, and embedding teen leadership into structural operations of the space. I also found library guidelines relevant to the arts spaces because public libraries maintain accessibility. Public libraries anchor neighborhoods in Chicago as arts sites, voting locations, and for technology access.

I first used qualitative coding methods (Saldaña 2009) across observations, interviews, focus groups, and the written short answers. My written surveys for youth and staff also included a six-question Likert scale. Initial coding strategy was sometimes descriptive, sometimes in vivo, and sometimes values coding. Early data categories revealed assets that strive for physical safety, gender inclusivity, literary agility, entrepreneurship, advocacy, and healing. When I sifted the data further for patterns and themes, I noted frequencies and similarities. Feeding youth showed up frequently across

all collection strategies. The Child as Hungry is not “deep” coding wise, in terms of analyzing what was said. Hungry offers depth for theological reflection. The “How” of meeting the hunger as material need offers tangible details about the resources and rituals of the site. Similarities in the rituals of sharing work, in advocacy, and in neighborhood presence created categories that led to the Child as Village as a major conceptualization. Focused coding further yielded Visible as effectively encompassing how the sites conceptualized the child, based on how I analyzed use of the spaces and the spatial signifiers.

I attempted to use Hypothesis Coding at the beginning of the project, in that I tried to quantify percentages of hours the spaces are accessible to youth and the square footages dedicated to youth, to quantify how and when youth are the sole users of the facility. None of these measures yielded helpful data.

Literature Review

In “Space to Play,” a 2013 MA study, Molly Goyer Gorman surveys rural Northern Ireland for youth theatre spaces. Of particular interest to me was how Gorman explores “sense of ownership” with youth theatre participants. Gorman further investigates with youth in her key case study site whether the program would be the same for them in a different space. Gorman’s study resonated deeply with my research questions. My study contributes to this line of inquiry that also includes the work of Natalie Hart, who studied space making at Birmingham Repertory Theatre in the UK, and the work of Matt Omasta and Drew Chappell in *Play, Performance, Identity: How Institutions Structure Ludic Spaces.* The Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Youth

Theatre Arts of Scotland both supplied mapping projects that identify gaps where youth lack access to a theatre space.

I mention in my methodology that the Young Adult Library Services Association's Teen Space guidelines (a rubric for developing spaces for youth ages twelve to eighteen), though designed for library spaces, pedagogically contextualized my study. Likewise, HIVE Chicago is a collective of cultural and civic organizations that network to address youth access, learning, and innovation, and on the surface does not appear to address youth theatre concerns. However, several of my research sites are affiliated with members or allies of the HIVE Chicago network, and I learned from the ways that the sites both contribute to and benefit from that membership.

I surveyed literature surrounding other model arts sites—nationally or locally—i.e. Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, Harlem Children's Zone, and two places in Chicago: the locale surrounding the Gary Comer Center, which is within the geographical boundaries of the study, and the Ray and Joan Kroc Center, which resides outside the boundaries of my study—to help place my research in dialogue with other surveys in terms of how youth dedicated spaces contribute to and gain from the surrounding community. Harlem Children's Zone has been a model for the Promise Zone strategies at the heart of neighborhood talks between the University of Chicago, its police department, and neighborhood councils. I referenced both national and international sites to highlight the need for more extensive localized research as well as to highlight the geographical gaps between accessible spaces. Rural Northern Ireland, Canada, and London all offered analytical models and parallel sites. United States model spaces such as Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, Harlem Children's Zone, help describe the collaborations necessary

to effect aspirational arts facilities. Chicago spaces such as the Kroc Center and Gary Comer Youth Center, both models beyond the scope of the research, help contextualize how local spaces develop strategies for youth accessibility and help explain the selection process for the boundaries of my research. For example, the Comer complex includes both middle and high schools as part of the campus. Comer engagingly anchors the Grand Crossing neighborhood, yet the intertwined reach of partners and dollars located the site beyond my research frames.

In *Albert Cleage Jr. and the Black Madonna and Child* Jawanza Eric Clark commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Sunday when Rev. Cleage unveiled a black Madonna and Child mural in his Detroit church. Clark relays the theologies that Cleage tackled and how blackness in divine imagery included black Christians in the wider black liberation efforts in the 1960s. Black Messiah imagery supported black believers naming the African roots of Christianity. Clark edits a volume of essays that aid me as I analyze "what's on the walls" in my research sites. Scholars in Clark's text reflect on how Cleage engaged the mural as much to resist white imagery as to highlight that Jesus was a human being.

Clark explains that black theology/theologians read Cleage as widening a gap between a black Messiah and a white Christ. Black scholars saw that gap as an obstacle for racial reconciliations in theology and ministry. Clark argues that Cleage is actually trying to move beyond racial divide, to arrive where the humanness is so primary that race is irrelevant. Cleage says "black Messiah" instead of "white Christ" both to correct the imposed imagery of whiteness as well as to emphasize humanness. From Clark's edition, I pull scholarship that discusses why Christological images matter for black

youth. The scholars in the text offer analyses that I connect to Wilmer and White's child theology lens and to signifiers in my data that cue youth to practice ownership and experience belonging.

Theoretical Underpinnings

In theologian Martin Marty's *The Mystery of the Child*, doctrines of humanity intersect with childhood studies. Marty parallels controlling the child with limiting God, and in his assertion, I find relevance for interrogating how arts spaces embrace, stimulate, control, or limit the God-activity in and for the child. Recently, scholars are revisiting the works of Karl Barth and Martin Luther as underpinning a growing Child Theology Movement. In *Entry Point: Towards a Child Theology with Matthew 18,* Wilmer and White share emergent reflection for a theology that starts with the child placed "in the midst."[3] Like liberation theology, womanist theology, queer theology, and others, child theology seeks ways that attending to a marginalized group leads scholars and congregations to reflect on Christian doctrines and faith practices in new ways. How might the marginalized—in this case, the child—point towards truths and understandings of how discipleship could look? With the embodied child as "pointer or sign," (Wilmer and White 2015) what surfaces in a doctrine of humanity? Which past interpretations sustain, and which understandings erode, with the child as the focus of the theology? Such questions guide the child theology movement, and the reflections help me explore

[3] In Mt. 18:1 (NRSV), the disciples ask Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" In 18:2, before replying, Jesus sets a child in the midst of the disciples, and then answers. Jesus "stages" the response.

my secondary question that considers theological implications of how the sites conceptualize the child.

Additional theological underpinnings of my study include metaphors of "room for the spirit" and "room at the table" as parallel to the collaborative art-making process and the place-keeping / culture-keeping capacities that art possesses. W.E.B. DuBois and Sören Kierkegaard's comments on sacred spaces inflect how I unpack "room for the spirit," particularly because in the selected community areas, churches are sites for arts activity. Branching from my theological lenses to relevant performance studies theory, I find Victor Turner's ritual studies helpful in examining "sacredness" embedded in the wider community arts. Turner's language helps me respond to my primary question in terms of what the surrounding locale gains from the "sacred work" (Turner 1982) of its members. I also apply Foucault's theory of "heterotopic" spaces, which are real places that embody some contextually utopic qualities and operate as counter-sites to their locality (Foucault 1967). Some of the study sites intentionally frame their spaces as operating alternatively to the lived experiences of the youth participants. Thus, since I investigate whether youth dedicated spaces offer a unique welcome in the spaces that I include in my study, Foucault's language helps me interrogate and describe whether sites perform rupture of theological, academic, environmental, or peer group boundaries that the youth participants encounter. Therefore, I describe theologies (liberation, practical, and womanist) that operate as part of the research sites. I place the theologies in dialogue with critical theories about racialized (Elam, Giroux), religious (Kierkegaard, Parker, Wright, Beckwith), public (Jacobs), produced (Lefebvre), and arts (Omasta & Chappell) spaces.

I also engage theories of intersectionality to support my study. Intertwined demographics of race, class, gender, faith practice, and family structure operate in ways that determine how youth have access to performance sites in the community areas. Likewise, some of the sites target youth participants based on such demographics, and shape how space operates based on lived experiences of youth participants' social identities or social locations.[4] Intersectional theories contextualize the descriptive data and help me analyze the qualitative data. Furthermore, authors of the research tools that I employ in my study often have already embedded intersectional approaches in their theologies and methodologies. For example, one research tool that I employ is Stephani Etheridge Woodson's "Ecological Framework for Community Cultural Development Capital" (Etheridge Woodson, 2015). Etheridge Woodson builds her ecology in a framework that incorporates Tara J. Yosso's writings on capital and cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), and Yosso writes from the standpoint of critical race theory, itself a scholarly approach that identifies convergent marginalizations. Thus, since intersectional theory implicitly operated in the tools to analyze data, I explicitly discuss the theory as I report my findings. Likewise, I employ asset-based community development models that congregations and faith-based institutions have been using (Gunderson, 1992; Rans and Altman, 2002; Snow, 2004) to address intersecting oppressions of class, health care access, educational access, and employment.

Summary

Radical Welcome Conclusions

[4] Global Girls is gender-based; KLEO targeted domestic violence in its genesis and today strives for making the wider community a safe haven.

Analyzing data as I encountered the art and peacebuilding that anchors south side Chicago communities led me to describe my ten research sites as conceptualizing the child in three change-making areas: the Child as Hungry, the Child as Village, and the Child as Visible. The conceptualizations reflect youth exhibiting leadership through Village responsibilities and their arts of being Visible. I further observed youth practicing belonging through Village tasks, in Town Square spaces, and how they bear witness to Hunger in themselves and others. Primary signifier assets include Food, Nooks, Town Squares, Reflective / Reflexive Walls, and Entrepreneurial Tools. Youth report mixed arts residents and users as a key legitimization of their work.

For me, the conceptualizations, spatial assets, legitimization, and entrepreneurship construct a theological anthropology; value the child's humanity and honor the child; correspond to nationally identified developmental, personal, and social assets for youth; and reflect Wilmer and White's child theology concepts. Furthermore, the spatial signifiers welcome youth. The walls reflect the participating youth and encourage them to see themselves as belonging. Gathering spaces signal that youth can be part of the group. Nooks assure youth that they can step away and withdraw when needed. Food and table invite youth to receive hospitality.

I claim significance and value for three major areas of my study. ***First***, I contribute to the wider literature on building youth theatre spaces. Mapping attributes helps the wider theatre for youth field learn from current youth dedicated spaces and offers markers that help generate such sites in contexts of need. ***Second***, in Chicago specifically, my study puts youth theater spaces in dialogue with community partners seeking to address issues of safe, welcoming, and creative spaces for south side youth.

My asset-based approach helps identify transformable local capacities. I most strongly contribute to scholarship and practice with my ***third*** aim, as I reflect theologically on how signifiers in youth arts spaces centralize, welcome, conceptualize, and message the Child.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHILD AS HUNGRY

Homily

Matthew 14:13 – 21, Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

13 When Jesus heard about John, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. When the crowds learned this, they followed him on foot from the cities. 14 When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion for them and healed those who were sick. 15 That evening his disciples came and said to him, "This is an isolated place and its getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves."
16 But Jesus said to them, "There's no need to send them away. You give them something to eat."
17 They replied, "We have nothing here except five loaves of bread and two fish."
18 He said, "Bring them here to me. 19 He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them and broke the loaves apart and gave them to his disciples. Then the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 Everyone ate until they were full, and they filled twelve baskets with the leftovers.
21 About five thousand men plus women and children had eaten.

As a theatre director, I am trained to look for the chain of moments in any story. When I hear of an event, I want to know what happened in the moment before—the Instigating Incident. While the beloved gospel story that is our text for this homily exalts the Feeding of the Five Thousand, I remind us that Matthew prefaces the miracle moment by sharing that "When Jesus heard about John, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself." While messengers came on foot to give Jesus the news of his cousin's death, today, our efficient flows of information require that we process myriad deaths local, national, and international. Technology brings long distance death ever closer to our doors and youth, families, teachers, or parents, may find themselves identifying with faraway tragedy while familiar words resonate: "It could have been me." And I can imagine Jesus, learning of the death of his cousin, hearing the same echo that we hear: "It

could have been me." And then—because he *is* Jesus, he knows: "That *will* be me. One day. Soon-soon."

Beloved, in a time when even small children march against violence carrying posters that ask, "Am I Next?", who have the children just heard about before coming to us? How many Cousin Johns have they lost? How many faces haunt them from their newsfeeds? What prophets who paved paths for them are now ancestors who they grieve? Like Jesus, youth experience the conflicting pulls of both feeling lonely and simultaneously wanting—*needing*—solitude, to grieve. On days and times when they just want to be left alone, crowds follow and Will. Not. Grant. Them. Peace. So. They pour out more. Pour out patience. Pour out plays, poetry, and performances. They perform academic excellence if they can, and they perform lament when they must.

Jesus, followed by the crowd, pours out more healing. Jesus, grieving the cousin killed by political powers, teaches and preaches until the hour is late. And this Jesus, in the midst of thousands, is yet still lonely. Because his friends are *still* clueless. That's the part of the story that we usually hear: these disciples, who keep witnessing miracles, still doubt what Jesus can do. For hours, they've been watching a man—with no medical training and no medicines—heal hundreds of people. And that's just what Jesus has done on this day in the text. We're in chapter 14 of the book of Matthew. This feeding moment arises after the water into wine, the Sermon on the Mount, the healing of lepers, healing Peter's wife's mama, exorcisms, controlling the weather, people who couldn't see before can see now!—all of this has happened before the disciples' eyes, and still, they're saying to Jesus, "Hey…how is everybody going to eat?" Even with his dearest friends by his side, Jesus stands alone.

Yet Jesus shows us how to connect to others in such a moment. Jesus makes the miracle part of the power of all who are present. Jesus says, “There’s no need to send them away. You give them something to eat.” Jesus issues a charge for feeding the people in the future. Jesus breaks the bread and the fish, many times over, beyond what our minds could conceive that bread and fish in this amount and size can do. The disciples, however, are the ones who pass out the meal. Their hands participate in the miracle that Jesus begins. Now. Let’s expand it further. The text says that five thousand men were fed, not including the women and children. Every text, every concordance, every commentary, makes much of how the women and children weren’t counted in the five thousand. Every text wants us to know that even more people than that were fed; that families were sharing and breaking and eating bread together…that families, consuming the shared food, growing so full that basketfuls remained, completed the divine activity. The miracle only resonates because the people participated by eating the food. Jesus needed the people to eat in order to show the miracle. Likewise, the Lord has need of you. //

The Child as Hungry emerges as a primary conceptualization of the child both literally and figuratively. Each one of the sites offers food to the youth participants. I count the literal feeding as significant because the principle *and* principal value supersedes the economic concern that participants may be “food insecure” (to use the federal government terminology)—though food insecurity could describe demographics surrounding some sites. However, the value in fellowship, breaking bread together, extending hospitality, communicating to both youth and parents that needs will be met, all pointed to a larger conception of how the Child enters the space and the signifiers of

welcome and comfort that the Child seeks. Figuratively, the Child as Hungry reconceives how I understand "youth dedicated" space. My sites conceive of a child who gazes beyond her or his specific art form, beyond their skill set, and beyond their age group. Multiple staff and youth interviews reveal that youth need space to themselves, and at the same time, youth perceive their access to the professional artists in residence or their collaborative arts opportunities as inspirational signifiers of how a space welcomes and values their presence. I was initially disappointed to only find one space that I would have defined as youth dedicated at the outset of my research. I learned that youth in my study gauged my visions of youth dedicated space as exclusionary. Additionally, the Child as Hungry is rich fodder for unpacking my data theologically. Myriad "feeding" occurs: physically, spiritually, and artistically at each site, which participants self-report in my research.

Theoretical and Theological Underpinnings

In *Entry Point*, Wilmer and White ground their work in "the single action of Jesus who placed a child in the midst." (Wilmer and White, 2015, Location 233) The scholars experience the gospel story as freeing them from their theoretical presumptions and assumptions to attend to the actual child. At the same time, the scholars engage the story as keeping them from imposing interpretations onto the child. Remembering that Jesus places the child offered the scholars a balance of freedom and restraint as they theorized about the Child. Wilmer and White further describe a sacred and ritualized approach to their work. Their practical theology approach guided the scholars to visualize a child as present in their midst and then to allow some distance from that child to reflect, listen, and do theology anew. Wilmer and White methodologically "step back," as we say in

justice work, so that the Child stands forward. The Child holds the central spot, placed by and alongside Jesus. Willing to "actually upset our existing theologies and assumptions" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 201), Willmer and White sought methodology for "a church recognizing that its hearing is compromised by past mishearing, so that if the Word is to be heard in the present, there needs to be a liberation, a turning, an uncluttering of accrued baggage" (Willmer and White 2015 Location 238).

I value that Wilmer and White reflect on child and theology as separate from other and established educational, congregational, or theoretical enterprises with youth. In a more congregational practice or exercise, I would privilege the work of Joyce Ann Mercer, who engages Mark's account of this same gospel story in *Welcoming Children: A Practical Theology of Childhood* (Mercer 2005). Mercer offers a feminist practical theological reflection on including children in congregational life as a primary justice concern. I engage eschatological points from Mercer's analysis when I discuss Lefebvre later in the chapter.

Along with their colleagues in the Child Theology Movement, Wilmer and White acknowledge the encumbrances that "The actual child can get lost in statistics, stereotypes, ideal types, in theory and in organized advocacy and action even in sentimentality and nostalgia…we could be lulled into thinking that we are already sufficiently in touch with the child" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 200). The writers meticulously account that while child-friendliness, the child naturally, or the child historically may be in our midst, their deep reflection aims to more broadly consider and include the varieties of stakeholders working with faith or faith-adjacent youth.

Child Theology Loci: Temptation + Humility

Wilmer and White pull seven concepts from the gospel moment when Jesus places the child amidst the competing disciples: Child, Kingdom, Temptation, Disciple, Humility, Reception, and Father. I apply these seven loci to the conceptualizations and signifiers from my data. Temptation and Humility resonate most with the Child as Hungry.

"Discerning how to live in tight situations, and how to be true to truth which is not popularly supported requires Christians to think as wisely as serpents, even while, trusting in God, they are as simple, as peaceful and friendly, as doves" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 532). I submit that the child as placed in the midst of my research sites has to navigate the same Serpent-Dove skills. While finding this Golden Mean of wisdom and trust challenges any person, the lived or narrative realities in Chicago require my research sites to prepare youth to find the balance in contextual extremes. Youth who are adjacent to compromised safety, health, and education, and youth who suffer imposed narratives of their compromised safety, health, and education, navigate waters different yet parallel to those youth who actually experience compromises. The arts sites open space both physically and figuratively for youth who make transparent the "unpopular" truths of systems that pre-emptively criminalize youth or deny them access and employment, systems that penalize youth and schoolchildren in biased and unwarranted ways. The mission of each of my research sites, and the partnerships affiliated, specifically target these vulnerabilities that their participants face.

Willmer and White offer that "temptation is not only an assessment of what is, but a discerning openness towards the future. That is, discerning takes the risk of envisioning, hoping, and aiming at a particular future even while respecting its being unknown and

unknowable until the day of its coming" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 1383). The writers continue, "The temptations of Jesus were intrinsic to life as a venture of risky and costly imagination. In imagination there is a kind of knowing to which not-knowing is intrinsic." Framed epistemologically, I link temptation with Hungry because Willmer and White describe it as a kind of appetite. I quote, "We need to learn how to imagine wisely and boldly, to be engaged without being hubristic."

The scholars add, "Imagination: faithfulness to calling, not fantasizing unreality" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 1401). Willmer and White practice precious pastoral care as they unpack the word-concepts that they extract from the gospel story. I hang out here because linking temptation to imagination models how to value self and other despite imperfections and weakness. "Temptation is a conflict of imaginations." My inner child drama / performance studies scholar values imagination as a primary task for the human. In the context of a vulnerable Jesus and competitive disciples—*chosen* disciples, applauded for accepting the vocation and call—Wilmer and White describe imagination as a factor that mitigates vulnerabilities and simultaneously promotes courage. While I want to hold on to imagination as virtue, Wilmer and White remind me that the work of imagination is vulnerable to vice. The scholars refuse absolutes and elicit questions as interpretation to make transparent their pathways of language, theory, and exegesis.

Somewhat irreverently, in my view, the child theologians describe the child following a pattern of Jesus that, paraphrased, is "figuring out who you are and how to be that person." Thus, navigating temptation and imagination is the work of Child and Jesus alike (Willmer and White 2015, Location 1453 – 1520). Willmer and White further present that "The child…was more than a teaching aid in the hands of Jesus; the child

was a friendly strength for him in the struggle of his temptation, an abiding reminder of his calling…When the disciples were inadvertently but painfully becoming a stumbling block to him, Jesus placed a child in the midst who, without saying a word, partnered his witness to the kingdom of God."

The Child, then, Reminds and Disrupts as her "ministry of presence." I intentionally choose "ministry of presence" language from chaplaincy models. My research process shows me that, not unlike trained art therapists, youth in the research sites practice healing and caregiving of self, peer, and neighborhood. "Through the presence of the child, we may suppose Jesus found more than emotional refuge from the loneliness caused by the hardness of the disciples. As the disciples brought Jesus back into fundamental temptation, the child strengthened him as an unspeaking witness against the false kingdom. Placing the child was another way of pursuing his work."

Willmer and White progress through children's literature examples to express how humility emerges from the gospel story. The scholars first explore examples of agency or lack thereof, such as a child lacks or such as Jesus chooses. Where the Child is passively put down, receiving external humiliations, Jesus *comes* down—internally choosing lowered status, or submitting. Next, Willmer and White discuss relational activity from that lesser station. They reference looking forward as hope, and looking up in terms of faith, toward God as the "Most High." Thus, they express relational activity in humility as hope. They use the children's literature characters of Eeyore, Alice, and the siblings in the Chronicles of Narnia as examples—all from stories of the mystery of child worlds—to assert the historically dominant narrative and status of the Child as practicing humility, despite contemporary narratives of the child in Western countries as having

increasingly higher status. Willmer and White, collaborating and practicing globally, spend extensive analysis on this point (Willmer and White 2015, Location 2220), and forward an argument that I read as racially sensitive.

"The signing of humility is achieved because a child is both little and new. This littleness is a vulnerability and exposes the child to risks of manifold humiliation. But it is also the littleness of the seed which, without pretending to be what it is not, without pride and boasting, has the power of life and the future within it. And because it is little, it looks up. Humility as seen in the child is hopeful."

I am sensitive to the focus on "littleness" in their argument. Willmer and White publish their text in 2015, and I read them as seeking an inclusive child theology. However, media representations and my childhood experience of my own body lead me to ask, "Well, how little does the child have to be?" I realize that the Child in my question reaches beyond the actual Child placed by Jesus and extends to the child as manifest in a practical theology. I, and the youth in my research sites, experience a world that criminalizes "not-little-enough." Willmer and White are working with a global collective, across ethnically and linguistically and economically diverse child-centered faith initiatives and ministries. I simply speak to the particularity that across their exegesis, theorizing, and theologizing, a word like "little" as evidentiary of Child-ness trips me up—i.e. Tamir Rice should have been 'littler' in order to deserve his life as a twelve-year-old. Willmer and White's concepts here also create tension with childhood studies scholars who advocate for the child as a complete being. Willmer and White discuss the child as potentiality: "The child, however small, and however low its status, is thus living hope incarnate. The child is a process of hope, awakening hope."

I potentially ascribe and witness “littleness” within community, relationally and more figuratively, for in-group dynamics. I don’t like saying that, yet the text calls me to name the contradictions and politicizations of black adults infantilized, and then alternatively, black youth as unentitled to innocence. Embodied, performatively, cross culturally, my lived and scholarly contexts struggle with “reading” each other’s young. Research and history both show that ascribing child and adult across ethnicities often exposes cultural bias (American Psychological Association March 2014). This point is one of few where I take issue with my child theologians. I note again Robin Bernstein’s *Racial Innocence* and introduce the writings of Almeda Wright to highlight why it matters and why this discussion belongs with the conceptualization of the child as Hungry.

Wright, in “Image is Everything? The Significance of the *Imago Dei* in the Development of African American Youth” (Clark 2016) offers that “young people in African American Christian communities often voice frustrations regarding limited theological resources for reflecting on their current realities of persistent racism—demonstrating a lack of access to or disconnection from some of the larger historical narratives, debates, and resources regarding the image of God and the possibility of God empowering them in struggles regarding race and racism. Therefore, I start by exploring where the *imago dei* “shows up” for black youth” (Clark 174). Wright describes youth as figuratively hungry to make sense of and transform the challenges they face. I submit that Wright’s articulations hold for youth beyond sanctuary walls. Wright discusses *imago dei* as the necessarily inherent God-human relational condition that attributes value to human life. To the extent that Wright’s question of where the *imago dei* shows up for

black youth pervades and penetrates national dialogue, and since the majority of participants across the sites are black youth. I apply her work to all of the sites in my study. I read Wright's *imago dei* writ large, including and beyond faith purposes.

Wright allows that contemporary youth encounter biblical personalities as Africans in some churches. In the 1990s, she says, black churches were overhauling the stained-glass windows to image biblical figures of color. She also mentions how black *imago dei* shows up in pop culture (D'Angelo, Kanye, and India Arie). "…the images that made young people sit up and take notice are not the ones in their Sunday school literature. I argue that this is because the images have not been accompanied by a wider discourse which challenges the prevalence of white Jesus alongside other representations and the ongoing struggle to articulate why or how a black Messiah, or even being created in the image of God, is significant in their lives." Wright frames the popular songwriters as offering epistemological reflection that resonates with how youth engage theological questions. The intersection allows me to reflect on the child theologically in any of the spaces, even apart from the site expressing a faith value.

Signifiers

Food (literal), Nooks, Gather-Retreat-Gather, Connect-Isolate, Cross-Pollinate

I group these signifiers because they all reference how the participant artists inhabit the spaces. Gather-Retreat-Gather reveals that the sites best function when participants convene to get started, disperse for some work period to generate material, whether in pairs, small groups, or solo, and then re-convene to share and build. "We have time to explore, go to the cafe, space to spread out" (Focus Group April 2017). To the artist's ear, or even a teacher's ear, this rhythm of process may sound like a given.

However, facilities require multiple safe, semi-private, nooks and cubbies and square footage to accommodate this arc. Gather-Retreat-Gather is the spatial dynamic that I highlight of the phenomenon. Connect – Isolate is the emotional dynamic practiced in the landscape: does the participant feel like joining in or being alone? Are there safe places to withdraw away from other participants yet within appropriate range of the attending adult, depending upon participant age? Focus group participants at Global Girls report that their favorite spots that they would replicate in a new space are "the bathroom and the storage room because that's where my favorite teaching artist would conference with me one on one" (Focus Group 2017). A second girl agrees, and the private space respects others as much as it protects oneself; that's where you go "when you not tryna distract from what's all going on." They have a name for it: "Dr. Feel Session!!!" is how one participant wrote about it on her survey. A congregational facility like University Church, a renovated convent such as what houses St. Anselm's after school program, or a trio of modest storefronts such as the Global Girls studio across from a fire station, offer this range of functionality for creative process and emotional boundaries.

Cross-Pollinate, then, is the aesthetic dimension of the grouping. Participants at Teen Arts Council, Rebirth, and Firehouse report the benefit of creating in a mixed arts professional space. "At Logan, there's always art going on. Good energy to be around. You're around creativity constantly. It's valuable, it's inspiration, there's freedom to open up." Another youth cosigns the sentiment, "creatives inspire creatives, creativity, and I think that's raw. It makes me more confident all these things are supporting me. *(by way of example, he names visuals around the home space)* African art. Clothing, Africa map,

so dope. I have ancestors. It's very reassuring" (Rebirth focus group, May 2017). The discussion hangs out here, as many of them want to add.

"—walking past dance and music on our way to practices…"

" …helped to see that art builds off each other. You see this cross of worlds to speak each other's languages." I hear how much they appreciate, value, find inspiration in the privileged university building, with faculty, MFA studios, glassed observation deck above the theatre scene shop, and the cocooned drama spaces that I had hoped I would find for my study sound provincial by comparison. Youth expressed both comfort and legitimacy through cross-pollination.

Produced Space

I borrow a broad concept from Henri Lefebvre to discuss how my research sites produce space. In *Production of Space*, Lefebvre argues that history once held a tradition of "code at once architectural, urbanistic and political, constituting a language common to country people and townspeople, to authorities and artists—a code which allowed space not only to be 'read' but also to be constructed" (Lefebvre 1974, 7). Lefebvre's meticulous analysis offers terms such as "science of space" and "truth of space." While he allows that spaces can be coded and signified, Lefebvre presents that "Codes will be seen as part of a practical relationship, as part of an interaction between 'subjects' and their space and surroundings" (Lefebvre 1974, 17-18). Thus, my methodology uses Lefebvre's strategy of contextually identifying how the space produces practices and habits. I appreciate that Lefebvre links space to time because he establishes the error emerging from seeing space as fixed rather than in relationship. Missing the relationship of the space erases the human activity in the space of a laborer subject, for example, and

grants primacy to the state subject for the particular spaces that Lefebvre analyzes. Space and time thus exhibit some interplay according to how Lefebvre sees relationalities as producing space.

> The *ideologically* dominant tendency divides up space into parcels in accordance with the social division of labour. It bases its image of the forces occupying space on the idea that space is a passive receptacle. Thus, instead of uncovering the social relationships (including class relationships)that are latent in spaces, instead of concentrating our attention on the production of space and the social relationships inherent to it – relationships which introduce specific contradictions into production, so echoing the contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the social character of the productive forces – we fall into the trap of treating space as space "in itself" as space as such. We come to think in terms of spatiality, and so to fetishize space in a way reminiscent of the old fetishism of commoditites, where the trap lay in exchange, and the error was to consider 'things' in isolation, as 'things in themselves.'
>
> …What is urgently required here is a clear distinction between an imagined or sought-after 'science of space' on the one hand and real knowledge of the production of space on the other. Such a knowledge, in contrast to the dissection, interpretations and representations of a would-be science of space, may be expected to rediscover *time* (and in the first place the time of production) in and through space. (Lefebvre 1974, 89-90)

Where Lefebvre reflects philosophically about erasing time—he describes quite violently "this manifest expulsion of time" (Lefebvre 1974, 96)—I reflect theologically about how my research sites respect, invite, and carve time for youth to create—to *labor*—and witness value in their labor. While I cannot wrestle here with Lefebvre on the state value of youth labor—producing the heterotopic spaces of entrepreneurship and disruptive justice practices simultaneously—I can argue that my data show how spaces visibilize time…and the time of *children*, *black* children, specifically.

Lefebvre says, "What we are concerned with, then, is the long *history of space*, even though space is neither a 'subject' nor an 'object' but rather a social reality – that is to say, a set of relations and forms. This history is to be distinguished from an inventory

of things *in space* (or what has recently been called material culture or civilization), as also from ideas and discourse *about space*" (Lefebvre 1974, 116). Indeed, reading Lefebvre here tempts me to retitle my instrumentation for the project (i.e. "Built Environment Inventory" in the Appendix). Potentially, my inventory problematizes me including Lefebvre's work as theoretical underpinning. However, since the theorist references *history* of space, and Willmer and White as well as Wright lead me to consider Jesus as disrupting spaces, especially by placing a child in the center outside of the child's historical place, I proceed with Lefebvre's analysis. I contend that, given the contextual nature of my work and how my sites respond temporally and contextually to the world that their youth participants encounter, my inventory yet offers building blocks for youth arts spaces while maintaining the reflective process (if not depth) that Lefebvre demands.

Ultimately, Lefebvre parses how space is necessarily social, produced, and reproduced through its use and users. Therefore, a signifier such as Cross-Pollinate produces a legitimizing space that differs and offers in collaboration with rehearsal or performance space within the same structure. Lefebvre discusses how the social nature of the spaces interact. Even when structurally delineated, instead of "colliding" as material objects might, "Visible boundaries, such as walls or enclosures in general give rise for their part to an appearance of separation between spaces where in fact what exists is an ambiguous continuity" (Lefebvre 1974, 87). Lefebvre's argument also responds to potential subjectivities in my methodology. Where I as researcher have noted, extracted, and illumined particular spatial signifiers, differing "fragment(s) of space" less resonant in my observations would nevertheless hold multiple and intersecting social relationships.

In other words, while for me, the trash can over-flowing with Girl Scout cookie boxes at Free Street Theater was a signifier of healing in the Green Room, a different object out in the lobby could signal healing to someone else. Likewise, my cookie boxes also hold other social relationships that manifest elsewhere in the space.

Summary

The child as Hungry manifests in each site through food offered, spiritual reflection, and arts exposure. Child theology loci of Temptation and Humility explore imagination and status for the child in the signifiers that emerge from the data. Willmer and White assert that "temptation is a conflict of imaginations," and Humility, most concisely, is vulnerability + potentiality. Almeda Wright, offers key perspective for facilitating how youth encounter the *Imago Dei*, the relationality of humans to God that ascribes value to human life. Spatial signifiers of Hungry include Food (literal), Nooks, Gather-Retreat-Gather, Connect-Isolate, and Cross-Pollinate. Henri Lefebvre describes producing and reproducing space as a relational process that visibilizes labor and time.

CHAPTER 3

THE CHILD AS VILLAGE

Homily

Isaiah 11:6 – 9, The Peaceful Kingdom

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the kid,
The calf and the lion and the fatling together,
And a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
Their young shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
And the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
On all my holy mountain;
For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.

Growing up, my sisters and I had to say individual bible verses in turn before we said our collective family grace at mealtime. Only after our recitations could we eat, and my parents had the patience of Job waiting on us to quote scripture. As children, however, we were so hungry that we grew impatient with any stumbles. We three older ones were kind enough to leave "Jesus wept" for the youngest. But we competed to be the first to speak, "and a little child shall lead them." If you missed your chance, you could end up lost in a Psalm somewhere—23, 100, 121—and those were harder to get right. Plus, our literal comprehensions believed the words meant that one day, the kids will lead. One day, kids will be in charge. The scripture felt like righteousness that we could wield against grownups.

Now, this isn't what the text means at all, despite little ones wanting to one-up the adults. Isaiah means to foreshadow that the Christ child will come and bring peace to the

land. The context of "and a little child shall lead them" describes God's promises for peace following a time of oppression. The prophet describes Israel's vulnerability as a kingdom that feels small and powerless compared to its enemies. Where Isaiah wants to promise that seeds planted by ancestors will bear fruit, at the same time, the generational transfer of conflict complicates the hope. Thus, Isaiah focuses on the exploring child of the future in order to vividly describe how current segregations and otherings will give way to coexistences and relational living in the future.

The prophetic poetry juxtaposes aggressive animals against the smaller creatures that are their prey. Consider the verbs that typically describe the behaviors of wolves, leopards, lions, bears, and snakes towards lambs, kids, calves, fatlings, and children mentioned in the text: Eat. Tear. Bite. Maul. Sting. Yet carnivorous and defensive actions between living things will end when the One who saves enters the world in the form of a human child. This is the promise that we are supposed to take from the reading: that one day, we may traverse and transgress spaces both within and beyond our prescribed comfort zones—and do so *without fear*. While the *little* child leads the newly non-aggressive animals in verse 6, the *nursing* child can play over the snake hole and the *weaned* child can stick hands down inside the snakes' home, in verse 8. Fearlessly, infant and toddler can explore their curious surroundings. Fearlessly, the child can befriend wild animals. Collectively, mature creatures agree not to consume each other's young.

Neighbor, I submit to you, that Isaiah's Christ showed up once upon a time, yet we still consume each other's young. Isaiah's Messiah manifest seven centuries after the prophecy, and yet twenty centuries after that appearance, our children travel both feared and fearful. What mature creatures are we that we privilege the fears of the aggressive

and armed adult in our species over the fright of fleeing lambs, calves, and fatlings? How does maturity miss that attacking the young of others makes one's own offspring vulnerable? Yet today, like bears and lions and snakes, we grow so afraid that we attack in order to protect. "Attack…to *protect*." Counterintuitively, attacking breeds wider conflict and thus even greater danger. Peace and fear inhabit separate houses. Thus, the prophet introduces the listener to a child who will grow to conquer death and destruction, and help humankind imagine and practice towards living fearlessly.

The child in the scripture exists only in early stages. For Isaiah, the nursing, weaned, and little child has yet to learn the fear of snakes and wild beasts. Thus, this child can model safety for careful persons in the newly peaceful community. This child can model safety amidst differing sexualities and genders, safety amidst differing religions, abilities, social statuses, and family incomes; this child fears neither consuming nor being consumed. She consumes media yet has faith in her ability to be present in the company of her friends. She rejects falling consumed by what consumes her elders. The child here models being FREE...models freedom. I dream of freedom for my own child. Salvation offers us freedom…in faith, if not in practice.

Despite my scholarship and training, I still have an assurance for my younger self about her uninformed biblical exegesis. Day and night, in prayer and in blessing, adults exhorted her to strive to be like Christ. If the child wants faith to lead, wants faith to model safety, she can witness sacred steps to follow. A child, imaged in a human body like her own, has sketched the map. //

The Child as Village excites me because it scripturally reflects the biblical "a child shall lead them," as well as inverts the proverb that "it takes a Village to raise a

child." Given the deep need for extensive peacebuilding, six of the ten spaces operate in some manner beyond the walls of a primary space to occupy, partner, or otherwise impact up and down one or more blocks; a seventh space has plans and capital campaign in the works. Through peace festivals, protest actions, muralling, service, arts marketplaces, and more, each site expects youth to permeate and impact the neighborhood. The Child *models* being the Village, which then elicits Village care. Youth participants at each site maintain a Village presence, slowly subverting the violence surrounding what I call the "crimes of presence" that compromise how they traverse each context. For example, I attended one of the two culminating performances of the summer drama program held at the Incubator, which anchors the developing ArtsBlock on 55th Street, two blocks east of KLEO and New Life Center Church of God in Christ. One performance occurred in the facility, and one occurred in Hadiya Pendleton park. The park is named for the King High school band student who was killed afterschool, on school grounds, an innocent bystander, just days after performing with her band at the inauguration in Washington DC. Sculptures that celebrate her in the park are impressionistic band instruments. The Child as Village helps residents to emerge from behind their doors and convenes them into both indoor and outdoor "town square" spaces. Rightly or wrongly, the onus, as I observe, is on the Child to be the Village that she or he desires. Each site offers a manner of gathering space that signifies Village responsibility.

Theoretical and Theological Underpinnings

Child Theology Loci: Kingdom, Reception

Willmer and White express the Kingdom as a communal and collective space. I also choose their concept of Reception from the gospel story as applicable to how the

sites conceptualize the Child as Village. Reception, according to Willmer and White, both invites and welcomes, and these are two separate steps. "In the face of their conception of the kingdom of God, he places a child" (Willmer and White Location 1025). Wilmer and White discuss the hierarchy, ambition, anxiety, and competition that mar kingdom concepts.

> "Jesus…rephrases the issue: How will they enter it? The answer has been waiting for them all along in the history of God's gracious hospitality: before it is too late they need to hear it. It is enough to be in the kingdom: "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the LORD, with the sparrow and the swift, than dwell in the tents of the wicked." (Psalm 84 3, 10) To be just inside, on the margin of this kingdom, does not put one in danger of being pushed out or deprived. That is how people normally feel when they are on the margin, because then being excluded is closer than being "well in". But it is not so in the kingdom of God. The light of God shines equally through the whole, and no one is caught in a shadow of an intervening building. (Revelations 21:22-22:5) To be just inside is to be as much inside as one who is at the centre." (Willmer and White, Location 1093)

What Willmer and White discuss here is particularly *spatial* and reflects how Lefebvre describes *production* of space. The text particularly resonates for me with one youth's story as she described layered circles of care, concentrically, from the center to the outer spheres, post-performance after a particularly emotionally engaging text (Focus Group April 2017). A male peer co-signed on the image with his own story of how the group "had his back." Willmer and White go further: "Indeed true community with Christ is paradoxical: being on the margins with Jesus is to be surely enclosed in the love of God. Anxiety is unnecessary, just as ambition is pointless (so Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount)" (Location 1558). Willmer and White then discuss "communal witness" and the "social communal" approach to the kingdom. Again, the child theology scholars resonate with Rev. Cleage's concern that individual salvation overtakes collective witness. The reason to care about the difference, for Cleage, is the nation left to the child.

Do I take issue with the gendered language of Kingdom? Yes, especially given that my seminary training stressed gender neutral language for God and humankind. I gravitate towards Rev. Dr. King's "beloved community," but that language neutralizes part of Willmer and White's hierarchical argument, which is what Dr. King and others sought to embody, but the disciples did not. Thus, in the context of analyzing the gospel text in the moment that Jesus placed the child, I retain the language of Kingdom. The disciples were competing for high places because of the patriarchal society, culture, and language use that plagued them. Wilmer and White sift those layers.

Jesus first receives the child himself. Then he challenges the disciples to receive the child. In three gospels, Jesus calls Receptivity a chain reaction: Whoever received this child in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives him who sent me (Matthew 18:5; Luke 9:46-48; Mark 9:33-37). Matthew asks the disciples for some transformation in order for them to receive the child. Thus, Wilmer and White relate receptivity to humility, and now they align more with what childhood studies scholars argue about the child as a whole person rather than an unfinished adult. Receiving the child exacts honoring the child as "being distinct...She is not to be dissolved into an idea serving another's self-centered project" (Willmer and White 2015, Location 2396).

Signifiers: Town Square Spaces

Jane Jacobs calls her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities,* "an attack on current city planning and rebuilding" (Jacobs 1961, 3). For example, Jacobs argues that sidewalks help to assimilate children, who should play on sidewalks instead of in parks. She counts the adults able to view children at play on sidewalks and stoops as

the reason that sidewalks are safer than parks. Residential and storefront windows render adults able to oversee play.

Jacobs offers what is formally a youth developmental asset: "In real life, only from the ordinary adults of the city sidewalks do children learn—if they learn it at all—the first fundamental of city life: People must take a modicum of public responsibility for each other even if they have no ties to each other. This is a lesson nobody learns by being told. It is learned from the experience of having other people without ties of kinship or close friendship or formal responsibility to you take a modicum of public responsibility for you" (Jacobs 1961, 82).

Jacobs uses the term "street bossiness" to categorize how city children give advice to strangers about directions, parking, icy patches, and more. "This is instruction in city living that people hired to look after children cannot teach, because the essence of this responsibility is that you do it without being hired." (Jacobs 1961, 83) Jacobs also points out that sidewalk play occurs beyond the purview of matriarchy. She argues, for her time period, that city planning stages spaces that "exclude men as part of normal, daytime life wherever people live." I employ Jacobs' analysis and submit that the cross-pollination discussed above subverts the matriarchal play-space boundary. The arts spaces in my study that permit free play, some degree of free exploration, offer additional spatial assets that distribute watchful eyes across gender.

Jacobs challenges the usefulness of the town square given the phenomena of homelessness and safety that compromise the use of the spaces. In any case, I define my town square signifier as a public meeting space. Jacobs prompts me, however, to acknowledge the performativity of presenting art in the public space at all. When youth

perform a story in the space, they additionally perform a sense of safety. In a Theatre of the Oppressed sense, performing both “safe” and “brave” in the space is Boalian “rehearsal for the revolution.” The data from my observations show performing village exacts a courage from youth who are the players in the rehearsal.

Jacobs discusses that “…deterioration, crime, and other forms of blight are surface symptoms of prior and deeper economic and functional failure” (Jacobs 1961, 98). Of the persons amidst blight, Jacobs says, “They did not drive out respectable users. They moved into an abandoned place and entrenched themselves.” I use Jacobs’ points to underscore the weight of the Child’s task as Village. Jacobs asserts that the wealthy supplant the poor, not the other way around. From this view, the Village conceptualization means that youth in the sites retain and reclaim potentially supplanted spaces.

For social and safety reasons, “On successful city streets, people must appear at different times” (Jacobs 1961, 152), so Jacobs argues that mixed use offers economic benefits as well. Mixes of workers and residents at different times of day expands commerce, service, customers and clients. Segregating residential and commercial areas limits the variety of offerings and widens gaps in times of use. Jacobs discusses the goods and services that inhabit old vs new buildings (Jacobs 1961, 188). Jacobs argues that since new buildings cost a lot to maintain, new buildings attract highly profitable or well-funded businesses. Old buildings enable a wider variety of arts, services, and commerce to operate in a neighborhood. In my project, all five of the faith-based sites operate in old buildings. Of the non-faith-based sites, the two that reside in newer spaces, one of which is a rehab, are both University of Chicago affiliated properties.

Thus, Jacobs offers measures that I include when I analyze my data. Why Jacobs? Why Jacobs' 1961 text populated with 1959 examples? Sunshine intentionally uses Jacobs' theories specifically as it shapes properties. The storefronts manifest multiple guiding principles that Jacobs asserts. I can identify Jacobs' values in the Sunshine properties and presence on 61st street. I see Jacobs' values reflected with other sites--Firehouse, ETA, and Global Girls in particular. Measures I extract from Jacobs include:

- Aged buildings + mixed age buildings constructed over time
- Mixed uses + users + hours
- Sidewalk factors: eyes for safety + socialization of children (observing modeling)

Jacobs fascinates me because her decades-old work describes current phenomena. Jacobs concerns cities with ethnic enclave evolutions during years when some immigrant groups retained nationalities that categorized them as non-white.

Partnerships, Peacebuilding, and Multi-Unit Presence

The grouping here is a chain reaction, like the grouping above. Six of the spaces, as I said earlier, have multi-unit presence, whether arts building, café, clinic, job training facility, chapel or rectory, child care facility, church annex, or even affordable housing units. These aggregates may offer supports to parents, spiritual resources, and serve as information clearinghouses for the neighborhood. They exist as partnerships together and then generate others. Each community-anchoring multi-unit organization includes peacebuilding in its objectives. While the business model is beyond the scope of this project, the signifiers manifest in the spaces, supplies, and landscapes of the built environment. Firehouse, for example, is a youth initiative of Lawndale Community Church. The property cross-pollinates the hip-hop arts of dance, theatre, DJ, spoken

word, visual arts, graffiti, and since my data collection, culinary arts as well, supervised by a barbecue sauce legend. Murals inside and out, on walls, on stairs, on the red garage door, and on adjacent buildings, announce the artistry inside.

The multi-unit presence of the blocks-long Lawndale Community Church campus isn't immediately observable to passers-by. Nothing uniform necessarily links the painted fire station and the church building, the clinic, the job training, or the daycare. The proximity, however, means that when the plumbing facilities in the Firehouse were in disrepair, partner sites nearby with fingerprinted, background-checked staff were safe places for youth participants to use the bathroom. In the case of Firehouse's Board Up program, the cue for peacebuilding is in the lack of built environs. Participants retrieve their supplies from the building and then meet in an empty lot outside. They paint large plywood panels and when dry, take their creations to cover the blank woods on boarded up homes in the neighborhood. The project reflects the theological focus at Firehouse, which practices art as redemptive transformation (Corbitt and Nix-Early 2003). A.R.T, the acronym and the words, are painted on the walls of the second floor, along with the faces of famous people from the neighborhood. Upon entry into the building, a high staircase with names of adjacent and surrounding streets greets the eye. Immediately, the art messages that greatness can emerge from the roots in the community.

Produced Space

My research fields offer tools for understanding assets of Child as Leader. Tara Yosso's 2005 concepts for Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso 2005, 77 – 81) alongside Etheridge Woodson's Ecological Framework for Community Cultural Development

Capital (Etheridge Woodson 2015, 51) efficaciously highlight the richness of engagement that happens in a significant architectural feature at each of my research sites: the Town Square. The Town Square is where communities witness conceptualizing the Child as Village as I describe: the modeling and responsibility for community that youth exhibit at each site, in role, task, and presence. The Town Square space, whether indoor or outdoor, is the corresponding built environs signifier of the Child as Village where the youth participants live out their necessary performances integral to neighborhood narrative. Together, the Town Square space and the Child as Village exemplify each of the nine capital capacities in Etheridge Woodson's ecology and the six capital capacities in Yosso's frame. The Town Square itself is built capital, and as Etheridge Woodson grants the fluidity of capital in different settings, may be the civic capital. My research sites and / or their audiences credit youth with Human, Creative, Cultural, Political, and Social capital. Youth further collaborate to reimagine the Environmental and Financial capitals at every site. Yosso's Aspirational, Linguistic, Familial, Social, Navigational, and Resistant capital capacities, which Etheridge Woodson includes in her visual map, together show the gift and the challenge in the Child as Village. I uphold the belief that youth participate in civic engagement and decisions. My project means to celebrate the youth assets that Etheridge Woodson, Yosso, and others underscore. Contextually to Chicago, however, and through the lenses of child theology and practical theology, I must highlight that youth exercising these capitals in Town Square spaces holds life and death stakes.

Death is part of the work. Rebirth youth poets "committed this year to stories that couldn't be told /by people who are not here" (Focus Group, May 2017). When one poet

shared that the third-grade teacher of the deceased protagonist of his poem approached him after a performance, the youth agreed, “this is what mattered.” A brief hush fell over the group; then one speaks with soft urgency: “We didn't win first this year, but WE WON (my caps). In our hearts.” Her breath catches. Around the circle, a chorus, "This is why we write," rises and echoes, call and response, like the refrain of a prayer.

We have precedent in the Theatre for Youth field of arts spaces where children lead. I reference the legacy of children’s theatre and the space use indicators that Herts Heniger observed and embedded in the Children’s Educational Theatre as establishing practices. This is an historical context of youth modeling a new Village for immigrant parents. I also reference the biblical scriptures that title Herts Heniger’s chapters. I’m implying “inheritance” here, biblically, culturally, economically. Prodigal nature emerges where youth transform heritage: i.e. inherit poverty, and racism, whether personally or communally, and the child practices accountability for environmental concerns.

I frame the welcome as Radical here because as the primary conceptualizations emerging from my research attest, each space fills a gap and offers a welcome that youth and parents self-report as uniquely accessed at their site. Though the parent interviews are few, the circumstances of each family add weight to the responses. First, each parent participant reports their respective arts site as a family space, beyond solely the individual child participant in the program. Two families had two youth participants, one current, and one former, in their programs. In one case, the older sibling participated in the very same program. In the other case, the program is gendered—for girls, yet an older son first connected to the space as a staff support through the After School Matters arts employment model. The parent expresses that the studio is a space of liberation that

literally frees her daughter from the physical confines of home as well as from the solo nature of home activities. “It's giving the girls a sense of unity, to work it out. It's good they get it at a young age, you know, Sisterhood” (Parent Interview May 2017). The parent sentiment resonates with what the Global Girls focus group and questionnaires highlight as “the bumrush” of welcome at their space.

Two of the families, though they’ve resided in Chicago for some years now, are not native to Chicago, and one isn’t native to the United States. These families thus experience their arts site as a window to how the city “works.” Both parents expressed the challenge of acculturating to a city where the child’s primary experiences do not revolve around school: “school here is not the locus” (Parent Interview April 2017). Above, I explained why I excluded school sites. Even though I exclude them, to frame the economic and academic diversities of the city, I do use the four-level census-based Tier system that distributes school lottery spaces for efficient demographic description, and I use the neighborhood school ratings for context. The upshot means that students regularly lottery for schools around the city, so school is not necessarily how youth and families build their Village. The periodic entry years and unpredictability of school [schema?] in Chicago are too complex to describe here, and that complexity means that for families new to the city, arts sites such as the ones in my study offer a family multiple and streamlined mechanisms for unique welcome. For an international family, the site offered radical community engagement: “…it provided access to an American experience not available to many […] expats to get this insider knowledge about American history, American race relations in this profound politic--it's also a political organization and we became very articulate. So…it told the family a LOT about America. So for us, we really

treasure this relationship" (Parent Interview April 2017). Sites such as those in my study offer families an intergenerational place to explore questions of nation, citizen, and the foreigner, broadly conceived. The theological task of Reception as Wilmer and White extract and issue from Matthew 18 resonates with how parents responded in the study, on behalf of themselves and their families as a whole.

Willmer and White offer produced space for the loci of Kingdom and Reception in the vein of Lefebvre. The scholars introduce the phrasing, "earthing the kingdom of God" (Location 2482)—clearly a production of space. "Humanity is created and called to image and partner God. The human search for earthings of the kingdom of God involves work with earthly material. Thus we envision and experiment with actions which are eligible and legible as signs of the kingdom of God." Liturgy, they argue, is earthing, and yet more earthing must occur. Willmer and White use other language, I just point out that "order of service" means to be followed and consequences arise beyond the boundaries.

Summary

The Child as Village emerges from data that puts the responsibility on the child to perform spaces as safe. Willmer and White offer two loci, Kingdom and Reception, that contrast with such responsibility on the shoulders of a child. Both loci, however support the communal nature of the data observations. Additionally, the child theology loci of this chapter actively align with Lefebvre's produced space; the mechanisms for Kingdom and Reception are transparent as Willmer and White discuss them. The chapter also resonates with the urban analysis work of Jane Jacobs, a formative theorist whose writings explicitly underlie the architecture of Sunshine Gospel Ministries.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHILD AS VISIBLE

Homily

Luke 2:41-52 Jesus in the Temple at Passover

41 Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. 42 When he was 12 years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to their custom. 43 After the festival was over, they were returning home, but the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't know it. 44 Supposing that he was among their band of travelers, they journeyed on for a full day while looking for him among their family and friends. 45 When they didn't find Jesus, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple. He was sitting among the teachers, listening to them and putting questions to them. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed by his understanding and his answers. 48 When his parents saw him, they were shocked.

His mother said, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Listen! Your father and I have been worried. We've been looking for you!" 49 Jesus replied, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house?" 50 But they didn't understand what he said to them.

51 Jesus went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. His mother cherished every word in her heart. 52 Jesus matured in wisdom and years, and in favor with God and with people.

One of my favorite stories about myself is how my parents lost me when I was a crawling infant, in the midst of a celebration at our home. Neighbors, extended family members, and guests had been in and out of the front and back doors for hours, to the barbecue in the yard. Nobody had worried about me, because any family or friend present was a trusted part of my Village. As dusk fell, and the hour grew late, my parents grew worried. People searched up and down our block, up and down the alleyways and under the hedges surrounding our southeast DC home, looking for me. Eventually, my older sister trotted upstairs to put on her pajamas. She arrived in the room that we shared and called out to everyone, "The baby is up here, asleep, in her crib." Nobody had looked for

me up there because they hadn't known I could climb stairs. I like the story because of how my parents tell it, yet I can only imagine how scared they were! I know for myself what it is to lose a child in a busy playground for just ten minutes, even. Just when I was ready to call for help, Noah walked up to me and said of his older cousins, "Mama, Michael Jr. and Asim are lost." My little one never knew that HE was the one who was missing.

Likewise, in our text, the adolescent Christ child never knew that he had been missing. Twelve-year-old Jesus, immersed in his purpose, thought he was right where he was supposed to be. For him, Mary and Joseph were lost about their child's rightful place. Here these two parents have taught their child faith, language, reading, manners, history, culture, holiday food, and taken him on a journey for a week-long celebration of how God liberated their ancestors! Why would he want to go home? Here, he meets others who wrestle with ideas of community and justice and neighborliness and what God would have us do. Here, a not-yet teenage boy finds a safe space, a *brave* space, to talk to scholars and teachers about ancient texts and prophetic poetry and legal mandates and how he interprets them. Tween-aged Jesus sees himself reflected and affirmed and legitimized as teachers sit with him, amazed, and taking him seriously. Jesus felt at HOME.

So, when Mary asks, "Child, why have you treated us like this?" what can Jesus respond? "Mama, the good religious education is so far away from our house. I can't get this in our neighborhood." Even as their lost lamb is found, a gap widens between them. In this place, the child finds more of self. Yet the parent, in this place, sees laid bare the child's gifts and questions and roads to walk that the parent has never faced. What is it

like to parent or teach such a child? This text allows us to talk about the parental journey, finding such a space that matches your child's needs, equipped with literatures and reference texts and trained leaders who can recognize the developmentally appropriate responses to who your child is. And yet, "Why have you treated us like this?" *This*, from parents who didn't even look for him for a whole day. This, from parents who otherwise trusted their child to do the right thing, and who were fortunate enough to travel safely enough with family and friends. And, also, *this*, from parents who sit in loneliness, in awe of a child with special abilities and needs, that others don't know about or understand.

Mary and Joseph have been through a lot to keep that boy alive. This is the Jesus who lived when boys like him were supposed to die. This is the little boy whose cohort so frightened the Empire that they had targets on their backs from birth. They weren't supposed to make it. What if Mary's fear is that this prophesied child has put himself out there too soon? That he's making himself too visible? Mary has been raising Jesus, and she knows—his *questions* have questions! I submit to you, boldly, that when verse 50 says "they didn't understand what he said to them"—yes, they did. They had to. They didn't forget that angels came and talked to them. They didn't forget that three strange men showed up with presents to a barn where their baby was born. I think they were just caught off guard. The child is twelve! Jesus disrupts their sense of normalcy, of season and routine, disrupts the connective collectivity and ritual of the Passover journey, and reminds them of their call to parent such a Child. It's just too soon for the powers that be to know all the things that their child wants to say. Out Loud. It's too early for the leaders to know the things that this child will challenge. The child still needs protection; still

needs tools to walk the loneliness of the calling. What will the child suffer when stepping out alone?

Alright. I'm supposed to preach the good news. Luke gives it to us. The last two verses in the text tell us that Jesus went home, obeyed his parents, and everybody still liked him. Luke tells us that Jesus walked in safe space for years longer. Mary models for us to hold the child's words in our hearts for the days when all spaces must be brave. And Jesus grows into the One who will seek us out when we are lost—whether we know it or not. //

For better or worse, the Child as Visible is an outcome of my analysis. For the better, each site carves space to witness the child. Sadly, space for youth to be visible stands out at each site as contrasting with other spheres—so much so that being a Visible Child becomes a craft itself, added alongside the fine art. Conceptualizing the Child as Visible also reconceives "partnership" for me. Sites discuss the impact of partnerships on their institutional image, and when I parse my data I discover depths beyond my initial understandings of exchanging resources and worthy service. I engage both formal and colloquial concepts of staying "relevant," particularly as it relates to identity, for the impact of partnerships. Partners offer validations and credibility, risk-taking with the marginalized *of the* marginalized, and reflexively extend deeper engagement with professed theological commitments.

Theoretical and Theological Underpinnings

Child Theology Loci: Child, Disciple, Father

Disciple: Loneliness in having a calling

Child: Being present to Remind and Disrupt

Father: Protect/ion

I retain the gendered Father from the Willmer and White text since the patriarchal contexts of biblical history require wrestling. My seminary training grants me inclusive language for preaching, yes. Yet for scholarship, for field research, I retain the realities of patriarchy that the research participants face. My purpose for this project does note where the research sites challenge those traces. From an asset-based approach, I extract the tools that youth find to navigate whatever their obstacles may be.

For Willmer and White, the Disciple concept is really about loneliness. The child is the only one "with sense"—or, looked at another way, the only one not pretending to have sense—who Jesus can find in the moment. The writers highlight the loneliness of disappointment, and that Jesus was lonely like us sometimes: "…in the course of a fruitful ministry beset by frustration and friendlessness" (Location 1647). The Christological value here resonates with Lefebvre, Wright, and Jackson. I value how the writers express the denial such that "Jesus was left lonely and friendless by disciples who were not with him in spirit and practice," which resonates for me because we can be so far off base today with youth and the deep realities of what they face. "Each year in Holy Week, we remember that they betrayed, denied, or forsook him a the last, but the movement of the Christian year enables us to downplay that as an aberration in an extreme situation."

Willmer and White next discuss tension between telling the child to be their fullest self, and at the same time, teaching faith that denies the self. "In our modern risk-averse culture we think the cross is unsuitable for children" (1767). I relate personally to this point through a drama ministry play for Easter 2009 at Trinity United Church of

Christ: the script was a *Good Friday* play, with the spirits of murdered Chicago Public school children as leads in the cast…resurrection is meaningless unless we can talk about crucifixion. Resurrection from what? And what could that mean for the death that youth participants witness or ingest, whether interpersonally or through media? Thus, when Rebirth decides to tell stories of those who are no longer on earth to share them, I say that death is part of the work.

When Willmer and White offer that, "Where the cross has not been denied, it has been quarantined," I take away from the Cross and Child intertwined in the call to discipleship that the Child points out how the narrative of faith is made easy until it is no longer easy. We explain until we greet something that seems too ugly to explain, too weighty to explain. Turn, Humble yourself—only works because of the biblical context: the disciples would see the child as low status and no threat to their place in the kingdom. However, the scholars then ask, "Does Jesus collude with an oppressive social cultural situation by using a child to make a point? Does he exploit its unfairness or inhumanity for his own purpose? If so, was Jesus enclosed uncritically within this culture? In view of these problems, shall we abandon Jesus or at least the Jesus of this story?" (Location 2065) Certainly not, however engaging the concern and the slippery slope of power matters to the child theology enterprise.

Willmer and White's Father concept encompasses the charge to protect the child, plus the consequences of rejecting and despising the child. Here, Willmer and White use language of the "marginal" "invisible" child, words that apply to the lived experience of youth in my community. The writers use Jesus' word "despise" instead of "neglect," the contemporary field word that typically describes failures when shepherding youth, and

they suggest “abuse” being something different altogether (Location 2876). Undervaluing little ones is the first step in taking advantage of their vulnerability and relative weakness—towards “despising.” Willmer and White highlight that Jesus warns the disciples of the slippery slope from undervaluing to despising (Location 2912), and the theologians caution against believing that we are removed from the cruelties that the child may encounter.

After they discuss Death as a despiser, Willmer and White engage the mystery of the angels. Here the scholars anticipate and confront oppositions and sciences that reject angel presence and look for simple step throughs of their thinking. Willmer and White offer that angels bridge the distance between the child and God’s face. And then they say, with more contemporary language, that although we pretty much laugh at angel talk today, we yet witness “angelic function in human life” (Location 3084). The biblical text in Matthew 18:10, as Willmer and White interpret, invites us to “look for angels who are functionally effecting in dealing with real issues in life as it is given to us now.” They task us to use whatever imagery helps—i.e. Jacob wrestling all night with an angel, or the spilled blood of Abel that God points out to Cain. As “angel-blood,” it speaks and operates eschatologically and ancestrally, intertwining with human activity.

Death and despising, and the need to protect against them, are simultaneously personal and collective tasks as I examine conceptualizing the Child as visible at my research sites. In his Introduction titled “Expendable Futures” Giroux describes black youth as “increasingly jobless and marked as a surplus and disposable population in an economy that does not need their labor” (Giroux 2009, 17-18). Giroux also describes how the purported post-racial society in the age of Barack Obama renders “any invocation of

race …as a private prejudice, decoupled from wider institutional forces. This depoliticizing and privatizing of racism makes it all the more difficult to both identify the racialized attacks on poor youth of color and take the kind of action that would dismantle the systemic conditions that promote such practices of exclusion and disposability" (Giroux 2009, 18). What's important for me about Giroux is that his analysis aligns with Cleage's concern about personal salvation competing with collective witness, which again reflects the hierarchical debate amongst the disciples. Willmer and White—and Mercer—anchor a child theology on a gospel story that resonates with core conflicts in the racializiations of faith language and embodiment today.

In "A Crucified Black Messiah, A Dead Black Love" (Clark 2016), BaSean A. Jackson shares comments that emerged as his congregation debated whether to use their own members' faces on a sign that would announce their building plans on their new land. As staff and members culled and envisioned what image to project, one member's feedback was, "We don't want to offend anyone." Jackson writes, "I wanted to pastor a church that realized that we should not want to try to trick people into worshipping with us by posting pictures of strangers on a sign. I wanted to pastor a people who Loved themselves enough to be unanimously proud of who we were no matter who was attracted or repelled. However, I did not pastor such a church. I do not pastor such a people. I pastor Black people. I pastor Black people who, in too many cases, still wrestle with self-Love and what to do with our blackness" (Clark 190). I find Jackson's reflections powerful and relevant because Jackson relays a reflective process of adults. My research sites conceptualize the child as Visible. Projecting the Child's face and surrounding the child with reflective/reflexive faces isn't optional. This quote also

supports my discernment in the sampling strategy and site selection process. My research sites boldly project the face of the Child in their midst.

Signifiers: Walls, Comfort, Industry Standard, Entrepreneurship, Legitimize

Walls

"Rigid and bohemian—this is the tension that I feel. Professional artists bring more professional artists…If you have more gorgeous stuff on the wall…? Kids will question themselves. Won't feel safe. Feel judged. They won't want to come in" (DeShazier May 2017). Emmy award-winning rap artist Rev. Julian (aka JQwest) and I wind through a maze of attic-turret rooms with vertical latticed windowpanes that open to a balcony view of the Open Mic night performance hall. Some walls have murals in progress on the actual wall; some have canvases, some paper, taped up, and some have just a name painted, claiming the territory for future use. Basement studio spaces at University Church have honor codes painted onto the exposed pipes running along low ceilings. Both the stairwell leading up to the open mic performance hall and the painting studios, and the stairwell to the basement thrift and recording studios have keyed wrought-iron gates that lock during late or off-hours.

Observing "what's on the walls" was the most accessible data to read when I catalogued built environs. Inspirations and honor codes offer participants direct messages about engaging the space. Qualities of art, as Rev. Julian discusses above, and notice of calendar events, stand out as primary signifiers that message participants about options for their own futures and towards professional networks. Awards, cultural reflections, and memorials encourage participants regarding legacies that they inherit.

Comfort, Industry Standard, Entrepreneurship, Legitimize

The signifiers clustered here address technical and logistical needs to create work. Comfort encompasses both the real material needs of bodies, such as appropriate "sittables" or flooring for creating, tables to complete homework, and needs for food and drink. However, Comfort signifiers can include what are generally seen as 'wants' instead of needs, yet become needs when conceptualizations expect the Child to deliver work. Wireless access, charging outlets, storage for work in process or storage to help deal with the realities of transportation for youth become necessities for the Visible Child, given the expectations. Signifiers of comfort also can reflect a theology of hospitality as practiced at the larger faith institutions that house Firehouse, KLEO, Sunshine, or University Church.

Data offer rich understandings of Industry Standard equipment for producing work. When asked to rate the quality of DJ equipment at Firehouse on a scale of one to ten, the instructor said, "Six." He explained that six was almost better than having a ten; that the teens were experiencing manipulating the vinyl in old school ways (Interview November 2016). Six, in his view, was the sweet spot of preparing them with the flexibility to work on new or old equipment in any venue. Industry standard becomes a sliding scale for preparation. Participants also read access to industry standard equipment as a marker of being valued.

Likewise, signifiers of Entrepreneurship may intersect with Industry Standard equipment. Both the DJ instructor and Pastor Phil at Firehouse reported (Interviews November 2016) paid DJ work that the program facilitates for participants. Sunshine Gospel Ministries includes Entrepreneurialism as one of its six core values, and lists "200

jobs on 61st street" as the third of its three-point vision. An entrepreneurial moment that surprised me was a Rebirth fundraiser within a holiday arts festival that the Arts Incubator hosted. In a Reading Room space, the youth sold original poems. Customers could choose one of three types of poems, such as an acrostic of a name or word, and answer a few content questions. While attendees browsed vendors and art, youth poets created the poems on digital devices, printed them out on yellowed parchment-like paper on one of two compact wireless printers, scrolled them, and handed the buyer a bow-tied gift.

Signifiers that Legitimize the work of the program deeply impact participants. Entrepreneurial opportunities and industry standard equipment both offer legitimizing capacities. Legitimizing the work, however, reflects how the space functions and builds relationships in addition to and beyond the tangible tools available for use. Prior to my study, I defined "youth dedicated" in terms of hours and resources reserved for youth use. I now define youth dedicated in terms of how youth experience the space as legitimizing the work that they create there.

Produced Space

Safe Space and Brave Space

The youth work language of "safe space" has evolved into "brave space" which accounts for the risk that participants contribute in the work. Staff respondents particularly speak to that trajectory, particularly given wider political climates and external factors that youth process within their programs. I revisit a preliminary coding moment, pre- Three Conceptualizations, where I noted strategies for physical safety, gender inclusivity, literary agility, entrepreneurship, advocacy, and healing, to describe

the space that conceptualizing the child as Visible produces. The very first picture that I took in the research was of a trash can overflowing with empty Girl Scout cookie boxes on the Saturday after the November 2016 election. Alongside the chalk map on the board (Figure 29), the trash was a symbol of how the room was a brave space to watch the election, to talk politics, to risk sharing concerns and hopes and fears, knowing that the sharing also feeds created work. Likewise, "brave space" describes the emotional risk that Rebirth collectively chose when electing to poeticize stories of youth no longer alive to speak.

A key story illumines how brave space includes the physical and metaphoric spaces intertwined. One of the funding programs permits a shared classroom between spaces. A number of youth who live close enough to two sites wanted to attend a particular class. However, for gang territory reasons, some could not arrive safely at an initially planned locale. Another site, in partnership and close enough, was able to host a session of a different site's course, and thereby accommodate more youth. The brief story highlights multiple needs: 1) that a few blocks make a world of difference, 2) tweens face precarious territorial boundaries, 3) the external financial support facilitated shared classrooms, 4) youth programs are in concert, not competition. The story highlights why theologically I use the word *neighbor* as a verb. I tell the story in this child as Visible chapter because the child's visibility—the black child's *hyper*-visibility—embodies risk. However, the story also exemplifies the child as Village. Multiple organizations further neighbor one another because youth challenge the community to produce safe space. By traversing, youth perform the spaces as safe and collaboratively produce brave space both inside and beyond the site walls.

I extrapolate from the contextual observations in my research to the wider experiences of youth in the geographic area and beyond, and Lefebvre offers a dire-sounding critique that resonates these decades later with Giroux's culture of disposability that black youth face.

> The primacy of the economic and above all of the political implies the supremacy of space over time. It is thus possible that the error concerning space that we have been discussing actually concerns time more directly, more intimately, than it does space, time being even closer to us, and more fundamental. Our time, then, this most essential part of lived experience, this greatest good of all goods, is no longer visible to us, no longer intelligible. It cannot be constructed. It is consumed, exhausted, and that is all. It leaves no traces. It is concealed in space, hidden under a pile of debris to be disposed of as soon as possible; after all, rubbish is a pollutant. (Lefebvre 1974, 95-96)

Above, I introduced Lefebvre to support how the sites and my findings visibilize youth time and the labor of youth artists. Here, Lefebvre frames time as beyond merely invisible towards time manifest as trash, incinerated. With Giroux and Lefebvre as lenses to engage the child theology locus of Child as disruptor of routine and reminder of call (Willmer and White 2015), safe space and brave space disrupt economic norms. Entrepreneurship in the spaces seeks to disrupt distributions of wealth, now and in the future, for youth participants and for the communities. The signifiers for the Visible child produce spaces that protect, physically and/or emotionally, not *from* exposures, but rather *during* and for exposures in the public sphere.

Performance studies scholar Harry Elam offers a concept that he calls "Reality Check" (Elam 1992), which helps me further explore how the Child reminds and disrupts as Willmer and White frame in child theology. Reality check is what Elam calls a moment of schism that illumines the gaps and ruptures between what is real and the

representation of the real. According to Elam, the schism forces its observers to experience the grotesque, the uncomfortable, and the unfamiliar, often in some traumatizing way. Elam cites charged racialized events such as the funeral of Emmett Till, video footage of the assault on Rodney King, plus artistic performances to make two key points. First, reality checks expose complicities that invisibilize the gaps in the real and its representations. Second, the reality check generates new performances and new audiences who witness the complicities and the gaps. Taking child theology and the reality check together, the child of color profoundly intervenes. Willmer and White reflect on how the Crucifixion is somehow too grotesque for the Child, how the *actual* Child in the midst disrupts sanitized and distilled faith narratives. With Elam's work as lens, the Visible black Child implicates the tellers of sanitized stories and reminds adults and communities of movement towards or away from call and charge.

Summary

Conceptualizing the Child as Visible, reflecting that child on the walls, with signifiers of comfort, entrepreneurship, and other legitimations in the space, recovers and makes transparent the time, labor, and presence of the Child. The Visible Child both presents and experiences danger when facing authoritarian powers in society. The craft of self for the Visible Child empowers, networks, and opens some doors even as the craft closes others. The Visible Child reframes partnership for institutions that serve or support youth, as the Visible child owns and projects her or his image and identity. Child theology loci of Disciple, Child, and Father reveal the isolation, risk, and disruptive agency that the Visible Child embodies.

CHAPTER 5

SENDING FORTH

[Further] Implications

Henri Lefebvre alleges that arts spaces are "bourgeoisified." For Lefebvre, the spaces are prescribed, proscribed, circumscribed, and ascribed such that purported free expression instead operates as a tool of the state. In part, my research supports Lefebvre's claim. For example, I sought signifiers of sustainability, and the connectedness of After School Matters, One Summer Chicago, and the University of Chicago infuses the research sites with goals of shaping youth who navigate, conform to, or avail themselves of systemic education and employment. Admittedly, I harmonize my data with the National Research Council and National Academy of Sciences personal and developmental assets, so I in fact deliberately seek how the programming at my sites facilitates growth in youth in accord with state-sanctioned ideals.

The Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth (Eccles and Appleton Gootman 2002) delivered a report in 2002 that assessed best practices in youth community programs. Multiple medical, social science, and educational researchers and practitioners gathered across a two-year project, which resulted in a four hundred-plus page document. In the figure below, I link my observed signifiers in the built environment to the core Personal and Social Assets that emerged from that project as facilitating positive youth development. For efficiency, I include dominant examples that occur in multiple instances across the sites.

Personal and Social Assets That Facilitate Positive Youth Development	Signifiers in the Built Environment

Physical development	
• Good health habits	Types of food access
• Good health risk management skills	Tools for comfort
Intellectual development	
• Knowledge of essential life skills	Responsibility for the space
• Knowledge of essential vocational skills	Employment signifiers
• School success	Homework space and help
• Rational habits of mind--critical thinking and reasoning skills	Reference resources, books, games of strategy (i.e. chess)
• In-depth knowledge of more than one culture	Research resources, partner spaces
• Good decision-making skills	
• Knowledge of skills needed to navigate through multiple cultural contexts	Tools for international travel; cultural images or artifacts
Psychological and emotional development	
• Good mental health including positive self-regard	Images on the walls
• Good emotional self-regulation skills	Inspirations, space to gather or retreat as needed
• Good coping skills	Tools for comfort, self-care, even hygiene
• Good conflict resolution skills	Honor codes on walls
• Mastery motivation and positive achievement motivation	Tools / supplies to excel; industry standard quality when possible
• Confidence in one’s personal efficacy	Epistemological mechanisms
• “Planfulness”-- planning for the future and future life events	Industry standard equipment; entrepreneurial tools

• Sense of personal autonomy/responsibility for self	Access beyond session time
• Optimism coupled with realism	State of the art equipment coupled with security measures
• Coherent and positive personal and social identity	Entrepreneurial tools to market self and art
• Prosocial and culturally sensitive values	Cross-pollination of arts
• Spirituality or a sense of a “larger” purpose in life	Meditation spaces, spiritual guidance and tasks
• Strong moral characters	Peacebuilding
• A commitment to good use of time	Schedule, session agenda
Social development	
• Connectedness—perceived good relationships and trust with parents, peers and some other adults	Proximity to invested adult
• Sense of social place/integration—being connected and valued by larger social networks	Awards on walls; multi-unit presence; interconnected web
• Attachment to prosocial/conventional institutions, such as school, church, non-school youth programs	Multi-Unit Presence
• Ability to navigate in multiple cultural contexts	Cross-pollination of arts
• Commitment to civic engagement	Village tasks in Town Square spaces

Figure 32. Data Signifiers and NRC/NAS Personal and Social Assets for Youth Development. (Eccles and Appleton Gootman 2002)

The image work with KLEO participants (Nov 2016) offered a glimpse of how their program combined with arts-based research techniques showed them exercising the

assets in the chart. The session left me wishing I had a process for further unpacking the complexity of images and dialogue WITH the participants, instead of by myself. I can speculate associations with their sculptures—i.e., when building an image of Welcome, a group formed the Jesus altar call. Was the sanctuary space steering them into literal images that reflected the environs? Or is the image of "come to Jesus" enough of a lived trope /meme /metaphor with abstraction embedded? These questions were beyond methods I could apply in the moment. In the time that we did have, in addition to reflecting some of the assets in Figure 32, discussion also reflected Evelyn Parker's work on spirituality with adolescents. Constructing the images and then interpreting them showed the process of "meaning-making" that Parker references (Parker 2003, 2006). Content of the images revealed resiliencies and rituals that are primary for their daily lives.

We also explored the terms Home, Safe, Belonging, and Youth Dedicated. As researcher, I learned new dimensions of my terms that I attribute to their unique vantage point that I and other adults do not have. For example, the Youth Dedicated group sculpted themselves as in proximity to one other, all at different levels, on their phones. This group image sparked dialogue.

"They're together but disconnected."
"It looks like loneliness."
"Kids are dedicated to their phones."
"A place for us would let us use our phones."

My experience with this group was an early example of expanding my preconceptions. They're not going to see Youth Dedicated from an external point of view. Likewise, the sculpting around Belonging triggered important negotiations around a two-directional or

active-reflexive sense of Belonging: did the Queen belong to the people, or did the people belong to the Queen? For me, the gendered and hierarchical structures they created are data that inform. Their work led participants to dialogue about building and serving community. In the process, participants engaged one another in real talk. Some expressed pride at the depth of reflection that could come from them doing something that seemed simple. Peers offered each other attention. On the one hand, a longer process with time to foster agility with the work, removing literalisms, might have yielded something different. I choose to value how the images of the literal and the conceptual mixed together. If they were experienced image work artists, they might have screened choices in ways that revise their organic responses.

Correlating my signifiers with positive developmental assets for youth allows my research to advocate for youth arts spaces. The correlations highlight, however, the myriad obstacles that require youth to cultivate extensive resiliencies. One of my three non-staff/youth/parent spontaneous interviews (August 2017) grew from a discussion of the space as the most consistent home for homeless teens and the interplay of their presence across performance gatherings, alternative home spaces or shelters, and social media. I frame this point in my wider narrative about the role of the spaces in the economy of the city and why certain signifiers manifest in those spaces. In addition to KLEO, Firehouse, and University Church, other sites in my study also suit aspects of the homeless youth artist story—i.e., the arts site may be a primary meal site for youth experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

Thus, even though my study includes measures and sustainability partners allied with state structures—and strictures, in some cases—I maintain that the research sites

offer radical alternative. For example, the sites use some spaces alternatively to their purpose or dominant narrative. When participants join in protest, create site-specific work, or perform spaces as safe counter to their dominant narrative—in performance terms, they transform the *where* of the scene setting. By conceptualizing the Child as Village, each site transgresses the proscribed arts space boundaries. Additionally, I maintain that because the sites work with marginalized youth, the sites reframe *who* develops systemic navigation skills. Primarily, however, a reflexive operates that ignites transformable capacities: the sites structure themselves to be transformed.

Child as Village mirrors the Carnival and festive state (Guss 2001) inversion and / or subversion of power. While Lefebvre might argue that Chicago's holiday and summer festivals that feature youth (music festivals, the Bud Billiken Parade[5], culminating programs, ethnic and cultural festivals) are also bourgeoisified and circumscribed frames, I argue that current events incite transgressive performances both within and in additional gathering occasions beyond and in direct tension with prescribed schedule and order.

LIMINALTY, Epistemologies, the Prophetic, and the need for Chaplaincy

The research sites produce liminal spaces that focus lenses on the space between the real and the representational narratives of youth lives. The Village-Visible Child in my research sites walks the liminal space of W.E.B. DuBois' double-consciousness (DuBois 1903) or even triple consciousness (i.e. intersecting identities of gender, culture,

[5] Annual parade in Chicago named for a guardian angel character featured in the children's section of the Chicago Defender, an historic black newspaper. The parade, the 2nd Saturday in August and now in its 89th year, profiles youth musicians, performing artists, and neighborhood groups mostly from the South and West sides of the city.

or language. Physical signifiers that birthed the Liminality code included the orchestra pit at *Louder Than A Bomb* and the grayscale experience of the annex – sanctuary sessions at KLEO. Furthermore, theoretical impetus to spend time on liminality lies in the work of Jane Jacobs, an old school gentrification journalist brought to my attention from speaking with the director at Sunshine Gospel Ministries. Childhood studies scholars already wrestle to revise language about the child toward whole personhood, and I ascribe to the child as being fully rooted in deliberate, unambiguous, developmentally appropriate life. Thus, I am not using liminality in terms of transitional space between childhood or adulthood here. Rather, the orchestra pit represented like a baseball dugout, with youth performers on deck, yet also in (what I read personally as) disruptive and discomforting proximity to the judges who shared the orchestral space.

Dressed in team jerseys, my research group Rebirth flowed in role from teammate to artist to prophet to child with trauma, as Baldwin-esque as any artist-saint could be, while facing upwards of four thousand people in one of the most historic and ornate concert venues in downtown Chicago, and the juxtapositions were jarring. My field notes (March 2017) remind me that "They're on their feet all the time…it looks more sport than art when used this way. It's transgressed space." Further feeding the sport imagery, youth on all poetry teams had a chant, a call, a mantra, said on cue as each poet introduced themselves before beginning their piece. The youth would state their name, and then their team name, and leave the briefest pause for the team to shout the motto from their area in the pit. The Rebirth refrain comes from *The Incredibles*, a 2004 Pixar film about a family of superheroes. Samuel L. Jackson plays the family father's friend Frozone, the only black primary character in the story, and his superpower is freezing

things. Jackson sees a hulking monster pass by his window, skids in his tracks, swings around to open a cabinet, only to find it empty, and calls out to his wife the phrase that the Rebirth team shouts to usher their mate into the sacred role: "*Honey, where's my Supersuit*?!"

Similarly, I noted liminality at KLEO at a culminating event (Dec 2016). As a side note, the youth performances were so impressive that I wondered what I'd been doing with my life all these years. Some were so confident, so talented, so irreverent in performance—and some were the same youth that I encountered in the program in the sanctuary. Their embodiment completely changed from sanctuary to the annex performance space, and I quote my field notes from that day: "This space is familiar and special. Liminal. Not sure how I explain that." Post-data analysis, I explain it with Turner, DuBois, Kierkegaard, and liturgical concepts of the sacred and the profane. Literally, the contextual ministry commitments of that congregational space open the doors and grant space for core sacred work and social redress. Their devising transgressed the sanctuary space during the creative process, knowing that the performance venue and audience called for a raw embodiment dissociated from pulpit space. The dichotomy of the two spaces at KLEO is beyond what I observed and coded in general at the research sites (or observed even in my own experience) where rehearsal and performance regularly occur in different spaces. The KLEO annex is both the same place and a different one, with church fellowship hall qualities and sanctuary proximity across a small parking lot. I assert the liminality of each space, however imperfectly, because the concept becomes a theological link about the thresholds where the spaces that youth typically inhabit expect the Child to abide.

Circle strategies, gathering and devising in ways that physically embed or extract the epistemologies for youth to create, stand out as an implication for child theology and for placing the child of color at the center. Rebirth youth shared the strategy of saying a poem while hitting the punching bag as a physical way of knowing what needed revising, what needed rehearsal, and knowing the depth of meaning in their writing; knowing more intimately what their own poems meant to themselves. (Youth Focus Group April 2017) Rev. Julian at University Church was a gold mine of explicit epistemological connections to my research questions: "...emphasize stewardship. Buildings do ministry. Space does ministry. Stewardship has been limited more towards people in the past." (DeShazier May 2017) The gains in spiritual practice that emerge from his comments about how stewardship manifests have implications for practical theology.

The longest thread that I've coded as epistemologies of the built environs comes from the Rebirth Focus Group. It happens when the coach reiterates my questions with the deft skill of a wordsmith: "What would be different if you all were (a) a school team or (b) if we had our own space?"

After that question, the teens spoke with even more raw transparency. "It's two different mindsets / systems - in the home space, we're making up the new lines. At Logan, we edit, refresh, clean up and polish." Peers offered convicted agreement on this point: "it's Go Time at Logan!" She continued that the home space was "intimate, subconscious…in a space to focus on writing and growth, vs. classroom—would be different, just going across the hall." Another adds of the group poem performed at a national competition that they "couldn't choose choreography here at home. Completely did that at Logan…the contrast space opens up new ideas, new perspectives." The group

describes the home as a laboratory space, and Logan as a place to switch gears and polish. The spaces cue parameters for the task at hand, and the team experiences that weight. Collectively, indistinguishably, they cite moments of discovering each other's performances and impact when they transition from the writing space of home to the formal rehearsal spaces. One participant shared multiple rich experiences of the spatial impact on meaning and depth: "watching it unfold, I thought, mid-poem: this is incredible…this was a whole new world…his story, I didn't know—story, dance, never realized the expression that could come from dance specifically…the performance space changed the meaning of the whole poem." As he spoke, with halts as he sought words, peers interjected: "We all fell out." "It was spiritual!" "It was painful, and also healing." "We connected with the Spirit. Bringing it, letting it speak through us." Identifying the prophetic in the youth work and the liminality of the youth "chaplain-ing" themselves charges me with convivial and prophetic outcomes for the research.

Often, introductions at performances I attend include an adult artist transparently expressing their aesthetic self as "out of the way," in an "all of Thee, none of Me" language structure reminiscent of congregational speaker prefaces. The number of performances where the adult NYU-trained-Yale-trained-award-winning-label-signed recording artist introduces stories that youth chose / wrote / as important to them—as much as I respect and have even spoken such prefaces myself—makes visible a subtext: "Nope. Not what I would have picked." And also: "LISTEN." And I wrestle with this. I ask myself what Paulo Freire would say, when he challenged how the educated enter spaces with intentions to value multiple intelligences and local economies and withhold the capital we have under pretense of honoring typically discounted resiliencies. What

measures ensure exchange? I get that this question is theoretical, communal, hierarchical in ways that are beyond the scope of the collected data for me to answer in this project. What I do think the project data ***can*** interrogate is this: does this abdicating preface show up in other spaces? Or only in these? And why? Further, my emergent charge of writing towards the prophetic and arts chaplain-ing demands that I examine this question: what leads me to perceive the preface as abdicating a stewardship role? These questions are birthed from the *Where* of such introductions to youth presentations. The questions cannot be answered here, yet they can direct next steps.

Inter-webbed Interplay

As I left an Arts Incubator youth opening, I ran into a tenured east coast professor who I met as a mentor at my first theatre conference as a graduate student, three years prior. She was on her way to the connected Currency Exchange café as the invited respondent for a film reception. She took a Lyft—or Uber—from her downtown hotel. In any case, this immediate encounter as I stepped into the rain was part of the opening night experience: this locale is a viable "spot." The professor assumed I was on my way to the same event, while I stuttered, processing the anachronism. Seeing her, coincidentally like that, added another layer of "legitimacy"... the "place-making" had happened; the "place" is now "made." Using "made" like that makes me think of the usage in "made" man--which is mob language, certainly, but is also about an alternative community and alternative economy creating structures of value and power and influence. Thus, the terms “place-keeping” or “culture-keeping” suit my project, as field language evolves from “place-making” in my rich sources and sites. More mainstream

use includes "made it" as a term for success. Extracting "make" / "made" from "place-making" highlights the power and influence aspects that I hadn't picked up before in the longer arts-based usage form. At the same time, *people live and work and learn there already*…it's already a "place." This incident impacted my coding because it cued me to look for signifiers of place-making in the youth sites, and then analyzing those signifiers highlighted the inherited legacies and the responsibility of both archiving and "[un]earthing" (to reference Willmer and White) that the youth artists shoulder in their already-a-place locales. Importantly, such signifiers that show the sites as claiming, re-claiming, establishing, or renewing neighborhood-as-destination qualify as assets of youth arts sites. I acknowledge that the differing contestations of place-making lead to differing depths of "recognizing" a site as having particular capital. I frame my point as necessarily inclusive of contextual capital value.

While I accept the contextual nature of place-keeping offering capital, I offer that a strategy of making transparent how youth access resourced environs is to consider an expansive view of industry standard equipment as applied to tools of networking in context. Lefebvre, however, cautions against a "science of space" and has altered, if not my research goal, at least my relationship to the goal and the data.

I argue that my data does respond to Lefebvre's concept of 'natural space'—i.e., one Rebirth site is a home. The faith-based spaces, insofar as they are liturgical ritual spaces as Turner describes, are natural space. In *Art in Action*, which forwards establishing a functional, biblical, and Christian aesthetics of beauty, Nicholas Wolterstorff offers that every people, everywhere, have created theatre and storytelling in some way for societal functioning (Wolterstorff 1980). I put Wolterstorff and Turner

together to say that a preservation or recovery of natural space happens at my research sites. I argue both the presence and absence of natural space in the sites as I understand Lefebvre to describe. Deploying Lefebvre at all requires that I address his natural space term, and he seems to deal in nuance more than the absolutes. Essentially, Turner and Wolterstorff justify me applying Lefebvre to the youth spaces where I observe the data reveal unarticulated evidence of or effort toward Lefebvre's 'natural space'. For example, residing happens; eating happens; primary home space for homeless youth happens; Willmer and White offer loci for constructing child theology that are all 'natural space' elements. Father, Temptation, Disciple, Humility, Kingdom, Reception, and Child are each, broadly, natural space elements as Lefebvre explains his term.

The matrix of relationships between the sites evolved and surprised me even post-data collection. Global Girls won a three-year grant from another site's wider initiatives. I was in offices on a sixth visit at KLEO when I saw a university-sponsored program scheduled on the wall calendar. Still a third site, ETA was the beneficiary of a consultant for capacity-building through another community partnerships office. The interplay concisely upends assumptions about youth-dedicated spaces that I brought to the study. Global Girls comes closest to inhabiting what I expected "youth-dedicated" space to look like at the start of my research: sustainably protected and reserved as a kind of "single family" home. The reality shows me something more like mixed income complexes or live-work warehouse spaces and reflects the share culture of our time.

The web also facilitates the Give-Gain questions of this chapter. Above, when I discussed the Visible Child, I mentioned that the research project expanded the meaning of "art" for me. I already bring to the work the understandings from Etheridge Woodson,

from Boal, and from my own theological anthropology that all persons are artists; I submit that the act of creating is how humankind is in the image of the Creator and that we co-create with the divine. The Visible child, interconnected, expected to maintain social media presence and cultivate personal brand, practices a second (or third or fourth) art of performing the Self. The matrix shows the child in the research sites as wearing hats of employee, curator, author, civic public, activist, healer, mentor, and more.

Paintings, photos, awards, mosaics, and murals embed institutional narrative into walls and floors and stained glass. Such signifiers of place-making legacy generate internal and external codes of ethics that carry sacredness, that chant “Respect the Space.” My coding counts visual aesthetics integrated with physically legible institutional and neighborhood history as another regulating, peacebuilding strategy. My methodologies examine how the built environment in each site facilitates and reflects pedagogies that operate in the space, and how the space presents itself to youth as a space for them to embrace and explore their humanity. My outcomes describe the assets in my research sites that humanize the child and conceptualize the child as citizen.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation in terms of counting and weighting nodes is the consistency of text volume per instance: i.e., in the Rebirth Focus Group, whether I coded an exchange of dialogue with two participants completing each other’s sentences as one instance or two instances. Likewise, one participant offering multiple examples in a single response could be coded as one instance or as multiple units. I have assessed the findings here for discovery and response to the research question, and therefore I stand by the reflections

and value. Another limitation in weighting the data, rooted in the research question, is that I code according to my particular theological lens. For the scope of this project, that lens is part of my research contribution. Future study could mine this data with less interpretive nodes. As a researcher, I am "insider" in ways that I did not know that I was; the interconnectedness of the sites and the city infrastructures that support them are both outcome and limitation of the study. The project dialogues across theatre for youth, faith-based, mixed arts, and civic engagement audiences and responds to multiple concepts of capital. Re-coding the data for one model at a time could yield deeper reflection and isolate more specific assets for advocacy.

Space for Grace: Does Grace's Studio exemplify my findings?

What part of any of that [the YMCA] makes it a 'studio'—whatever that means to her—that belongs to her? That she calls her own? I read my findings back into the Y with Grace: how did the Hungry Child, the Visible Child, the Village Child manifest there? Where do the seven child theology loci and the fourteen major signifiers that I observe in the built environment show up in the spaces? My findings now offer a checklist that I value as criteria that Grace may have inventoried when she claimed her studio.

Grace's studio anchored a Village, and the youth participants were experts on their neighborhood. When youth wanted food beyond program offerings, they knew where to go eat, and tweens and teens often walked younger children with them on the excursion. Snack spots resided on blocks near a college where students frequented the restaurants, thus conferring both aspiration and independence on the journey. The studio was also a family space for many, where siblings participated across programs. Some

tween and teen participants had younger siblings in the child care program, so the Y became a family hub. And, that many years ago, Computer Literacy courses were a new and necessary community resource that served parents and adults as well as youth. The space cross-pollinated arts disciplines: a performance of theatre, dance, or music could have accompanying visual arts projects. Visual arts extended from inside to outdoors. Thus, alongside gardening, the visual arts helped to carve outdoor town square space. The glass counter at the front entrance held local artisans output and modeled entrepreneurship for youth as they entered the building. A kitchen and meeting room offered space for cast parties and birthdays, and a prestigious dance company sometimes held summer dance camp in the sprung- and marley-floored mirrored dance studio, which was as industry standard as any. Two small classrooms offered additional Gather-Retreat-Gather or Connect-Isolate options. Youth performances in the facility were often a stop along wider city festival events, and youth often received invites to other venues to perform excerpts of their work. Grace claimed this YMCA because it fed her and connected her. Grace's space raised her Village visibility and moved her from "welcome to" to "integral for" the narratives and legacies on the walls.

Charge

An end-goal is to distill my findings into a tri-fold brochure that highlights the assets of the research sites, to share with local alderpersons or leaders and advocate for more supports and spaces. I further identify three reflections for future study. First, sources I encountered, whether in research or in practice, observe how youth programming impacts parents. Connecting my research to parental experiences is a future direction. Secondly, the economic impact that youth arts programming can have on local

commerce is a follow-up that I hope to connect to my quantitative research on how some national arts participation studies exclude certain religious, educational, or youth arts activity. Lastly, theology, critical race theory, and childhood studies are a trinity that must be taken together to strengthen congregational and arts practices, as well as to disrupt marginalizing legal and policy practices.

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APPENDIX A

SITE REQUEST AND AGREEMENT LETTER: INTERVIEWS + FOCUS GROUPS

Dear Director:

My name is Tiffany Trent. I am a PhD student in Theatre for Youth at Arizona State University. My supervisor is Professor Stephani Etheridge Woodson in the School of Film, Dance, and Theatre at Arizona State University. I would like to include your youth arts site in my dissertation research study, which is an asset-based cultural mapping project about how youth performing arts spaces welcome youth, equip their spaces for youth to create work, and provide safe space. My study targets arts centers on the south side of Chicago, where I have lived for 25 years. The purposes of this form are to provide information that may affect how you make your decision for your site and your youth to participate, and to record your consent if you are willing to participate in this study.

The study has nine parts:

1. Built Environment Inventory – 30 to 45 minutes for me to survey your physical workshop space, and to take photography for documentation.
2. Staff Written Questionnaire – 15 minutes (1 or 2 staff)
3. Staff Interview – 20 minutes (1 or 2 staff)
4. Youth Written Questionnaire – 15 minutes (15 youth / full enrollment in target program)
5. Youth Focus Group – 45 minutes (5 youth only, determined from consent letters and written Questionnaire)
6. Custodial Adult Interview – 20 minutes
7. Arts Based Research – 30 to 40 minutes to facilitate Values Statements and Image Work
8. Shadowing – 1 to 2 youth who exhibit extensive leadership and time commitment
9. Session observations – observe minimally 2 and maximum 10 program work sessions

If you decide to allow your program site to participate in this study, your youth will respond to a written questionnaire that will take about 15 minutes to complete, during session hours, and with program staff present, at the facility. At the end of the questionnaire, youth may indicate whether they are willing to participate in a 45-minute focus group interview with 4 other youth in the program. Finally, I am asking permission for me to observe 2 – 10 session hours.

I will audio record the interviews. I will also video record and photograph some rehearsals and performances, according to custodial adult permissions. These documentations are for my research and will not be for public consumption. If my research is published in an academic journal, and if pictures help to support that research, I will verify the specific photos in advance for your authorization. I will also use pseudonyms of each participant's choosing to protect identity and privacy.

I do plan to provide my findings to your program leadership, and to community leaders. My study seeks to identify assets of programs in the study—in other words, to identify and learn from the key things that your space does well in creating art with youth. I expect the results to offer language that serves you in advocating for your program.

Any youth may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. There will be no penalty. Agreeing to participation does not waive any of your legal rights. However, no funds have been set aside to compensate you in the event of injury. In the event that your child suffers harm as a result of participation in this research project, you may contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the Research Compliance Office at (480) 965-6788.

By signing this form, you are saying 1) that you have read this form or have had it read to you, and 2) that you are satisfied you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers will be happy to answer any questions you have about the research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (217) 840-8397 or Stephani Etheridge Woodson at (480) 965-2661.

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, please call the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Note: By signing below, you are telling the researchers Yes, that you will allow your site to participate in this study. Please keep one copy of this form for your records.

Your program site name (please print): ______________________________

Your Signature: ______________________________

Your Title (please print) _______________________________

Date: ______________________________

For research purposes, I will photograph and videotape class sessions and performances. I will not publish any documentation without your consent. Please initial below next to the consent you choose.

________ (initials) I consent to my program and site being photographed and videotaped for research purposes only.

________ (initials) I consent to my program and site being photographed and videotaped for research purposes and for academic publications.

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT:
I certify that this form includes all information concerning the study relevant to the protection of the rights of the participants, including the nature and purpose of this research, benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures.

I have described the rights and protections afforded to human research participants and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice the parent to allowing this child (ward) to participate. I am available to answer the parent's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of the study.

Investigator's Signature: _______________Tiffany Trent_______________

Date: _______________May 1, 2016___________

APPENDIX B

SITE REQUEST SCRIPT / LETTER: BUILT ENVIRONMENT ONLY

Hi, [DIRECTOR NAME]. My name is Tiffany Trent. I've lived in the Hyde Park – Woodlawn area for over 25 years, until I left for a PhD program in Theatre for youth at Arizona State University. I taught theater at U of C for 13 years, and directed their Summer Drama Workshop, plus the School Partnership Program with Ray elementary. I also taught theatre around the South side [with the Park District at South shore Cultural Center, and at St Anselm's summer arts camp in West Woodlawn] OR, FOR CHURCH SITES: [with drama ministries at churches including Shiloh, Trinity, and St. Anselm]. The South side has been my home for a long time, and I kept my little condo, because I knew I would come home to do my dissertation research.

I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about how performing arts spaces make youth feel welcome. I want to learn about what makes your kids feel at home in your space, and what aspects of your space make the kids want to spend time there. [I am additionally interested in how so many youth performing arts programs here on the Southside have a faith-based connection and find a home in churches].

If you agree, you or one of your staff will fill out a written questionnaire. I would also like to observe your facility and space for about 30 to 45 minutes, and use photography to help me document the space for my research. If I publish the photos or written results, I will use only title or role for you, not your real name. I will name the space in the research, since the goal of my project is to produce an asset based cultural map of youth dedicated arts spaces around the South side.

You do not have to be in this study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time. If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if your supervisors or colleagues ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study.

I have learned and taught a variety of acting and improvisation games and techniques, so as reciprocity for allowing me to include your site in my study, I would be happy to facilitate a session of drama exercises that you think would benefit your students.

Signing here means that you have read this form or have had it read to you and that you are willing to be in this study. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (217) 840-8397 or Stephani Etheridge Woodson at (480) 965-2661.

If at any time you feel pressured to allow your site to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, please call the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Signature of Authorized Program Director ______________________________

Subject’s printed name ____

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APPENDIX C

YOUTH PARTICIPANT LETTER OF ASSENT

My name is Tiffany Trent. I study how to teach drama at Arizona State University.

I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about how performing arts spaces make youth feel welcome. I want to learn about what makes kids your age feel at home in an arts space, and what aspects of the space make you want to spend time there. Your parent(s) have given you permission to participate in this study.

If you agree, you will fill out a written questionnaire. After you fill it out and see the kinds of questions I ask, you can write on it if you are willing to do a focus group interview later. I will use photography to help me research. If I publish the photos or written results, I will use a nickname for you, not your real name. You can pick whatever name you want me to use for you. One day, I may facilitate drama exercises to help me research. You do not have to answer any story or improvisation game questions that make you uncomfortable.

You do not have to be in this study. No one will be mad at you if you decide not to do this study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time.

If you choose to participate in the focus group interview, I am also asking if you agree to audio record the interview. Only I will have access to the recordings. The recordings will be deleted immediately after being transcribed and any published quotes will be anonymous. To protect your identity, please refrain from using names or other identifying information during the interview. Let me know if, at any time, you do not want to be recorded and I will stop.

If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if your parents or teachers ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study.

Signing here means that you have read this form or have had it read to you and that you are willing to be in this study.

Signature of subject____

Subject's printed name ____

Subject's first-name alias for research ____

APPENDIX D

PARENTAL GUARDIAN PERMISSION FORM

Dear Custodial Adult:

My name is Tiffany Trent. I am a PhD student in Theatre for Youth. My supervisor is Professor Stephani Etheridge Woodson in the School of Film, Dance, and Theatre at Arizona State University. The arts program where your minor child (ward) attends has agreed to participate in my dissertation research study about how youth performing arts spaces welcome youth, equip their spaces for youth to create work, and provide safe space. The purposes of this form are to provide information that may affect how you make your decision for your child (ward) to participate and to record your consent if you are willing to have your child to participate in this study.

If you decide to allow your child to participate in this study, your child will respond to a written questionnaire that will take about 15 minutes to complete, during session hours, and with program staff present, at the facility. At the end of the questionnaire, your child may indicate whether s/he is willing to participate in a 45 to 60-minute focus group interview with 4 other youth in the program. Finally, the program staff has granted permission for me to observe 2 – 10 session hours.

I may photograph how youth use the space. You may refuse to allow your child (ward) to be photographed at any time. These documentations are for my research and will not be for public consumption. If my research is published in an academic journal, and if pictures help to support that research, you can choose that I not use any photos with your child's (ward's) image.

If your child participates in the focus group, I am also asking your permission to audio record the interview. Only I will have access to the recordings. The recordings will be deleted immediately after being transcribed and any published quotes will be anonymous. I will use a pseudonym of your child's choosing to protect your child's identity and privacy. To protect identity, I will ask youth to refrain from using names or other identifying information during the interview. At any time, your child can tell me that they do not want to be recorded, and I will stop.

If you choose not to have your child (ward) participate or to withdraw your child (ward) from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. It will not affect your child's (ward's) participation at the arts facility in any way. Likewise, if your child (ward) chooses not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Agreeing to your child's (ward's) participation does not waive any of your legal rights.

By signing this form, you are saying 1) that you have read this form or have had it read to you, and 2) that you are satisfied you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers will be happy to answer any questions you have about the research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (217) 840-8397 or Stephani Etheridge Woodson at (480) 965-2661.

If at any time you feel pressured to allow your child (ward) to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, please call the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Note: By signing below, you are telling the researchers Yes, that you will allow your child (ward) to participate in this study. Please keep one copy of this form for your records.

Your child's (ward's) name (please print): _________________________

Custodial Adult 1: Your name (please print): ____________________________

Your Signature: _______________________________

For research purposes, I will photograph the space and how youth use the space. I will not publish any documentation without your consent. Please initial below next to the consent you choose.

________ (initials) I consent to my child (ward) being photographed for research purposes only.

________ (initials) I consent to my child (ward) being photographed for research purposes and for academic publications.

APPENDIX E

STAFF INTERVIEW CONSENT LETTER

Dear Staff,

My name is Tiffany Trent. I study how to teach drama at Arizona State University.

I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about how performing arts spaces make youth feel welcome. I want to learn about what makes your youth participants feel at home in your arts space, and what aspects of the space facilitate how your site extends welcome to youth. The program site has given me permission to conduct this study.

If you agree, you will fill out a written questionnaire. If needed, I may ask to interview with you for follow up questions based on your responses. We will take no more than 20 minutes. I will use photography to help me research. You may refuse to be photographed at any time. If I publish the photos or written results, I will use a nickname for you, not your real name. You can pick whatever name you want me to use for you.

You do not have to be in this study. No one will be mad at you if you decide not to do this study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time.

If you choose to participate in the interview, I am also asking if you agree to audio record the interview. Only I will have access to the recordings. The recordings will be deleted immediately after being transcribed and any published quotes will be anonymous. To protect your identity, please refrain from using names or other identifying information during the interview. Let me know if, at any time, you do not want to be recorded and I will stop.

If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if program staff members ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study.

The researchers will be happy to answer any questions you have about the research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (217) 840-8397 or Stephani Etheridge Woodson at (480) 965-2661.

If you have any questions about your rights or this form, please call the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Let me know if you agree to be part of this study. If you also agree to be photographed for research purposes and for academic publications, please sign below.

Signature of subject____

Subject's printed name ____

Date ____

APPENDIX F

CUSTODIAL ADULT INTERVIEW CONSENT LETTER

Dear Custodial Adult,

My name is Tiffany Trent. I study how to teach drama at Arizona State University.

I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about how performing arts spaces make youth feel welcome. I want to learn about what makes your child / ward feel at home in an arts space, and what aspects of the space encourage you to let your youth spend time there. The program site has given me permission to conduct this study.

If you agree, I have a few questions to start the interview, and then I may ask a follow up question or two based on your responses. We will take about 20 minutes. I may use photography to help me research. You may refuse to be photographed at any time. If I publish the photos or written results, I will use a nickname for you, not your real name. You can pick whatever name you want me to use for you.

You do not have to be in this study. No one will be mad at you if you decide not to do this study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time.

If you choose to participate in the interview, I am also asking if you agree to audio record the interview. Only I will have access to the recordings. The recordings will be deleted immediately after being transcribed and any published quotes will be anonymous. To protect your identity, please refrain from using names or other identifying information during the interview. Let me know if, at any time, you do not want to be recorded and I will stop.

If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if program staff members ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study.

The researchers will be happy to answer any questions you have about the research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (217) 840-8397 or Stephani Etheridge Woodson at (480) 965-2661.

If you have any questions about your rights or this form, please call the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Let me know if you agree to be part of this study. If you also agree to be photographed for research purposes and for academic publications, please sign below.

Signature of subject____

Subject's printed name ____

Date ____

APPENDIX G

YOUTH FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the beliefs or values of the program / space? Describe how do you experience those beliefs and values here.

2. How do you experience welcome when you arrive?
    a. Interpersonally
    b. Spatial

3. Describe how you access the space pre- and post- session hours.

4. Describe the relationship that you experience between the program / space and other neighbors, whether businesses or residents on the block.

5. Tell me about the nearby places you go when you're hungry or want a snack.

6. Are parts of the building off-limits for you?

7. Try to remember when you first came to the building. What was your first impression?*

8. Describe ways that you're able to bring your concerns to the table when you have an issue with an adult or something that happens here.

9. If the program had to relocate, what are some things you would want to recreate in the different space?

10. Describe ways that you feel ownership over this space.

*I'm listening for cues that respond to the question from my Built Environment Inventory:
How does the Space perform? How does the space say:

- Sit here / don't sit here - Touch / don't touch - Make something / Use these
- Be quiet / make noise - Play / be still - Connect / Isolate
- Relax / Be careful

If needed and if time permits in the focus group, I may also facilitate the arts-based research method below.

Image Work
Solo, in pairs, and as a group, participants use their bodies to create images of the following words:

- Welcome
- Home
- Safe

- Mine
- Own
- Youth dedicated

APPENDIX H

STAFF WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Describe the program mission.

2. How long have you worked here? (Years, months)

3. In what capacities do you personally engage the youth? Please describe.

    a. Formal (i.e. Music teacher, poetry teacher, director, custodial)

    b. Informal (i.e. counseling, ‘agent,’ mediator, pastoral)

4. How do you see kids using / treating the space as “home?”

5. In what ways does the program extend welcome to youth participants? Describe.

    a. Interpersonally (i.e. greetings, front desk)

    b. Spatially

6. What are intentional strategies that you employ for Safe Space?

    a. Spatially

    b. Interpersonally

7. How early do kids arrive before program session starts? How late do they typically remain after the session ends?

8. Describe ways that you impart / share / embody any faith aspects or core values of your program / space.

9. Describe the relationship the program / space has with neighbors / residents.

10. Of all of your operating hours per week, what percentage of those hours are dedicated to youth programming, where “youth” are persons <26 years?

Please rate the following statements according to the scale provided.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Youth feel safe here.					
Youth would like to spend more time here.					
This space welcomes our participants.					
The space has everything kids need to create work.					
The program sessions would be the same in a different space.					
This space is a youth dedicated space.					

Would you be willing to do a follow up interview of 20 minutes?

If available, would you be willing to share a floor plan or square footage measurements of your space(s) for research purposes? I would destroy or return these details for your security reasons.

APPENDIX I

CUSTODIAL ADULT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I will start with the following few written questions, and then potentially lead into an organic interview of about 20 minutes with 2 – 3 guardians at the 3 interview sites.

1. How did your youth get connected to the site?
   a. I found the program on my own and enrolled my youth
   b. My youth found the program on his or her own
   c. Through one of my friends
   d. Through a friend of my youth
   e. A teacher or mentor suggested I enroll my youth here
2. Is this facility a space for your full family, or for your youth and this program in particular?
3. How secure are you with the following aspects, and why?
   a. The locale
   b. The activities
   c. The amount of time your youth spends here
   d. The staff
   e. The beliefs and values of the space
4. What does your child access here that isn't available to them elsewhere?

APPENDIX J

YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE – WRITTEN

1. How long have you attended the program?
    a. 1 year or less
    b. 2 – 3 years
    c. 3+ years

2. How do you arrive?
    a. CTA
    b. Walk
    c. Custodial Adult drives you here
    d. Carpool with peers who drive here

3. Do you come early or stay late before or after program sessions? How early, or how late?

4. Other than friends you've made here, do any of your friends come here?

5. How did you start coming here?
    a. A friend brought me
    b. Custodial adult signed me up
    c. I found it or looked it up on my own
    d. A teacher or mentor told me / brought me
    e. Staff here recruited me (i.e. saw or heard me perform elsewhere)

6. Do you do homework here? If so, does anyone here help you with homework?

7. Is this your primary extracurricular activity overall? How many hours a week do you spend here in the summer? Do you spend more or less time here during the school year?

8. Is this your primary arts activity or place to create work?

9. Are there beliefs, values, or mindsets that you need to have in order to participate here?

10. Do you feel welcome here? What does or does not make you feel welcome? If you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to make you feel more welcome?

11. When you're hungry or want a snack, are there places nearby that you go?

Please rate the following statements according to the scale provided.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel safe here.					
I would like to spend more time here.					
This space welcomes me.					
The space has everything I need to create work.					
My program sessions would be the same in a different space.					
This space is a youth dedicated space.					

12. Would you be willing to do a focus group interview for 45 minutes?

APPENDIX K

ETHNOGRAPHIC LOCI

1. Pre-session: how kids “move about” – this is both disciplinary structure + built environs
2. Space Setup – who? Youth roles?
3. Equipment
    a. setups
    b. Keys / codes: needed? Who has them?
    c. Who operates?
4. How do participants welcome a newcomer?
5. Temperature control seems weird but it’s here…some observation of whether they can influence it, comfortable, freely add/remove/access their clothing. Relates to a freedom I’m trying to observe also.
6. Language observation:
    a. AM I crossing a territory to / how do I frame what’s invoked theologically? I’ve said I will do that analysis.
    b. I’m doing audio…right?
7. How do kids walk into offices?
8. How do kids address the adults around?
9. Do parents enter / observe?
10. Are friends / siblings / youth guests welcome? (how does that impact? i.e. protected space where that couldn’t happen, like a safe space Free Street, could be just as “home” as places where it does happen.
11. What’s off-limits? Explicit or Implicit? And for whom?

*I’m listening for cues that respond to the question from my Built Environment Inventory:

How does the Space perform? How does the space say:

- Sit here / don’t sit here - Touch / don’t touch - Make something / Use these
- Be quiet / make noise - Play / be still - Connect / Isolate
- Relax / Be careful

APPENDIX L

BUILT ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY

Spaces Speak Built Environment Inventory - QUANTITATIVE Analysis according to these five

Q: How does the Space perform? How does the space say:

- Sit here / don't sit here - Touch / don't touch - Make something / Use these
- Be quiet / make noise - Play / be still - Connect / Isolate
- Relax / Be careful

Spatial

- Square footage – what's the % of youth space? i.e.:
    - A cultural/arts center with a portion for youth
    - An all-kids / services building with arts as one aspect
- Proximity to public transit
- Visibility (signage; space within a multi-purposed / multi-service building)
- Ease of access
- Private v Observable: i.e.
    - Glass wall with curtain option
    - Balcony or stadium viewing within the space

Relational

- Proximity of program space to available invested / mentoring adult staff
- Proximity of program space to other programs
- Proximity of program space to other services
- Homework help?
- What's on the walls? (i.e. inspirations, text, images could reflect mission, history.
- Does daylight reach the space?

Economic

- Industry standard equipment
    - Mirrors for dance
    - Sprung floor
    - Sound equipment in room / accessible
    - Lighting equipment?
    - Dressing Rooms
- Maintenance of the space / cost to maintain
- Computer access?

Comfort

- Places to sit and hang out; or just "can"—i.e. propriety of sitting on floor, etc.
- Places to study / homework space
- Able to store personal or shared belongings?
- Wireless access?
- Allows food inside? Snack space within the facility?

Time

- Hours that the program space is available for youth use
- Hours of facility access

- Session space = Performance space?
- If not, what is the performance space access?

I will ask if I can take photos of the space for documentation as I analyze and interpret findings. If I had cause to include any images in my final product, I would seek explicit authorization for the specific image.