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The marriage of two minds: The divine deliverance of Peter Shaffer's Amadeus from stage to film

Pamela Lou Smyth

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THE MARRIAGE OF TWO MINDS: THE DIVINE DELIVERANCE OF PETER SHaffer'S AMADEUS FROM STAGE TO FILM

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
English Composition

by
Pamela Lou Smyth
December 1994
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September 1994

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Abstract

Peter Shaffer's playscript and filmscript of Amadeus deserve serious attention as forms of postmodern dramatic discourse capable of making meaning in and beyond completion in theatrical or film performance and should not be overlooked by critics as models of rhetorical composition.

This study applies composition, literary, dramatic, communication, and film theories to show how the playscript and filmscript, reconceived as "texts," achieve the effect of discourse that simultaneously "entertains" and "disturbs" audiences.

The literary device of first-person narrative confession, considerably the most striking and powerful rhetorical feature, as well as the basic unit of structure underlying both play and film, compels this study. The device achieves maximum intellectual and emotional impact on audiences as a result of Shaffer's balanced orchestration of the "telling and explaining" dialogue of the primary (reader's) text with the "showing and feeling" action of the secondary (actor's text). How Shaffer and Milos Forman, director of the film, resolve the compositional problem of controlling response and achieving effect in translating Amadeus from stage to film contributes significantly to this inquiry. The resulting collaboration implies the potential of integrating multiple theories as a means of discovering texts and unifying approaches to teaching and studying composition and literature as processes, rather than simply as products.
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I owe a special debt of gratitude my late friend and longtime teaching colleague, C. Warren Martinsen, Jr., whose thoughtful gifts of the soundtrack from *Amadeus*, the score of Mozart's *Requiem*, and P. D. Q. Bach's *Oedipus Tex and Other Choral Calamities* replenished my spirit, brought laughter out of frustration, and proved a constant reminder of the real worth of this effort.
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CHAPTER ONE
Amadeus on Stage and Film

How readers make meaning from composed texts is the result of the transactional relationship involving readers and writers "as text is being created," states Robert J. Tierney (150). In Tierney's view, writers take readers into consideration as they compose, making note of how readers make meaning by decoding, translating, associating, and assimilating the signs and symbols inherent in texts to derive meaning.

Tierney contends that during the writing process, writers attend to what they compose and revise by "acting as their own readers" as a means of improving their writing (150). This interaction with the self as friendly critic and best reader might be compared to the popular psychological trend that recommends acting as one's own best friend in the process of fostering self-centered nurturing to improve self-esteem. The two-way transaction between writer and reader Tierney describes is complete when readers "respond reflexively and actively to what writers are trying to get them to think or do" (Sternglass 4). Deborah Brandt, continuing the focus on what the writer attempts to get the reader to do, observes in "Social Foundations of Reading and Writing" that readers make meaning from composed discourse in the same way listeners make meaning from oral discourse,
and that writers must attend to the needs and presence of the reader just as speakers must attend to real or eventual listeners (115-16).

Dorothy Augustine and Ross Winterowd take a similar approach, drawing from communication theory and moving closer to dramatic theory in their discussions of audience response. In "Speech Acts and the Reader-Writer Transaction," Marilyn Sternglass interprets their theory, stating:

They [Augustine and Winterowd] assert that writers are attempting to address and satisfy what they project as the response of the reader to the speech act underlying the surface structure of the communication. In other words, the writer's invention of the reader is part of an implicit theory of speech acts—of projecting the hypothetical responses and questions of a reader to an emerging text and, thus, of constraining the direction of the text. (7)

Described as an "implicit dialogue" between writer and reader, Augustine and Winterowd's theory might explain the transaction that may be presumed to exist between dramatist and reader as audience during the composing process (128). This writer-reader transaction more closely aligns with an aspect of dramatic theory, the Stanislavski Method of script analysis, which is discussed later in this study.
Augustine and Winterowd conceive the reader to be one that "requires writers to pay attention to regularities of behavior which involve a partner in the discourse, a 'silent' partner . . . who is equal and, ideally, equally competent in the linguistic business at hand" (128). Based on the intention-response model of philosophy and linguistics, their theory is founded on the "illocutionary act" that initiates the discourse and the "perlocutionary" response. They maintain that the compositional structure of the illocutionary act (claim, argument, assertion, or proposal) must be matched in form and content by the perlocutionary response (challenge, refutation, or question) (128).

How the writer composes a sentence with the desired response in mind as a means of cuing the reader is illustrated by an example showing the writer's silent projections enclosed in parentheses:

Illocution: (I assert to you that) The Equal Rights Amendment is misunderstood by a majority of voters.

Perlocution: (I challenge you to) Prove it!

The silent command in the form of a "performative" before a declarative sentence demonstrates how these two lines of composed discourse function rhetorically to order a response from the reader (128-29).
Rooted in performatives (what the speaker/writer does in oral or written language to initiate response and what the listener/reader does in oral or written response), their speech-act theory converges with the dramatic theory of script analysis that uncovers sub-text in the form of character objectives (also rooted in performatives but expressed in the form of infinitives).

In this case, the reader as actor might attach a silent objective to the lines of dialogue as a means of discovering what the text is attempting to get the reader to do. The reader might identify these objectives as first impressions and try a variety of "psychological objectives" until the clearest possible interpretation emerges:

Speaker one: Illocution: (I want to declare my opinion that) The Equal Rights Amendment is misunderstood by a majority of voters.

Speaker two: Perlocution: (I want to doubt) the validity of that declaration by saying Prove it!

Similarly, writers may apply the principles of script analysis to their writing by assuming the role of a "persona" or specific character in the processes of composing or interpreting the text. This process, informed by Stanislavski's theory, enables the writer, director, or actor to test the text for various types of audience
response by breaking the script down into components defined as "spine," "actions," and "beats". Spine is the more informal term used to represent the character's super-objective or through line-of-action (Sievers 52). The character's spine identifies what the character wants to accomplish in the play and in life overall. The actions are what the character does to achieve the spine; and the beats are the detailed ways the character goes about furthering the actions (Sievers 52). The complete analysis of the script helps the director determine the overall purpose of the play, identify character motivation, and form a suitable interpretation of the play.

As an aid to composition and interpretation, this performance oriented approach may also enable writers, as it does actors and directors, to predict how readers, as audience, are likely to respond to the rhetorical form and content of the writing. The director or actor typically asks such questions as "What is the character trying to do here?" and "What does the character want here?" or "Why is the character saying that?" (52-3). Likewise, the writer may ask "What do I want the reader to think or to do here," and "If I get the reader to react like this, then what must the next line look and sound like to answer that response?" to help determine reader response.

Throughout the composing process, projecting reader needs and response aims toward teaching writers the
importance of composing discourse that brings about an intellectual and emotional response that is, according to Stanislavski's principles, realistic, authentic, justifiable, and reasonable in terms of established patterns of human thought and behavior (Easty 27).

The consideration of dramatic literature as "composed" discourse and the playscript and filmscript as forms of text capable of making meaning beyond completion in performance is relatively new to studies concerning the paradigm shifts occurring in approaches to reading, writing, and speaking as process. But researchers and practitioners in dramatic theory are attempting to find a unified theory that will solidify rather than "bridge the gap" between these related discourse communities.

The convergences and transformations in theories guiding the criticism and instruction of composition, literature, and drama point to the realization that dramatic literature deserves to be treated as literary text worthy of the type and scope of scholarship and criticism accorded other forms of written literary discourse. Yet both the playscript and filmscript are often overlooked for the contribution they make as separate "composed" texts that invite serious critical investigation. The literary playscript and filmscript of Amadeus reconceived as "texts" in the form of "scripts" are natural vehicles for critics interested in psychoanalytical, semiotic, and reader-
response theories but should also be recognized as important forms of "composed discourse" and approached in terms of composition and dramatic theory for what each contributes to teaching composition and literature as process.

From the standpoint of the composing process, Kenneth Burke's Dramatistic Pentad is a highly useful method of investigating the playscript of *Amadeus* as a composed text because it helps readers and writers identify interacting parts and their relationships within the text and how they perform in ensemble to achieve effect. Burke's heuristic invigorates the reading process by inviting the reader to actively explore the text for five elements that are always present to some extent in a piece of writing: scene, purpose, act, agent, and agency.

A writer may devote considerable time to describing a particular environment or atmosphere at a specific moment in time to set the "scene". The scene (the where), when studied in relation to the element of act (what was done) and agency (how the act was accomplished), helps reveal the significance of where the act took place to the agent (who performed the act) thus shedding light on the purpose. For example, the first act of *Amadeus* closes with a detailed description of Mozart's response to Salieri's March of Welcome, after its performance:
MOZART: [Unfreezing]. You're a good fellow, Salieri! And that's a jolly little thing you wrote for me.

SALIERI: It was my pleasure.

MOZART: Let's see if I can remember it. May I?

SALIERI: By all means. It's yours.

MOZART: Grazie, Signore.

[MOZART tosses the manuscript onto the lid of the fortepiano, where he cannot see it, sits at the instrument, and plays SALIERI's March of Welcome perfectly from memory—at first slowly, recalling it, but on the reprise of the tune, very much faster.]

The rest is just the same, isn't it? [He finishes it with insolent speed.] (40)

Mozart continues to play, stopping at various points to ask, "It doesn't really work, that fourth, does it? (40-1)

He automatically and intuitively improves the piece, continuing to embellish it where needed:

[MOZART's playing grows more and more exhibitionistic, revealing to the audience the formidable virtuoso he is. The whole time he remains totally oblivious of the offense he is giving. Finally, he finishes the march with a series of triumphant]
flourishes and chords. An ominous pause."

Shaffer's detailed description of the agent (Mozart), act (the playing), agency (degree to and manner in which Mozart played), and scene (atmosphere and moment) enables the reader to draw connections, make associations, and consider the purpose based on what is found in the text. The dramatization of text in this fashion also teaches the beginning writer the importance of telling readers what they need to know to make meaning from all forms of human discourse: who is doing what to whom? And where, why, when, how, and to what degree is it being done?

As this example demonstrates, structural analysis of the playtext and script analysis provide the reader and writer with further clues that emerge from the two finely drawn and carefully orchestrated texts within the playtext described later in this study. These separate but interactive texts "primary" (dialogue) and "secondary" (stage directions) help reveal character motivation, the basic aim of Burke's Pentad.

In simple narrative, events usually follow in chronological order, characters are clearly described, relationships are cleanly defined, and the outcome of the events is predictable. Sophisticated narrative, on the other hand, often features complexities, ambiguities, layering of literary devices and a plot structure that
rarely follows a logical sequence. Thus, the Pentad can be a valuable tool in guiding readers through the process of fiction.

Like fictive narratives, dramatic narratives also unfold around the basic elements of plot but may not necessarily present exposition, conflict, complication, crises, climax, and resolution (if any) in a logical sequence. Most fiction reveals plot through a single text composed largely of description, narration, and character dialogue that normally unfolds in a logical sequence to establish the exposition and antecedent action. The dramatic narrative, however, relies on two sets of written texts identified in script analysis as the primary and secondary texts, and very likely a third "performance text" to answer the reader's questions.

The primary text (dialogue or what the character says) and the secondary text (stage directions indicating what the character does) function to inform the reader in two ways. Unfortunately, the untrained reader may regard the secondary text as an inconsequential set of directions to the actor when in fact, the "actor's text" is of critical importance to shedding light on meaning. Critical analysis of the juxtaposed texts operating as interdependent linguistic structures within the playtext and filmscript aid the reader and, particularly, the beginning writer in discovering how narrative confession shapes perception and response.
Read and approached actively as a "script," a seemingly dependent dramatic work can become empowered and energized when readers discover and investigate the interactive and interdependent natures of the primary and secondary texts inherent to dramatic writing. Application of Burke's Pentad, Tierney's Reader-Writer Transaction theory, the Augustine-Winterowd Speech-Acts theory, and Stanislavski's Method to each text helps point out any structural inconsistencies that might interfere with character objectives and how those objectives correspond with development of plot, thought, and argument, if any, advanced by the dramatic narrative.

Such reader-response criticism of the playtext and filmscript of Amadeus provides the reader with the tools necessary to discover how the subtleties of dramatic structure and language function rhetorically to shape perception and control response apart from the experience of the script in theatrical or film performance.

Research suggests that readers make conscious adjustments to accommodate the shift of focus from what the text "means" to what the text "does". When readers approach the text as literature, they tend to focus on how details of language, characterization, point of view, setting and a variety of literary devices shed light on interpretation and meaning. When readers approach the text as performance script, they are more likely to add to their focus a keener
awareness of how dramatic structure, dialogue, and dramatic action function to manipulate response and achieve effect. When readers interact with the text as script, they enter into a re-composition of the text, a transaction between writer and reader Louise Wetherbee Phelps describes as "symbolic action" (162-63).

At the heart of the tightly controlled confession is Salieri's obsession with self, a state of being defined in philosophic terms as solipsism. What the persona, in the guise of Salieri, "says and does" via the pretended sanctity of confession generally illuminates Shaffer's view of a self-absorbed society. Closely linked with solipsism is the obvious presence of the semiotic elements, language and symbols, that are contradictory to religious doctrine, and which reveal the confession to be laced with another typically postmodern quality, decanonization. Salieri's rejection of and resistance to authority, his faith in God, his flagrantly insincere desire for absolution, and his incessant references to "me" in the presence of his appointed confessors convey Shaffer's concern with the breakdown of spiritual, political, and social values and, especially, the effect of such deterioration on the self.

The focus on self and the relationship of the inner self to the forces of the outer world characterize postmodern literature, a term much debated and applied variously to indicate something that follows modernism in
the fine arts, music, architecture, and even the "new journalism" following World War II. Shaffer's use of narrative confession permits the reader to discover how the dramatist as writer leads the audience through degrees of psychoanalytic revelation via the persona.

In the guise of the main character/narrator, Antonio Salieri, the persona, addresses the narrative to the narratee in the form of a "conjured" audience to reveal the spiritual and emotional crises associated with the postmodern view of the world, one looking to the self as center of thought and motivation.

Because confession is an extremely old and complex form of discourse and by its nature elicits high levels of emotional response from the appointed listener, some discussion of the ritualistic and narrative nature of confession throughout history is necessary to understanding Shaffer's effects in using this device. Salieri's confession, at times entertaining and disturbing, compels reader, spectator, and viewer to participate in psychoanalytical investigation of Salieri's motives for the purpose of achieving a better understanding of human nature and the human condition reflected in postmodern literature.

Such a critical analysis of the playtext helps to explain why Forman, from the point of view of both reader and filmmaker, persuaded Shaffer, previously disappointed with filmed adaptations of his other plays, Royal Hunt of
the Sun and Equus, to collaborate on the screenplay (Gianakaris 84-5).

Forman's attraction to Amadeus and his insistence on the collaboration stem in part from Peter Hall's successful staging of the play in Britain. In a review of Amadeus, film critic Richard Corliss recounts that Shaffer's play, an "eloquent tragicomedy swathed in theatrical sorcery," (74) prompted Forman to "find a way to retain the play's intellectual breadth and formal audacity without betraying the movie medium's demand for matter of fact naturalism" (74).

Forman's "way" consisted of reshaping the play in such a fashion that what Corliss describes as the "fantastic madman's memory play" laced with fact would transform into "a more realistic musical biography" (74). The result of Forman's effort produces a film that brings Mozart and Salieri together on an intimate level. Through cinematic techniques Forman magnifies the personalities of Salieri and Mozart by showing where, when, how, why, and to what degree each may actually have affected the other on the psychological, intellectual, and spiritual levels. In a scene from the play described earlier, for example, Mozart responds to Salieri's Welcome March by proving it to be incredibly mediocre. The filmscript offers the reader a slightly different perception. This scene is followed immediately by another; the juxtaposition of the two
visually charged scenes functions to signal the beginning of Salieri's disavowal of his traditionally held spiritual beliefs and moral principles:

(to SALIERI)

The rest is just the same, isn't it?

He plays the first half again but stops in the middle of a phrase, which he repeats dubiously.

MOZART (contd)

That really doesn't work, does it?

All the COURTIERS look at SALIERI.

MOZART (contd)

Did you try this? Wouldn't it be just a little more --? ...²

He plays another phrase.

MOZART (contd)

Or this -- YES -- this! Better!...

He plays another phrase. Gradually, he alters the music so that it turns into the celebrated March to be used later in The Marriage of Figaro, "Non Piu Andrai." He plays it with increasing abandon and virtuosity. SALIERI watches with a fixed smile on his face. The court watches, astonished. He finishes in great glory, takes his hands off the keys with a gesture of triumph--and grins.]

INT. BEDROOM IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT. DAY. 1780's.
We see the olive-wood cross. SALIERI is sitting at his desk, staring at it.

SALIERI
Grazie, Signore.

There is a knock at the door. He does not hear it, but sits on. . . . (32)³

The quick cut from the Grand Salon to Salieri’s apartment, the instant visual shift from Mozart’s grin to Salieri’s intensely angry gaze upon the cross, and Salieri’s flat pronouncement creates the impression that Salieri is, at that moment, somewhat emotionally and spiritually affected by Mozart’s impromptu performance. Though visually potent and obvious in purpose, this scene, unlike its counterpart in the playscript, deliberately fails to disclose the true nature of Salieri’s thoughts. The playscript, on the other hand, discloses to the reader, via Salieri’s brief, humorously caustic and ironic monologue, not only to what degree he is emotionally and spiritually affected, but warns of a probable retaliatory outcome, a luxury Shaffer and Forman reserve for a cinematically chilling revelation elsewhere:

SALIERI: [To audience]. Was it then—so early—that I began to have thoughts of murder? ... Of course not: at least not in life. In art it was a different matter. I decided I would compose a huge tragic opera: something to astonish the
world! And I knew my theme. I would set the legend of Danaius, who, for a monstrous, was chained to a rock for eternity, his head repeatedly struck by lightning! Wickedly in my head I saw Mozart in that position.... In reality, of course, the man was in no danger from me at all. Not yet (42).

The cinematic technique Forman uses in this instance, cutting away from Mozart's face to a close-up of the cross, achieves a specific purpose in first-person narrative film. As Bruce Kawain explains in *Mindscreen: Bergman, Godard, and First-Person Film*, the technique not only frees the narrator/main character (in this instance, Salieri) to describe what he sees and hears around him from moment to moment, but also permits him to convey "what he knows (whether he was present at the original event or not)" (44).

Forman and Shaffer do more than record the dramatic narrative on film; they think and feel with images and sounds to fill in what Salieri perceives as memory and to emphasize what more closely resembles fantasy to make *Amadeus* what Kawain refers to as a "self-conscious" film (193). Film allows Shaffer's limited theatrical staging of Salieri's external and internal world to expand and transform beyond the reader's imagination. When Shaffer writes, "Was it then--so early--that I began to have thoughts of murder? ..." (42), the reader, presumably, will
imagine how Salieri might appear and sound, standing on a
darkened stage in a circle of light, directly facing the
audience of chosen confessors. The spectator in the
theater, however, sees and hears what the director decides
and the actor obligingly portrays. This same scene
rewritten for the film audience takes place in Old Salieri's
hospital room at night in the presence of the Priest, Fr.
Vogler.

The relatively short monologue hinting lightly at the
possibility of murder is replaced with a lengthier speech
implicating God and Mozart as conspirators. The language of
the confession is far more explicit in the filmscript as Old
Salieri speaks "passionately to the priest:

OLD SALIERI

It was incomprehensible! What was God up to?
Here I was denying all my natural lust in
order to deserve God’s gift -- and there was
Mozart indulging his in all directions --
even though engaged to be married! -- and no
rebuke at all! Was it possible I was being
tested? Was God expecting me to offer
forgiveness in the face of every offense, so
matter how painful? That was very possible!
... All the same--why him? Why use Mozart to
teach me lessons in humility? My heart was
filling up with such hatred for that little
man! For the first time in my life I began to know really violent thoughts. I couldn't stop them!

VOGLER

/ Did you try?

OLD SALIERI

Every day! Sometimes for hours I would pray!

(45)

Instantly, the audience is transported via Old Salieri's voice-over narration to a cutaway of the young Salieri's apartment, where the young Salieri is seen "kneeling in desperation before the Cross" as he says, "Please! ... Please! Send him away! Back to Salzburg! ... For his sake as well as mine" followed by a close up shot of Christ "staring from the Cross" (45).

This shift in time and space via film enables the filmmaker to expand the theatrical moment by layering visual imagery and sound to emphasize Salieri's emotional and spiritual state at that moment. By means of employing subjective camera technique, Forman directs the audience's attention to at least three signs and symbols he deploys within the frame to signify momentarily present religious belief.5

In a discussion of the "structure of signs" within any dramatic performance, Martin Esslin contends that audiences make meaning on both social and personal levels "only if the
spectators exposed to them know what they stand for" (The Field 139). Such cinematically conveyed signs as the presence of the Priest, the act of kneeling before the Cross, and the close-up of Christ staring down from the Crucifix, fuse with the verbal expression to inform the viewer and generate meaning on impact. However, as Esslin points out, the effect the sign structure achieves depends on the viewer's capacity or 'competence' to 'decode' the sign structures, and willingness to be absorbed by such structures (128).

The audience member's competence, according to Esslin, is measured by his or her knowledge of and familiarity with the cultural, social, and ideological conventions (semiotics) governing both the performers and the performance (141). The range of performance conventions is extensive. As Esslin explains, these conventions "cover the entire scope of life and behaviors within that culture," to include its "language, manners, moral standards, rituals, tastes, ideologies, sense of humor, superstitions, religious beliefs, the entire body of its store of ideas and concepts" (141).

The widespread appeal of the narrative confession, revealed and illuminated by both theatrical and cinematic sign structures, suggests that whether read as literature or realized in theatrical or film performance, the scripts and "performance texts" of Amadeus serve to underscore the power
and influence dramatic discourse has on shaping the attitudes and perceptions of audiences.

Shaffer's evenly balanced and deliberate blend of comic and serious effects, made more pronounced in translation to film, results in successfully entertaining and disturbing readers, spectators, and viewers in equal measure, a feature characteristic of much modern drama.

Acceptance of the comic situations and characters as conventions of the theater and film allows spectators and viewers to be amused by what Kathleen McCormick refers to as the "apparent illogicalities, incongruities, and disturbances" that are eventually resolved without any threat to the comfort or intellectual status of the spectators (228).

In the tragic situation, by contrast, McCormick explains that spectators are isolated as individuals and presented with "emotionally threatening and intellectually disturbing experiences" that evoke the Aristotelian elements of pity and fear from spectators as they watch the tragic hero's inevitable self-destruction. This "blurring of distinctions" McCormick describes as typical of modern drama and the "best theater" is prevalent because the modern world experience is itself one that presents each spectator with his or her own wealth of comic and tragic events that may never be resolved in a world of problem plays and blurred distinctions (231).
Amadeus, when treated as modern dramatic literature, explored as texts and analyzed by means of integrating composition, literary, and dramatic theory, offers critics, scholars, researchers, and practitioners in several disciplines new approaches for discovering how scripts as texts make meaning.

When the playtext, filmscript, theatrical performance, and film performance of Amadeus are read as texts from these perspectives, the reader, spectator, and viewer are provided with the tools needed to access the system of signs and symbols inherent in the text. The integration of these approaches brings to the text what McCormick, Waller, and Flower describe as a "general repertoire" or "set of culturally conditioned experiences, beliefs, knowledge, and expectations, about such matters as politics, religion, morality, lifestyle, love, and education" (22).

Perhaps sensing a possible reluctance on the part of scholars to accept the semiotician's approach to dramatic literature, Esslin halts his discussion explaining "icon, index, and symbol" at this point to play the role of devil's advocate by asking several critical questions:

Yet we may ask: what is the purpose, what are the benefits to spectators, critics, performers, of analyzing the typology of signs and sign systems; why should we want to know what types of signs, what sign systems, are present in a given
Esslin's questions are answered in part by McCormick, who claims that such vigorous interaction with the playtext as script forces the reader to rely on imagination to "complete the script" and to allow the text to "produce a variety of responses and interpretations" (12).

While McCormick supports the contribution semiotics makes to understanding the "interactive nature of performance" in terms of what such an approach "does" to help the reader make meaning, Esslin explains, more importantly, how and why the approach is indispensable:

The simplest answer, it seems to me, is the most practical, down-to-earth approach to the act of communication that every dramatic performance is intended to establish: by analyzing what signs and sign systems, in what interaction, are present and at least potentially operating upon the sensibilities of the recipients of the communication--the audience--we should arrive at the most concrete, factual basis for gaining a clear conception of what actually takes place in an artistic event like a play or film. (The Field 49)
The capacity of *Amadeus* on stage and film to simultaneously entertain and disturb audiences may largely result from the influence on Shaffer by German dramatist and director, Bertolt Brecht. In a discussion of Brecht's influence on modern theater, McCormick observes that Brecht attempts to motivate the audience to "respond questioningly, intellectually, not passively" (233). McCormick makes the distinction that Brecht's dramatic situations deliberately jolt complacent spectators into intellectual and emotional involvement, a reaction caused by the intrusion of reality on the audience during their presence in the theater.

The intrusion is accomplished by breaking with convention in such forms as leaving staging mechanisms visible or by permitting characters to break the illusion of the fourth wall (invisible wall separating actor from audience) by approaching the edge of the stage and speaking directly to the audience. This dislocating effect, though disturbing, also gives audiences a work that McCormick describes as "wonderfully entertaining" in the sense that audiences are "riveted in their seats, engrossed, and fascinated" (232). Early on in *Amadeus*, an example of such an attempt to dislocate the audience is evident when Salieri attempts to see the audience and invokes it as his "last audience" to appear (9). Shaffer's stage directions indicate that Salieri moves from the wheelchair to the fortepiano, where he performs this invocation by singing in
"a high cracked voice" while the houselights slowly dim up to illuminate the audience (9). Eventually, the lights reach full and remain at this level throughout the lengthy address and emotional appeal he makes directly to the now recognizable audience, only dimming down to signal the end of the first act (13). The unexpected break with the audience's collectively held perception of its reality as being a group of emotionally and physically distanced and uninvolved spectators forces the audience to recognize Salieri's reality in more certain terms. The result of this deliberate blend of reality and unreality is a realization of Salieri's unresolved emotional and spiritual conflicts that, as they go unresolved, tend to live on when the audience leaves the theater. The lack of resolution can possibly be attributed to Brecht's desire to compel the audience to react "as if in a debate with the production," sharpened by characters who are "deliberately inconclusive" with "conflicting motives and interests" (233).

Brecht's concept that theater should instruct and entertain through dramatic content and theatrical style that jolts spectators into "dealing" with realities is apparent in all of Shaffer's dramas, as is the blend of comic and serious effects prevalent in contemporary British and American drama. But more pronounced is the way Shaffer, like Brecht, breaks with traditional conventions to get his
audiences to question, criticize, and debate the nature of contemporary social, political, and spiritual issues.

Such seemingly senseless and shocking acts as the gouging out of the horses' eyes in *Equus* and Salieri's gruesome slitting of his own throat in *Amadeus* force the spectator, as Brecht said in notes to *The Threepenny Opera*, "to see certain things that he does not wish to see and thus sees his wishes not only fulfilled but also criticized" (233).

These blatantly shocking and disturbing elements align Shaffer more closely, however, with Antonin Artaud who used the term "Theater of Cruelty" in 1933 to describe a particularly brutal type of drama. Sylvan Barnet defines this type of drama as that which relies "more on gestures, shapes, music, and light than on words" and which has the potential to release in audiences the "suppressed primitive or prelogical powers within them, such as criminal instincts and erotic obsessions, revealing the 'cruelty' or terrible mystery of existence" (813).

While the influence is present in his dramas, Shaffer uses these elements to a lesser degree to focus attention on concurring power struggles at work on the social, political, and spiritual level. All drama, Esslin believes, carries social and political implications because it depends on human interaction to achieve meaning:
It is not the direct appeal, the surface message that is most effective, but, in keeping with the essential nature of the dramatic, the indirect implications of the dramatic action, the meaning that emerges, as it were, between the lines of the dialogue, from the wider reverberations of the action. (The Field 172).

How great an impact the political messages carry depends significantly on the disposition of the audience. Esslin contends that drama is predisposed to impact most strongly on the upper echelons of society, moving the more progressive and educated members to discuss and possibly react publicly to issues brought about on stage. As more audiences are exposed and reaction is registered, the more capable the drama becomes of "penetrating the consciousness of society" and moving public attitude toward change (172-73).

Criticized from a political standpoint, Amadeus raises issues concerning the power struggle between the working individual and the bureaucrat, the power and authority of the Church over the individual, and the Marxist response to Capitalism. In Amadeus, Shaffer portrays Salieri as the epitome of the politically correct patron of the Church and Court until his desire for personal gain and social recognition lead him to cross the line of moral acceptability. Shaffer uses Salieri's jealousy of Mozart
and his vociferous attack on God to underscore how
allegiance to the Church and its dogma can bring about
hypocrisy, even among the most devout. Salieri’s fall from
Grace, his attempt to justify his actions, and his self-
proclaimed absolution of guilt reinforces the concepts of
solipsism, alienation, and decanonization as means to
devalue the political power and authority of the Church.

Likewise, Shaffer portrays Mozart as a lascivious,
politically incorrect, but popular, struggling non-
conformist who desires only to gain recognition and
appreciation for his talent, rather than political status
and wealth. Shaffer’s characterization of Mozart as a
likeable but irreverent and impudent child makes audiences
want him to succeed in his personal battle to achieve his
rightful place somewhere between the patricians and the
commoners in a capitalistic society. Shaffer and Forman’s
powerful depiction of the shame and sham of Mozart’s
“pauper’s burial” strikes the final and most resounding blow
against the social and political values of his time.

The particular features of shock and horror in Amadeus
realized in theatrical and film performance almost always
affect spectators and viewers to such intellectual and
emotional degrees that they are prompted to emerge from the
experience reconsidering views, impressions, or opinions
they formerly held of Mozart, his relationship with Salieri,
and the conditions under which he lived, composed, and died.

28
Shaffer’s portrayal of Mozart contributes significantly to discovering how the playtext, filmscript, and film disturb and entertain by means of first-person narrative confession. The portrait of Mozart that emerges from Salieri’s narrative is one of a spoiled, undeserving and childish genius who falls victim to the personal and social demands his own unrivaled talent begets. Despite a confession marked by admission of his own diabolical efforts to thwart Mozart’s success, Salieri appears to delight in describing, with utmost finesse, Mozart’s tenacious perseverance against the enemy. Salieri’s confession is made as sumptuous as it is excruciating by Mozart’s naivety and inability to perceive that the enemy is thinly disguised as his slightly less gifted and intensely jealous colleague and friend.

Of critical importance to how effect is achieved is Shaffer’s severely criticized comic approach to the characterization of Mozart; but consideration of Amadeus as postmodern drama proves how dramatic structure, especially character development, shapes audience response as Rodney Simard explains:

Shaffer’s characters are individuals divided within themselves, lacking a firm sense of self, and representing modern questers in search of integration. . . . Traditional, representational realism is only an objective framework for
exploration in his work, for the reality of his drama lies in the individual psyches of his characters, not necessarily in their environments.

(101)

To evoke intense emotional response from audiences, Shaffer's sharply delineated but slightly exaggerated dual protagonists serve structurally to entertain, but also function dynamically to stress their diametrically opposed characterizations. The juxtaposition of character opposites pits the intensely serious Salieri against the light-hearted and sometimes frivolous Mozart, an antithesis that fuels Salieri's spiritual and psychological crisis that lies at the core of the work. By pairing off the two in psychological, spiritual, and intellectual warfare, Shaffer forces audiences "into the position of moral arbiters between the oppositions" (Simard 105), providing the level of psychoanalytical study typical of Shaffer's dramatic works.

In all probability, the greater effect on audience is achieved when the playtext is rewritten to accommodate the medium of film and is completed in film performance, yet another visual "text." On the subject of the evolution of the filmscript as a form of discourse and its status following World War II, Douglas Winston observes in The Screenplay as Literature: "It is not in the United States, sad to say, but in Europe that we find the first real trend
of accomplished writers gravitating to the cinema in order to further their literary careers and not to suspend them" (14).

Winston attributes this new status to the proved ability of postmodern cinema to convey thought and emotion expressed in terms as subtle and complex as can be and is found in other literary forms. Where the power of the screenplay to evoke response as "good reading" outside of realization in cinematic performance is concerned, Winston explains how far critics have come in accepting the screenplay as literature, stating:

Twenty-seven years ago, when John Gassner first presented . . . the rather audacious proposition that the "screenplay" could be considered not only as a new form of literature but also as a very important form in its own right, there were more than a few raised eyebrows among the prominent literary critics of the day, who were quick to point out, among other things, the impoverished vocabularies and elliptical sentence structures to be found in these so-called film plays; and, of course, there was the rather obvious fact that most filmscripts were written without any thought toward their possible publication. (13)

In defense of the playscript and filmscript as valued literary texts, postmodern French critic and film director
Alexandre Astruc asserts in "La Camera-Stylo" that film is "becoming a language," and clarifies this concept when he adds, "By language, I mean a form in which and by which an artist can express his thoughts, however abstract they may be, or translate his obsessions exactly as he does in the contemporary essay or novel" (15).

How and why Shaffer's play, translated from the language of the stage to the rhetoric of film, paradoxically entertain and disturb simultaneously is the subject of this investigation. For the purpose of illuminating rhetorical and visual features particular to both playscript and filmscript of Amadeus as separately designed texts, and in the interest of preserving continuity of discussion, selected excerpts are treated in their entirety. Read silently or orally as texts, the scripts deserve to be more seriously valued for their contributions to reader-response criticism.

Effort toward a convergence of critical theories continues and progress is being made; yet Anne Ruggles Gere states in "Composition and Literature: The Continuing Conversation," that closing the chasm between the two "requires more than rethinking ways of establishing another span between these two monoliths (617)." Rather, Gere suggests, this composition versus literature stance "necessitates alternate conceptions of the nature of composition and literature" (617).
In her review of four texts presenting different theoretical approaches to reading and writing, Gere draws attention to the common need they address: the recognition of reading and writing as a collaborative learning experience that is formed by interdependent and interactive processes reader and writer engage in to make meaning.

Continuing efforts by such researchers in composition as Dorothy Augustine, Ross Winterowd, and Helen Rothschild Ewald and in literature and drama as J. L. Styan and Edward Rocklin, confirm the importance of teaching students how to connect these processes and how to see their relationships at work through "ownership" of the text, whether performing in the context of reading and interpreting, viewing, and interpreting, or composing and interpreting.

Stanislavski's Method, guiding dramatic theory and the related forms of analysis such as script analysis, production analysis, and consideration of theatrical and film performance as "performance texts," provides a new way of approaching criticism and instruction of composition and literature as process.

When audiences learn how to break texts into primary units of thought and action according to Stanislavski's Method, the process enables them to identify the most probable motivating forces comprising the core of the text. Such detailed and comprehensive analysis of the construction of acts and scenes leads to an understanding of the
interactive and interdependent nature of the parts to the whole. What emerges from this type of critical analysis is a blueprint that lays out the entire structural design and shows how interconnected and interactive each element is, and the role each plays in contributing to the total artistic effect. A skilled reading of the blueprint then leads the critic to discover the variety and impact of rhetorical features at work in the play, how dramatic structure achieves effect, and how the play can be opened to multiple interpretations.

Dramatic theory is only one of multiple theories that converge in the instruction of composition and literature as processes. The overlapping of these theories supports efforts made by those researches and practitioners who recognize the need and envision the development of a single unified theory that will dissolve the perception that a chasm continues to separate these naturally inter-dependent academic communities.
Notes

1 For purposes of this study, subsequent references to audience refer to reader, spectator, and viewer.

2 Unspaced ellipses and spaced dashes, and subsequent references throughout this study, appear in original.

3 Subsequent references to the text of the filmscript will appear as page numbers in parentheses.

4 For purposes of this study, the modern American spelling is preferred. The traditional British form appears in titles and in quotations.

5 This technique, used in conjunction with establishing subjective point of view, consists of visually presenting a shot from an angle of vision that permits the audience to see the situation or objects from a specific character's perspective.

6 Essentially, Stanislavski's method can help the critic find what might be considered the purpose or spine of the play. The spine emanates from the objectives found for each character within each act and scene. The objectives are determined by what dialogue and action disclose about the character's needs, wants, or desires. How each character proceeds toward those objectives or fails to proceed is further decided by the line-by-line interpretation given the character's dialogue, depending on what the actor perceives to be the character's psychological intent or motivation.
CHAPTER TWO

Amadeus as Dramatic Discourse: How First-Person Narrative and Shaffer’s Orchestration of Texts Shape Reader-Audience Response

Martin Esslin makes the distinction in The Field of Drama that a dramatic text is a "blueprint" for mimetic action not yet realized in dramatic performance, and that "a dramatic text unperformed, is literature" (25). American theater audiences are presently enjoying a return to dramatic reading of narrative texts in the nature of personal diaries, letters, and memoirs staged as solo, duo, "reader’s theater," and "story theater" group performances.

In a review of A. R. Gurney’s Love Letters, Los Angeles Times theater critic Sylvie Drake asks, "Could one call an event at which two actors sit side by side at a large desk and read to the audience a play?" (1). The letters, written by two friends, cover a span of at least sixty years and trace events of their personal lives from childhood through and beyond middle age.

The actors, seated next to each other in chairs at writing side-by-side, define and redefine their characters as they read the text of the letters which reveal the effect the events described have on their enduring relationship. While the appearance of actors seated at tables on a bare stage reading their respective texts from ringed binders is
a touch novel, Charles Champlin observes in a later *Los Angeles Times* review that "The staged reading is not unprecedented," considering the successes of Paul Gregory's touring productions of Benet's *John Brown's Body*, designed for ensemble reading by a medium sized cast, and the two-character play, *Two on a Seesaw* (1). Similar to Gurney's work and sharing recent popularity with the small group and duo performances are Elizabeth Forsythe Hailey's one-woman adaptation of her novel, *A Woman of Independent Means*, a work also based on letters, most of the works by Samuel Beckett, and Hal Holbrook's recreation of Mark Twain.

What is a new theatrical phenomenon is the concept of the quickly rotating cast *Love Letters* employs to give the material fresh interpretations, perspectives, and appeal. During production in Los Angeles at the Canon Theater in Beverly Hills, the cast changed weekly over one hundred performances, allowing an enormous variety of actors the unusual opportunity of performing in the context of dramatic reading.

Chaplin, attending more to the stylistic features responsible for the immense popularity *Love Letters* achieves among actors and audiences, notes:

For the actor and actress, the nature of the play is a real testing challenge. They are denied the use of body language, which is like playing quarterback with your ankles lashed together or
trying to zip up a zipper with one hand. The acting has to be all voice and eyes—and the uses of silence. Gurney's silences—the letters not answered are as eloquent as anything this side of Harold Pinter . . . the chance to speak A. R. Gurney's wonderful lines (and be eloquent sitting motionless) is a challenge no actor can really resist. (8)

*Love Letters'* appeal lies in how the letters are crafted to evoke memory and emotion from the spectator who is subtly manipulated through theatrical space and time to experience and relive the often humorous and emotionally wrenching circumstances and events the letters describe. Two films made memorable by the use of a similar technique include the classic, *An Affair to Remember* and the currently popular romantic comedy, *Sleepless In Seattle*.

The distinctive structural feature Gurney's work shares with *Amadeus* is the fusion of the narrative and dramatic modes, bringing the narrative text Esslin describes as "perceived as lying in the past" when read into the "here and now" when retold by a narrator present in the room who "re-enacts himself as--a character" (*The Field* 25).

Read as a literary text, combining narrative and dramatic modes, *Amadeus* invites and sustains reader-response because of several distinctive features of Shaffer's dramatic writing style: experimentation with elements of
structure; economic language rich in irony, innuendo, and imagery; and complex social, spiritual, and psychological themes conveyed by means of solidly written dramatic action. Of no less significance is the collaborative exploitation of Shaffer's chosen director and production designer, Peter Hall, whose interpretative stagings of Shaffer's plays are integral to their dramatic impact and theatrical success.

Written from first-person narrative point of view, the play does not necessarily pose reader-response problems when encountered as literary text, for the reader willingly reconstructs in imagination the performance the text is "destined to evoke" (The Field 79-80). In actual performance, however, first-person narrative can adversely affect audience response if the other essential elements of dramatic structure are not sufficient to support, balance, and sustain the amount of attention placed on the narrator.

Thornton Wilder and Tennessee Williams are two modern American dramatists whose choice of first-person point of view as the structural mainstay of their works proved advantageous. Wilder's Our Town and Williams' The Glass Menagerie are highly recognizable by the presence in each of a strongly drawn main character/narrator whose forceful account is reinforced by an equally dynamic dramatic reenactment from his point of view. Like Amadeus, both plays focus substantively on interpersonal relationships that cause the narrator to remember both painful and
pleasant events of the past as a means of explaining and accepting (or attempting to amend) some kind and degree of guilt, remorse, or regret affecting the narrator in the present.

The proclivity of first-person narrative toward becoming bogged down and tedious with detailed recollection is a weakness that faces dramatists who chose to employ the technique. To prevent boredom and to ensure interest at the outset of the play, *Amadeus*, Shaffer employs several structural devices. These devices function to create and maintain the necessary element of dramatic suspense, to instill tension balanced by comedic relief, and to generate forward momentum.

The narrator/storyteller in the role of a protagonist, Salieri, participates in onstage dialogue and action. This device is employed to keep the audience focused on his emotional-spiritual crisis and the social-ethical dilemma posed by the "Did I Do It; Did I Murder Mozart?" question that opens the play, introduces the narrative, and implies a confession.

Shaffer next employs flashback and flashforward techniques to create and maintain suspense, to control levels of tension, and to provide dramatic exposition. This forced reversal of real time also functions structurally to control the theatrical environment by propelling the action of the narrative and audience through dramatic and
subjective time and space. The use of dramatic compression is not a new technique, but one audiences familiar with the balcony scene from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet may recognize.

The presence of devices most commonly associated with detective fiction also figure prominently in the structure of Amadeus. The influence of that genre might be credited to Shaffer's twin brother, a master of detective fiction. Not unlike the narrator in Gaston Leroux's detective novel, The Phantom of the Opera, Salieri also establishes the fact of vile deeds committed by the "accused," leads the audience through an examination of the accused's motives by posing questions to the audience and answering them, and, via flashback, discloses details of the circumstances leading to the tragic events. In both instances, the accused is first portrayed as an individual gone mad and incapable of remorse. But then, the portraits change as they eventually break down in confession, are judged upon their actions, become remorseful for what they have done, and seek only compassion and forgiveness from their victims. In the end, both Eric ("The Ghost") and Salieri are portrayed as tortured and tormented souls acting not with deliberate malice, but out of envy, jealousy, and need for recognition as somewhat overlooked but highly accomplished composers.

The successful translation of Amadeus from stage to film can be attributed to Shaffer's extensive utilization of
the resources of the medium. Particularly beneficial is film's capacity to effectively tender and manage multiple points of view. The fusion of points of view in *Amadeus* enables the expansion of such elements as time and locale, imagery and symbolism, characterization and dramatic action, and musical effect for the purpose of extending audience perceptions and manipulating response. The meld of the perspectives held by the subjective observer, the indirectly intimate observer, and the objective observer, results in a production that is tenable, compelling, and insightful.

The domination of first-person narrative point of view, and particularly the use of the intimate observer, as a structural device typifies Shaffer as a self-conscious postmodern writer concerned with his art and particularly the way a story is told. Shaffer permits Salieri to deliver the narrative as the intimate observer for the sake of showing rather than telling how the human drama unfolds, and as a means of luring the reader, spectator, and viewer into the inner workings of the human mind, thus revealing the interior dimension of the play.

William Chace explains why this stance, first attributed to American novelist Henry James, is especially preferred by postmodern writers:

> In making this distinction, he [James] was suggesting that a narrator should draw the reader into intriguing ambiguities at the heart of the
work, allowing him [the reader] the pleasure of discovering buried meanings for himself. The best narrator in such an approach observes events from a privileged position of intimacy. He is limited in terms of his knowledge, but not in terms of his access to the hearts and minds of the main characters. (51-52)

Shaffer manipulates audience response by building on the intimate observer's authenticity as a reliable narrator and competence to express the plot in terms of psychological realism. To heighten the storyteller's credibility, Shaffer also employs the objective observer who records only what he or she can actually see. The narrator, in this instance, Chace explains, functions "simply to record the surfaces of the scene--its "look" rather than its "feel". The value of this stance, Chace describes as "camera technique," is that the image is shielded from human perception and interpretation and thus is reproduced as perfectly as possible (53).

The objective observer's reliance on dialogue and gesture to reveal character presents the picture and forces the reader, audience, and viewer, to "make meaning from an uninterpreted situation," concludes Chace (53). How the objective observer functions in terms of Amadeus on film is considered in greater detail in subsequent chapters of this study.
Extrinsically, first-person narrative enables the reader, spectator, and viewer to focus directly on Salieri's conflict but functions intrinsically to elicit keenly sympathetic responses from audiences as they identify with Salieri on a deeply personal level. Shaffer's incorporation of three points of view is grounded in his awareness as a dramatist that audience response is governed less by the events of the plot, and more on how the protagonist is left "profoundly changed" (Chace 55).

To further insure interest and response, Shaffer employs the narrative device of confession, an inherently essential and vital aspect of the religious context. As a controlling structural device, confession adjoins with another fictive construct associated with first-person narrative, the complementary "narratee". The narratee (in the guise of the conjured audience) receives the narrative and functions, as would a priest, to manipulate reader and spectator response.

Acting in the capacity of appointed confessors, readers, audience members, and viewers (via the persona of Fr. Vogler) are invested with the responsibility to listen objectively. Esslin stresses the importance of the dramatic context when such devices as monologues or asides are spoken by characters, pointing out that words alone delivered on stage cannot "mean" outside of the dramatic context, or
separated from the situation and action in which they occur (The Field 84).

Not to be taken at their "face-value," words are, as Esslin suggests, "always the product of the character, the character's motivations and the situation in which he [the character] finds himself" (85). The questioning and analysis of character motivation by the reader and spectator of the play begins when the first act opens with "savage whispers" and "snakelike hissing" of the words "Salieri" and "Assassin" (1), repeated until the lights come up on the darkened theater.

The threefold function of this theatrical device is to arouse curiosity and interest, to create tension, to introduce dramatic suspense, and to establish dramatic time and space within the theatrical environment. The predictable "What's this all about?" silent response of the reader and spectator puts Shaffer, as rhetorician, in control, and Salieri (as fictive construct) in charge of leading the reader, spectator, and ultimately the viewer through the shocking, sometimes humorous, but eventually devastating account of the Salieri-Mozart conflict.

The problem of controlling and gauging audience response in adaptation becomes more pronounced when Shaffer collaborates with Milos Forman to rewrite the play in the medium of film script, forcing the work to meet the altogether different and unique demands made by film. In
making the shift from one medium to another, Shaffer is presented with a second writing challenge: how to reconstruct the play effectively to bring about the same intellectual and emotional responses from the distant, less personally involved viewer.

While at the onset of the play the reader can only imagine the darkened theater and the effect the accusatory whispers and hisses surrounding the name of Salieri achieve, the actual spectator experiences the real thing—the sensory effects of sitting with a larger audience in a black theater while amplified whispers and hisses build to a ferocious cacophony, creating an atmosphere momentarily charged with discomfort, tension, and confusion.

While this theatrical device "hooks" the reader and evokes response, it also serves to provide the first bit of dramatic exposition. Both reader and spectator immediately recognize that Salieri is under attack, while the accusations and suppositions are further substantiated by dialogue bantered back and forth between the Venticelli. The dramatic offstage accompaniment offered by Salieri's own anguished cry of "Perdonami, Mozart! Il tuo assassino ti chiede perdono!" offers enough in Italian to indict him further of the charge of "Assassin" (5).

Suspense maintains audience interest while the narrative unfolds with Old Salieri's appearance on stage in a wheelchair. As he commences the storytelling in the form
of a personal confession, the audience discovers Salieri to be typical of the ancient, idealized tragic figure who fights a battle with God and simultaneously endures great pain and suffering.

Shaffer's possible rationale behind employing narrative confession in the context of dramatic writing and the effect this technique achieves is explained by Langdon Elsbree's observation in *The Rituals of Life: Patterns In Narratives*. According to Elsbree, and in the tradition of Aristotle, the theme of suffering in literature always raises four basic questions: (1) What was done to merit such agony or hardship? (2) Could it have been prevented? (3) What meaning can the suffering have? (4) What can or must be done to escape it, and at what cost? (51).

The presence of suffering is immediately apparent from the outset of the play when Salieri's offstage pleas to Mozart for forgiveness indicate prolonged guilt, remorse, and intense suffering. This internal turmoil is also the focus of the opening scene of the film, but the difference between the play and film in this instance is the viewer's discovery, via the Venticelli, of Salieri lying in a pool of blood following a suicide attempt.

At the instant the grizzly discovery takes place, the opening titles begin to roll and Forman introduces the irony of the situation via the immediate intrusion of the "stormy, frenzied opening of MOZART's Symphony Number 25" (4). As
the Venticelli rush to aid Salieri, Forman furthers the irony by cutting to the interior (still night) of a ballroom replete with "twenty-five dancing couples, fifty guests, ten servants, and a full orchestra" and a Masquerade Ball "in progress"(4). The music [Mozart's] slows momentarily, permitting the audience to visually absorb the pleasant ambience of this scene. The "fast music returns" as a cut to the street outside Salieri's house shows the bleeding, half-conscious Salieri crying out to Mozart for forgiveness while being carried out of his house on a stretcher by two attendants. They place him in the waiting horse-drawn ambulance. The driver "whips up the horse, and the wagon dashes off through the still falling snow," carrying Salieri roughly through "three snowy streets of the city" while the Masquerade Ball progresses (4). Undercutting and concluding this ghastly montage, consisting of five scenes, is Salieri's pained recognition of the conversely beautiful, bittersweet strains of music coming from the Masquerade Ball--Mozart's music (4). Considerably one of the most effective demonstrations of cinematic technique in the film, this particular montage functions to introduce Salieri at the height of his emotional and spiritual crisis, to emphasize the significance of suffering, to underscore the irony, and to prepare the audience for the confession as it is disclosed to Fr. Vogler.
The virtually unseen but felt presence of the objective observer, the camera, forces the viewer to witness Salieri's anguish more personally and subjectively. What the viewer sees fosters sympathy for Salieri, even though his grief appears to be more for himself than for Mozart—and how Mozart's untimely and fortuitous death will leave society in the aftermath. Thus the presence of suffering leads audiences to ask Elsbree's questions—the same questions Salieri posits to his "confessors" and presumptuously answers as a manner of provoking sympathy for a probable murderer who is not a likely candidate. Such a provocation of empathy for a murderer is not a modern ploy; the device appears prominently in Shakespeare's tragedy, Macbeth, and has subsequently been designated the "Macbeth syndrome" as a means of recognizing the operation of the appeal in modern dramatic works.

By introducing Salieri at the height of an emotional and spiritual crisis through shocking and surprising dialogue and imagery in both the play and film, Shaffer can rely on gut level response and morbid curiosity to evoke feelings of sympathy for Salieri from the audience. The overall effect this deliberate shock achieves is to send the audience into the desired psychological state Beckerman describes as "the paradox of belief and disbelief," a response more commonly associated with Artaud's Theater of Cruelty (133).
In Beckerman's view, "There is the tug of the play, urging us to submerge ourselves fully in its life," juxtaposed against "the restraint of the larger world" (133). Suspended between the two, the audience submits but doesn't submit. In this state, Hatlen points out, the individual "loses his [or her] identity, becoming more susceptible to emotional appeals and more easily swayed than the single person in isolation" (290). Beckerman defines the experience as a form of discourse involving a "complex exchange of partially uttered signals in a three-way communication between the play, the individual, and collective audience" (133).

At this point, the dramatist and dramatis personae begin to manipulate and shape audience response as the narrative unfolds across theatrical (and internal) time and space. The combined narrative stances operate with the device of confession to establish setting, and historical and social context, and psychological perspective by introducing the main character at the height of emotional despair.

Shaffer structures the play around the device of confession, evoking curiosity, stimulating analytical thinking, and providing the amount of expository material needed to perpetuate, maintain, and ultimately satisfy audience expectation.
The Narrative Nature of Confession

Confession in any form attracts attention and appeals to many readers, especially those who are inquisitive to the extent of prying until their curiosity or need to know is satisfied. Confession strikes a nerve because it usually evolves from the speaker's sense of loss. Dennis A. Foster explains in *Confession and Complicity in Narrative*, that confession in the narrative form, "involves a narrator disclosing a secret knowledge to another, as a speaker to a listener, writer to reader, confessor to confessor . . . in a way that would allow another to understand, judge, forgive, and perhaps even sympathize" (2). Traditionally and historically, the confession of sin is addressed to a specific listener (confessor) or reader (in this case) and is intended to elicit a personal and sympathetic response that will bring about absolution. The sinner, by means of reliving the sin through the act of confession, is relieved when the burden of loss is transferred to the confessor (listener or reader), who in turn reenacts the sin in imagination and thus also sins (14-24).

By hearing the confession and closely identifying with the sinner's thoughts, feelings, and experiences, the confessor becomes an equal. Like the sinner, the confessor is reminded of his or her own frailties, assuming the burden of guilt, in turn also needing absolution.
Considering confession as a unique form of discourse, Foster observes:

Confession is . . . a mode by which people enter into the discourse of their culture, where they step beyond reiteration of the stories and into interpretation. It represents an attempt to understand the terms and the limits by which the people are defined, both as they listen to the confessions of others and as they recount their own transgressions. (7)

Subsequently, Salieri, as the confessor, reveals feelings of guilt, alienation from God, and incapacity to know or understand himself. Foster goes on to suggest that confession is "both a challenge and a temptation to a rational reader" because the confessor is "a species of madman, someone whose deviance into sin suggests the fragility, possibly the illusion, of reason's grasp on knowledge" (5).

Foster explains that the confession drives the reader to make sense of the irrationality of the behavior concerning the deeds confessed—and that this need to know "sets the listener to work" (5). Attempting to explain what motivates a confessor to confess, Foster draws a correlation between psychoanalysis and confession, stating: "Like confession, analysis transforms a feeling of alienation, of sickness, into an account of separation; it encourages one
who is lost to trust his [or her] past to a listener who will make sense of it" (8).

The device of narrative confession is not often found in dramatic literature but is most commonly associated with fiction, "new journalism" nonfiction, and the canon of religious and philosophical writing for its empowering effect on audience. Narrative confession has the natural capacity to take ownership of the reader and to usurp control from the listener, especially in the event of a spoken confession, as Foster points out:

Despite his [or her] own sense of guilt, a confessor commands a power over a listener because he controls the material the other is obligated to use to be the one who understands. What begins as a personal sense of sin, of alienation, has inescapable social, political, religious implications because the only possibility of attaining atonement is through the elusive medium of a narrative. And because each narrative requires interpretation, readers are drawn into the economy of a discursive exchange. . . . A confessor listening cannot maintain a position outside that of a confessor speaking . . . but for some readers this . . . exchange begins to shape the desires of others and thereby becomes a source of power. The hopes for meaning, understanding,
and atonement become allied with modes of exchange, desire, and revenge. (14)

Shaffer's use of Salieri as narrator and sinner asking to be heard in confession invites the audience to analyze the situation from Salieri's perspective. The audience is given an occasion to consider Salieri's motives, to discover and clarify ambiguities, and to form conclusions leading to interpretation. The aim of the confession is to predispose the audience toward accepting the reasons Salieri gives to rationalize his actions.

The discovery of the effects of narrative confession on audience leads the critic toward understanding the dynamics of this device that simultaneously "entertains" and "disturbs" audiences throughout both play and film and to recognize how the device sets up a complex compositional problem first for Shaffer and then for Forman when both collaborate to translate the narrative from stage to film medium.

An examination of Shaffer's playscript and filmscript as separate texts containing metadramas dynamically orchestrated to bring about a desired and directed intellectual and emotional response from the audience, reveals how the confession entertains and disturbs simultaneously. How Salieri's confession functions within the narrative to shape response is discussed later in this study.

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The Orchestration of Texts and the Shaping of Response:
The Reader’s Text and the Actor’s Text

The internal structure allows the dramatic narrative to be revealed through and delivered by means of two separate but finely arranged texts performing in concert: the primary and secondary texts. The narrative is conveyed to the reader by way of highly visual dramatic action and language contained in the primary text, designated in the context of theatrical production as the "actor's text". The primary text is simultaneously enhanced and empowered by elements of on-stage visual and auditory effects, often suggested by the dramatist in the "secondary text," or the stage directions. If indeed they are the dramatist’s directions and not promptbook notes made by the director or editors, they are usually set apart from the primary text by brackets and italics.

The stage directions function to support the primary text by suggesting to the reader, preparing actor, director, and theatrical designer what both the action and dialogue put together on stage might look and sound like. The stage directions act as a guide for those involved in achieving the kind of overall artistic theatrical and rhetorical effect envisioned by the dramatist and director. How the secondary text is used to help the director make meaning and to elicit reader, spectator, and viewer response depends
entirely on how the signs, symbols, and messages inherent in that text are literalized.

Because the secondary text appears technically different from the primary text and is set apart, many readers have not been taught how to recognize and actively respond to the stage directions as an integral part of the primary text. Often rushing through or completely ignoring the secondary text, they assume the text in brackets does not contribute significantly to the meaning of the work but exists independently, primarily for the purposes of technical production and performance.

The following stage directions from Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* offer the reader both an indispensable insight into Brick's character and a clear access to the dramatist's voice:

> [Brick's detachment is at last broken through.

His heart is accelerated; his forehead sweat-beaded; his breath becomes more rapid and his voice hoarse. The thing they're discussing, timidly and painfully on the side of Big Daddy, fiercely, violently on Brick's side, is the inadmissible thing that Skipper died to disavow between them. The fact that if it existed it had to be disavowed to "keep face" in the world they lived in, may be at the heart of the "mendacity" that Brick drinks to kill his disgust with. It
may be the root of his collapse. Or maybe it is only a single manifestation of it, not even the most important. The bird that I hope to catch in the net of this play is not the solution of one man’s psychological problem. I’m trying to catch the true quality of experience in a group of people, that cloudy, flickering, evanescent—fiercely charged!—interplay of live human beings in the thundercloud of a common crisis. Some mystery should be left in the revelation of character in a play, just as a great deal of mystery is always left in the revelation of character in life, even in one’s own character to himself. This does not absolve the playwright of his duty to observe and probe as clearly and deeply as he legitimately can; but it should steer him away from “pat” conclusions, facile definitions which make a play just a play, not a snare for the truth of human experience.] (112-13)

This excerpt demonstrates that not all portions of the stage directions can be (or are necessarily intended to be) acted, and that the directions may also function to more closely align readers with the dramatist’s persona in thought and understanding.
In the following stage directions from *Amadeus*, by contrast, the explanation of Salieri's emotional state is largely drawn for the benefit the actor but is essential to the reader for the purpose of achieving psychological and emotional identification. When Salieri picks up Mozart's original manuscripts after Constanze leaves his studio, he studies them while the actual music they represent is reproduced for the benefit of the audience. The audience simultaneously sees Salieri sight-read, and hears bits and pieces of Mozart's compositions. Salieri continues to sight-read, describing to the audience what he sees, what he hears, and how he feels. Because the audience relives the moment with Salieri by hearing the music and seeing him physically react to each piece, they are more prone to at least identify with Salieri's emotions. Readers, by contrast, rely solely on their interpretation of the text to imagine what the actual theater-going audience sees and hears:

SALIERI: ... The truth was clear. That Serenade had been no accident. [Very low, in the theater, a faint thundery sound is heard accumulating, like a distant sea.] I was staring through the cage of those meticulous ink strokes at an Absolute Beauty! [And out of the thundery roar writhes and rises the clear sound of a soprano, singing the Kyrie from the C Minor Mass. The accretion of
noise around her voice falls away—it is suddenly clear and bright—then clearer and brighter. The light grows bright: too bright: burning white, then scalding white! SALIERI rises in the downpour of it, and in the flood of the music, which is growing ever louder—filling the theater—as the soprano yields to the full chorus, fortissimo, singing its massive counterpoint. This is by far the loudest sound the audience has yet heard. SALIERI staggers toward us, holding the manuscripts in his hand, like a man caught in a tumbling and violent sea.] (72)

These particular stage directions, when read in their entirety, are of paramount importance because they accomplish two tasks. First, they provide the reader with a moment-to-moment description of the events that trigger a series of emotional responses in Salieri and show precisely how the experience of sight reading affects him mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Second, they signal the turning point of the play—that moment of high drama that brings Salieri to his knees. Simultaneously, the dramatic action arrives at a stand-still and the audience is held at an intense level of suspense designed to keep them engaged in the plot through intermission and well into Act Two.
As these excerpts prove, any reading of the primary text that excludes the secondary text results in the production of meaning that is only skin deep or that is gained from a surface understanding of the text. Paul M. Levitt explains this point more specifically in *A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Drama*:

The stage direction makes it possible for the modern playwright . . . to have the best of both worlds: the dramatic and the narrative. He [the playwright] dramatizes meaning in his play, and through the exposition in the stage directions he explains himself and his characters. The demand for a realistic art form, and especially the demand for psychological accuracy, have, in many cases, forced the playwright to analyze and explain motivations in the stage directions so that the stage action will not have to wait on it [revelation via stage dialogue]. In the modern drama, especially, stage directions are written to be read. (40-41)

And, as in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, some directions are written that cannot be performed.

When the reader is forced to shift back and forth between primary text that "tells" and secondary text that "shows" how the dialogue is to be delivered and the action
carried out, both texts are working or affecting the intellect and emotions to help the reader create meaning.

Esslin explains in *The Field of Drama* that dramatic works "contain a plethora of immensely important meaning-producing elements" (80). In dialogue, for example, he suggests that the "basic lexical meaning of the words themselves, their syntactic meaning, [and] their referential meaning to circumstances in the real world convey meaning in daily life" (80-1). Esslin points out that reading a play requires decoding every word on at least two levels. Readers decode for what the word means on the factual level and for what the word says about a speaker or character on the interpretative level (82).

As a feature of dramatic discourse, the secondary text further enables the audience to accept that point at which the narrative begins in terms of time, space, and atmosphere. In *Amadeus*, the secondary text opens the play by informing the reader that the esteemed court composer, Antonio Salieri, is suspected of murder and sends this message to the reader via highly visual and auditory language to suggest to what degree the atmosphere is charged with hostility:

[Darkness]
[Savage whispers fill the theater. We can distinguish nothing at first from this snake-like hissing save the word Salieri! repeated here.
there and everywhere around the theater. Also, 
the barely distinguishable word Assassin! The 
whispers overlap and increase in volume, slashing 
the air with wicked intensity. Then the light 
grows Upstage to reveal the silhouettes of men and 
women dressed in the top hats and skirts of early 
nineteenth century—CITIZENS OF VIENNA, all 
crowded together in the Light Box, and uttering 
their scandal.] (1-2)

To prepare readers for what ultimately becomes a confession 
to murder, Shaffer sets the mood by indicating in the stage 
directions how the play is to open. By plunging the 
spectators into darkness filled with "savage whispers and 
snake-like hissing" in which the word Salieri is "repeated 
here, there, and everywhere around the theater," along with 
the "barely distinguishable word Assassin!" (1), Shaffer 
immediately creates, heightens, and maintains a sense of the 
unknown—in essence, the dramatic suspense.

The stage directions further indicate that the whispers 
"overlap and increase in volume, slashing the air with 
wicked intensity" (1). When this sound effect is carried 
out in performance to the degree that the stage directions 
suggest, the result is the creation of atmospheric tension 
that pervades the darkened theater, startling anonymous 
spectators into emotional awareness and active 
participation. When Salieri cries out in agony, "Perdonami,
Mozart! Il tuo assassino ti chiede perdono," in Italian, and the Venticelli translate to "Pardon, Mozart! Pardon your assassin" (5) in English, the suspense is heightened. When analyzed in terms of what the secondary text does beyond simply informing readers and spectators, the text engages the reader and spectator in the act of receiving and responding to a form of symbolic discourse.

In a note preceding the script of Equus, Shaffer stresses how integral a role audience response to the non-verbal aspects of performance plays:

> When people buy the published text of a new play, they mostly want to recall the experience they received in the theatre. That experience is composed, of course, not merely of the words they heard, but the gestures they saw, and the lighting, and the look of the thing. (i)

Fear of the unknown, the mysterious, and the unworldly pervades the staging of many of Shaffer’s plays. In defense of the visually graphic and frightening images attributed to John Dexter’s direction and staging of Equus, particularly, Shaffer explains:

> Dexter directs powerfully through suggestion. Into the theatrical spaces he contrives, flows the communal imagination of an audience. He enables it to charge the action of a play with electric life. Aesthetically, his founding
fathers are Noh Drama and Berthold Brecht: the plain plank; the clear light; the great pleasure in a set-piece. . . . he sharply dislikes effect isolated from context—but he is naturally and rightly drawn to plays which demand elaborate physical actions to complete them. The Royal Hunt of the Sun and Black Comedy, both of which he directed, are such pieces: and so is Equus. Their visual action is to me as much a part of the play as the dialogue. (iv)

While the chilling effect of Shaffer’s writing and suggested staging of Amadeus is unique to each production, (and which may sadly be lacking in some due to ineffectual direction), the impression is not lost in translation to film. When the playscript of Amadeus is translated to the filmscript, the secondary text changes from the language of the stage to the rhetoric of film to produce what the camera sees and hears and in turn wants the viewer (and in the case where the filmscript is read as literature, the reader) to experience, as this scene demonstrates:

INT. LANDING AND STAIRCASE OUTSIDE OLD SALIERI’S SALON. NIGHT. 1823. Total darkness. We hear an old man’s voice, distinct and in distress. It is OLD SALIERI. He uses a mixture of English and occasionally Italian.

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OLD SALIERI

Mozart ... Mozart ... Mozart—Forgive me! ...

Forgive your assassin! Mozart! ...

A faint light illuminates the screen. Flickeringly, we see an eighteenth century balustrade and a flight of stone stairs. We are looking down into the wall of the staircase from the point of view of the landing. Up the stairs is coming a branched candlestick held by SALIERI'S VALET. By his side is SALIERI'S COOK, bearing a large dish of sugared cakes and biscuits. Both men are desperately worried: the VALET, thin and middle-aged; the COOK, plump and Italian. It is very cold. They wear shawls over their night-dresses, and clogs on their feet. They wheeze as they climb. The candles throw their shadows up onto the peeling walls of the house, which is evidently an old one and in bad decay. A cat scuttles swiftly between their bare legs, as they reach the salon door. (1)

The main difference between the two media for the reader is that the playscript relies on the reader's imagination for completion while the filmscript leaves little to the imagination and is completed through the exact images the script conveys. Robert S. Withers, in Introduction to Film, explains how meaning is made from the
filmscript when it is read, and as it is realized in performance:

The meaning of an image derives partly from the way it is presented—that is, from the film form—partly from its own internal characteristics and partly from external references both to other images in the film and to our knowledge of other films of the world. (23)

Speaking further on how film "creates worlds" on screen through the elements of location and time, Withers adds: "The filmmaker may move a camera through an actual place in the world . . . or may compose a sequence of many separate shots, each showing a detail of the location to be created" (27). Withers further observes that "a historical time period can be suggested not only by events and actions that are located in time but by many evocative images and details: costumes, speech patterns, architecture, and customs" (27).

Amadeus as Persuasive Discourse

Critics need to recognize the presence and dynamic orchestration of these separate but interdependent and interactive texts not only for how they function dramatically, but also for how they contribute linguistically to the making of meaning. Kenneth Burke's theory of Dramatism maintains that all human activity is rhetorical by nature. Burke claims that all discourse can
be made to mean if the symbols inherent to the discourse form are translated in terms of human behavior (Traditions 113). William Irmscher restates Burke’s key elements of the Pentad, explaining that the human being “is an agent capable of action in a social setting by varying means for diverse purposes” (113). Irmscher, noting the similarity between Burke’s heuristic and the journalistic questions of who, what, where, when, why, and how, employed to explain a situation, encourages a broader application. He uses a political disagreement to demonstrate how Burke’s theory functions to explain human motivation and render multiple interpretations:

A confrontation between two nations, for example, may be at first dismissed simply as a border skirmish, but, if it is investigated in terms of the dramatistic scheme, it may then be seen as a highly complex situation involving agents, co-agents, and counteragents, indicating motives far more complex than the initial explanation. (114)

The primary and secondary texts lend themselves easily to this type of analysis because of the unlimited range of ratios Burke’s theory offers to help readers discover the relationships between the key elements.

Application of the Pentad to the primary text (what is said) reveals surface reality, while analysis of the secondary text (what is done) permits the reader to detect
ambiguities, discover dramatic irony, and unearth the natural and truthful inconsistencies often extant between language and action. Esslin clarifies this aspect and emphasizes the priority dramatic action takes over dialogue in dramatic works, when he makes the point that "when the words spoken are in contradiction to the action of the characters, they, of course, are part of the action, revealing its complexity and mixed motivation" (The Field 84).

At the opening of both the play and film, these showing and telling texts operate on the power of suggestion to prepare audiences for the shock of Salieri's eventual confession by dramatically introducing the narrative via the opening darkness of the theater and the horrific suicide attempt depicted on film.

Quite similar in purpose and effect is the opening scene of Shakespeare's Hamlet, which begins with the replacement of the guards standing watch on a platform before the castle in the bitter cold, pitch black hour of midnight. Their brief exchange of dialogue indicates the night is still, but not necessarily calm when Marcellus asks, "What, has this thing appeared again tonight?" Bernardo, first to respond, states, "I have seen nothing." Marcellus, having seen the "dreaded sight" twice, attempts to convince the disbelieving Horatio, going so far as to challenge him to speak to "it", should the ghost make yet a
third appearance. With "the bell then beating one--"the ghost enters. "Looks it not like the King?" asks Bernardo. Horatio, perhaps the victim of the power of suggestion, responds: "Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder" (Harrison 605-06). These lines, if effectively delivered in a theatrically staged atmosphere of subtle dread, arouse curiosity, create suspense, and stimulate the audience's imagination toward mutual consideration of the supposition.

The opening scenes of both Amadeus and Hamlet trigger the questions Burke's Pentad answers: Who is doing what to whom, why, when, how, and to what degree. The need to know is the key factor involved in developing exposition and manipulating response. The audience needs to understand why Salieri cries out in anguish, if the rumors are in fact true, if he is a good or evil individual, and what is going to happen to him in the end. At once, Salieri is made suspect by the whispers of the citizens.

Following Burke's Pentad, the reader first discovers the scene (the darkened theater eventually lighted to reveal the silhouetted figures of the townspeople in the Light Box). Then, the reader is simultaneously informed something is wrong by the negative association given to the words "Salieri" and "Assassin" through the intensely threatening hissing and whispering of the townspeople. The heuristic leads the reader, at this early point in the narrative, to slightly identify the act, agent, agency, and purpose.
In the filmscript, by contrast, the reader first discovers the scene made more real and complete by the presence of the candle-carrying Venticelli, who gossip as they ascend the darkened staircase to the anguished screams of their master, Salieri, depicted behind the door and collapsing in a pool of his own blood after slitting his throat.

The reader of the filmscript does not have to guess that a terrible problem exists; nor does the reader have to wait very long to discover the act, agent, agency, and purpose. Esslin explains, from the semiotic perspective, that how a performance conveys messages and how spectators make meaning by decoding the "signs and sign structures" depends on their competency with the conventions of theatrical language systems. "Drama," Esslin contends, "builds its representation of reality in a non-linear, non-systematic manner: the spectator has to be alert to pick up the basic elements of the exposition and the subsequent concatenation of events, and to integrate them into a total picture" (129). When Salieri later introduces himself to the audience in the process of recounting his version of the story, the ideally polite audience might consider the option of leaving at intermission, but would most likely remain to hear him out, to make judgments as his account unfolds, and to comply with his wishes to the last.†
In Amadeus, Salieri's ability to control response is greatly aided by the structural device of flashback and flashforward, which not only serve to move the reader and spectator through theatrical time and space as means of showing cause and effect, but also allow the dramatist to move the reader and spectator through a variety of emotions and levels of response.

Robert Scholes explains in Elements of Drama how the device of confession, which he terms "retrospection", functions dramatically: "Often during the process of action, characters will look back and survey important events which took place before the play began, and when this happens drama is again using a device of narration" (21). Beyond providing exposition, confession, as a rhetorical device, causes interaction between narrator, reader, and spectator, resulting in the kind of communication triangle that might transpire between confidantes.

Unanswered Questions:

The Search for the Disturbing Truth

The possibility of Salieri's complicity in the death of Mozart is suggested by the questions posed at the outset of the play and film, and which establish the necessary conflict or "problem" around which Amadeus revolves. These questions are posed by the Venticelli shortly into Act 1, as they gossip in response to rumors that Salieri may be
Mozart's assassin, and by Salieri himself, at the end of Act 2 when he begins his confession.

The questions posed by the twin Venticelli, "Why on earth would he do it?" and "Did he do it after all?" (6) are then deliberately reinforced at the end of scene 2, in Act 1, by the question Salieri puts to his conjured and final musical audience in the form of an announcement: "And now, gracious ladies! obliging gentlemen! I present to you—for one performance only—my last composition, entitled THE DEATH OF MOZART; OR, DID I DO IT?" (13).

These questions, while functioning to create tension and suspense, also serve a rhetorical purpose. Though they are to some extent already answered in the mind of the narrator, Salieri, and later resolved by the absolution he confirms on himself, they are left unanswered in the minds of readers and spectators, who are simply left to ponder and speculate on them as they finish reading the play or as they leave the theater. This lack of emotional closure and resolution sustains the overall disturbing effect of Salieri's confession, the plausibility of his connection to Mozart's mysterious and untimely death, and the message it sends to audiences about the deterioration of historical and traditional beliefs and values.

The effect Shaffer's deliberate use of first-person narrative confession has on audiences is complex because it sets up a relationship problem between the narrator, the
reader, the spectator, and the viewer. How the narrative is received and interpreted in each of the three contexts may cause numerous ambiguities and confuse audiences in the process of making meaning.

While the confession offered in response to these questions serves to entertain audiences on the surface level, it also forces audiences to confront these questions on a personal level—an experience that may leave them feeling uncomfortable in the process. This temporary discomfort is the result of the structure of the narrative confession, which imposes on the privacy of readers and spectators when they are put in the position of hearing an unexpected confession they are "obliged" to hear. Such is the case when Salieri appoints the audience, collectively, as his confessor:

SALIERI: [Calling to audience.]
Vi saluto! Ombri del Futuro! Antonio
Salieri--vostro servizio!
[A clock outside in the street strikes three.]
I can almost see you in your ranks--waiting for your turn to live. Ghosts of the Future! Be visible. I beg you. Be visible.
Come to this dusty old room--this time, the smallest hours of dark November, eighteen hundred and twenty-three--and be my confessors! Will you
not enter this place and stay with me till dawn? Just till dawn--smeary six o'clock! ...
[They bow, bewildered, and leave the stage. He peers hard at the audience, trying to see it.] Now, won't you appear? I need you--desperately! This is the last hour of my life. Those about to die implore you! ... What must I do to make you visible? Raise you up in the flesh to be my last, last audience? ... Does it take an Invocation? (7-9)

Of interesting and valuable contrast to the primary and secondary texts of the play is the way in which confession and the problem of how to replace the theater audience as confessors in their personal and intimate relationship with the narrator is handled in the filmscript:

INT. A CORRIDOR IN THE GENERAL HOSPITAL. VIENNA. LATE AFTERNOON. 1823. 80 PATIENTS, 5 ATTENDANTS, 5 MONKS, 5 DOGS, PROPS.
A wide, white-washed corridor. DOCTOR GULDEN is walking down it with a PRIEST, a man of about forty, concerned, but somewhat self-important. This is FATHER VOGLER, CHAPLAIN at the hospital.

... ...

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM. LATE AFTERNOON. 1823. A bare room--one of the best available in the General Hospital. It contains a bed; a table
with candles; chairs, a small forte-piano of the early nineteenth century. As VOGLER enters OLD SALIERI is sitting in a wheel-chair, looking out the window. His back is to us. The PRIEST closes the door quietly behind him.

VOGLER

Herr Salieri?

OLD SALIERI turns around to look at him. We see that his throat is bandaged expertly. He wears hospital garb, and over it the Civilian Medal and Chain with which we will later see the EMPEROR invest him.

OLD SALIERI

What do you want?

VOGLER

I am Father Vogler. I am a Chaplain here. I thought you might like to talk to someone.

OLD SALIERI

About what?

VOGLER

You tried to take your life ... You do remember that, don't you? ...

OLD SALIERI

So?
VOGLER
In the sight of God that is a sin.

OLD SALIERI
What do you want?

VOGLER
Do you understand that you have sinned,—gravely?

OLD SALIERI
Leave me alone.

VOGLER
I cannot leave alone a soul in pain.

OLD SALIERI
Do you know who I am? ... You never heard of me, did you?

VOGLER
That makes no difference. All men are equal in God's eyes.

OLD SALIERI
Are they?

VOGLER
Offer me your Confession -- I can offer you God's forgiveness. (5-6)

Then, readers, spectators, and viewers are asked to witness the events and, by psychological identification, share in the crisis of emotions, as Salieri puts them in the uncomfortable position of spiritual authorities,
confidantes, and sympathetic jurors. In response to his tragic dilemma, they immediately react intellectually and emotionally to the action as it is suggested by the text, performed on stage, and realistically relived on film. As the plot unfolds from Salieri's point of view, readers and spectators unconsciously react to the rhetorical devices inherent in the language and action of the play and the effects of the theater.

As they relive the story, Salieri's memory substituted for their own, they make judgments directed toward justification of Salieri's actions based on the realization that he acted out of desperation and as a victim of his own psychological and spiritual crisis. Of course, when the viewer observes the priest's reactions to Salieri's attitude toward the Church, his manner of recounting the events leading up Mozart's death, and how he describes the role he played in bringing about Mozart's demise, the effect of larger than life visual images combined with Mozart's music is very different from that achieved in the theater.

As a matter of convention, spectators in the theatrical setting are willing to permit themselves some degree of discernable response to the live performance. The relatively close proximity of the audience to the stage (or performance area) enables actors to hear audience members laugh or cry, to see them shift in their seats, and to detect such reactions as excitement and anticipation,
tension and discomfort, or emotional support and sympathy in response to the performance. Actors and directors use aspects of audience response to measure the success or failure of dialogue, action, and staging to achieve the desired effect. The reaction of a particular audience, or even the response of a single individual, can change the tenor of the performance.\(^2\)

This transmission of energy generated between the actors and audience creates the "magic" of live theater, an element that is crucial to the artistic success of the play. The advantage theater has over film is that the director can make changes to improve the quality of a subsequent performance, or if need be, to alter the course of the play altogether. An added benefit of live theater is that multiple productions of the same play offer a spectator a fresh performance. Unlike the film performance that remains unchanged and predictable in form and substance, the progress and eventual outcome of each new staging can only be anticipated but never an exact reproduction of the original. Because this kind of two-way communication process is impossible for viewers in the cinema to achieve, and because the once permanently released film cannot go back for improvement, their first impressions and reactions can determine immediate failure or success of a film.

These brief examples, alone, of how the texts (primary and secondary) of the play and film achieve their effects on
readers, spectators, and viewers suggest that the texts
deserve to be read, re-read and approached critically as
literature that by nature not only entertains but disturbs
and persuades as rhetorical discourse.

While the dramatic dialogue and stage directions leave
the reader and spectator somewhat intellectually and
emotionally prepared for the events they foreshadow or
introduce by means of powerful visual and auditory effects,
the overall impact reaches a greater magnitude by
actualization in theatrical performance. When translated to
the medium of film, the impact is all the more amplified by
the unlimited capabilities of film such as camera angles,
editing, and the like. The effects that the rhetoric of
film and specialized shot-by-shot and frame-by-frame
language of cinematography have on viewers are explored
later in this discussion.

Any successful translation of narrative confession
across media compels consideration of audience response.
The success Salieri's persuasive "oratory" achieves in
registering shock and raising consciousness among viewers
results from the necessary recreation of the receiver of the
narrative in the persona of the Catholic Priest, Fr. Vogler,
who not only absorbs the full impact of the confession, but
also mirrors Salieri's distinctively modern view of the
world.
Notes

1 Audience here refers to both the conjured audience of followers Salieri speaks to from the stage and to the invented audience, the priest, who replaces the theater audience in the film.

2 How audience response effects the outcome of a performance can be illustrated by what occurred during two preview performances I observed of Thomas Babe's western drama set to music, Fathers and Sons, produced in March of 1980 by the Solari Theater Ensemble in Beverly Hills, California. The play examines the father-son relationship between Wild Bill Hickok and his killer, Jack McCall, his alleged son.

The play features one particular moment of high dramatic tension sustained by suspense. Hickok, being held at gunpoint, attempts to make things right with the distraught McCall. He calls the situation the way he sees it and states point-blank: "I'd like to love ya...I'd even like to like ya...but I don't." The cold response unsettles the audience. Stung and humiliated, McCall retaliates. Hickok is tied to a chair, hoisted atop the bar, and forced to sit there while McCall, who whines about his inability to do anything right or important, puts himself, Hickok, the saloon guests, and the audience to a psychological test.

With the gun aimed at Bill's head, McCall pulls the trigger. Actors and audience wince and gasp. The trigger malfunctions. Actors and audience sigh in relief. The act is repeated and again fails. The audience becomes uncomfortable in their seats. Hickok squirms. Tension mounts as McCall tries again. The trigger clicks and fails again. By this time the dramatic tension becomes close to unbearable. Hickok squirms under the tightness of the ropes and states, "Jesus, I feel awful." The audience is fixed and solemn. McCall's final attempt is successful. Simultaneously, McCall is also shot. Hickok, barely alive, utters his last words while McCall dies sprawled against Hickok's boots. The audience is silenced by the tragic ending and sits quietly as the lights dim down and fade.

When this scene played to the second audience, the same stinging lines evoked an unexpected response—laughter and the dramatic tension broke. Then, the shift in response from drama to comedy was compounded when Hickok complained, "Jesus, I feel awful." The line exploded and sent the audience into an uproar. As a consequence, the drama of that moment and the seriousness of subsequent scenes, including the tragic final scene, took on comedic highlights. Though the response was probably less than desirable, the transfiguration actually enlivened the performance and the play became more enjoyable.
CHAPTER THREE
Salieri's Confession

Writing in "Pluralism in Postmodern Perspective," Ihab Hassan asks, "But what is postmodernism?" and simply admits to the difficulty of trying to define the term:

I can propose no rigorous definition of it, any more than I could define modernism itself. For the term has become a current signal of tendencies in theater, dance, music, art, and architecture; in literature and criticism; in philosophy, theology, psychoanalysis, and historiography; in cybernetic technologies and even in the sciences.

(17)

Rather than "theorize" about postmodernism, Hassan prefers to offer his "catena of postmodern features" he also terms "a paratactical list, staking out a cultural field" (19) to help explain how twentieth-century literary thought has become flooded with relativistic terms that often are so ambiguous that they defy definition. Hassan refers to these inventions as "indeterminacies that pervade our actions, ideas, interpretations" and that "constitute our world" (19).

Historically, the term postmodern first appears in critical discussions of the fine arts and architecture and is a catch word artists use to label their perceptions of a
fragmented postmodern society. Occasionally, the term postmodernism is used rather loosely to describe an outgrowth of expressionism. In art, architecture, philosophy, the sciences, music, literature, theater, and film of the late Twentieth Century, postmodern expression is characterized by decanonization, fragmentation, solipsism (loss of self, depthlessness), hybridization, and carnivalization—a few associative terms Hassan provides, defines, and classifies in his "catena of postmodern features" (18-22).

Hassan further points out how structural elements such as narrative confession, time shifts, and breaks with traditional convention function not only to reveal characters in search of "self," but also to comment on cultural, social, psychological and political concerns as well (16-21).

Discussing postmodern drama in terms of stylistic devices, Simard finds Shaffer typical of postmodern writers because his plays are concerned primarily "with the interior lives of his characters" (100). While much of Shaffer's work is characteristically postmodern by Hassan's definition, Simard makes the distinction that Shaffer is not a purist; rather, his plays are often a blend of traditional thought and postmodernistic expression. Simard points out that while Shaffer structures his plays and characters around the traditional external view of reality, "his
treatment of his material and the issues he chooses to dramatize are distinctly postmodern" (100).

One feature of Shaffer's plays characterizing him as atypical of most postmodern dramatists, Simard notes, is his propensity for finding within the "framework of the traditional domestic drama" (100) an opportunity to stage a non-traditional work focusing the spectator's attention on the internal relationship the character has with the self rather than the external relationship the character has with society.

Specifically clear in speeches concerning Salieri's denouncement of God and his subsequent attempt to avenge God's preference for Mozart are decanonization and solipsism. Throughout the work, the philosophical theories of decanonization, solipsism, fragmentation, and carnivalization appear in the form of irony and come to light when the audience begins to question the motivation and decision behind Salieri's confession.

The significance of confession as a literary device and its structural function in the play is heightened by Foster's view of the traditional purpose of confession based on his analysis of Augustine's Confessions:

Death is the ultimately determining event, the sign of separation from God and hence of God's presence, hidden from man by his sin. The desire to overcome the sense of separation from God is,
then, a motivation for confession, but at the same time confession will continually recall the mark of death. To expiate the sin prior to meeting God face to face would mean one loses the most evident sign of His reality. . . . Confession generates its own motivation, reassuring the confessor of his eventual return to God through a perpetual recounting of his situation as alienated sinner. 

(22-23)

That Salieri's desire for confession and absolution is not sincere is intimated by his omission to ask God's forgiveness after Mozart's mysterious death; instead, he asks for Mozart's forgiveness. Looking back to the beginning of the conflict, Salieri claims to be devout in his alliance with God; yet, when he first becomes envious and jealous of Mozart, he simply attempts to justify his actions rather than to rectify his ambivalent feelings with God through confession and repentance.

Contrary to orthodox religious principle that demands he must repent under such circumstances, Salieri takes the opposite stance and inconceivably declares war on the very God he has, to this point, devoutly served. In the following soliloquy, decanonization (the devaluation of sanctification or elevation of principle by religious decree) surfaces not only in content, but also in form with Shaffer's deliberate capitalization of "Your" in reference
to God. The device, conveyed through the dialogue of the primary text, is also reinforced by the powerful imagery working in tandem through the secondary text, as these lines from the playscript demonstrate:

Him you have chosen to be Your sole conduct! And my only reward—my sublime privilege—is to be the sole man alive in this time who shall clearly recognize Your Incarnation! [Savagely] Grazie e grazie ancora! [Pause] So be it! From this time we are enemies, You and I! I'll not accept it from You—do you hear? ... They Say God is not mocked. I tell You, Man is not mocked! ... I am not mocked! ... They say the spirit bloweth where it listeth. I tell You NO! It must list to virtue or not blow at all! [Yelling] Dio ingiusto--You are the Enemy! I name Thee now--Nemico Eterno! And this I swear: To my last breath I shall block You, on earth, as far as I am able!... When I return, I'll tell you about the war I fought with God through His preferred Creature--Mozart, named Amadeus. In the waging of which, of course, the Creature had to be destroyed. (74-75)

The irony of the situation surfaces when Mozart's death does not prove victory for Salieri in his war with God, but
instead sentences him to a living hell, painfully and frequently reminding him of his own mediocrity.

Salieri's attempt to take his own life as a way out is just one more horrendous offense in the eyes of God or the Church and a guarantee against redemption if Salieri does not make peace officially through the Church. Salieri deliberately chooses not to make an effort to restore his relationship with God through the act of confession. Such defiance of religious convention is enlarged and underscored in the filmscript and especially in the film performance when the conjured theatrical audience is replaced with a real confessor who receives the narratee in the character of Fr. Vogler. Appropriately, Fr. Vogler assumes Salieri has requested his visit and implores Salieri to confess following the suicide attempt. The dramatic irony of the situation is more forcefully conveyed via the camera as the objective observer. Shaffer and Forman show more than tell by indicating Fr. Vogler's request is simply met with "a look of extreme innocence" (8) when Salieri finally responds.

Salieri's indifference to the priest further indicates no desire to honor this representative of the Catholic Church at either the beginning of Salieri's confession to the priest or at the end when the priest is simply too overcome with grief and remorse to perform the ritual and
confirm the absolution, thus allowing Salieri the opportunity to do it himself:

OLD SALIERI

Goodbye, Father. I'll speak for you. I speak for all mediocrities in the world. I am their champion. I am their Patron Saint. On their behalf I deny Him, your God of NO Mercy. Your God who tortures men with longings they can never fulfill. He may forgive me: I shall never forgive Him. . . . Mediocrities everywhere -- now and to come -- I absolve you all! ... Amen! ... Amen!

Finally, he turns full-face to the camera and blesses us, the audience, making the Sign of the Cross. Underneath we hear stealing in and growing louder, the tremendous Masonic Funeral Music of MOZART. (164-65)

The playscript, as well as the filmscript, also indicates that Salieri does not desire to enlist the service of an officer of the Church to act as confessor; however, he does make known his desperate need to seek forgiveness and absolution in the opening scene and carries out the self-proclaimed absolution in the closing scene of the play.

The act of elevating himself to the level of Patron Saint not only shows Salieri's flagrant disregard for the role of the Church in preserving and restoring harmony and
grace to the relationship between himself and God, but also suggests that essentially anyone can elevate himself or herself to the role of an officer of the Church simply by saying the right words and making the Sign of the Cross:

SALIERI

Mediocrities everywhere -- now and to come --
I absolve you all. Amen!

He extends his arms upward and outward to embrace the audience in a wide gesture of benediction -- finally folding his arms high across his own breast in a gesture of self-sanctification. (152)

These scenes are capable of disturbing audiences who are especially sensitive to how religious themes and values are treated in literature and film. About the presence of religious ritual in drama, Charles Meister writes:

So deeply rooted in human nature is the mimetic urge that no society has been known that did not employ drama in some form. At its best, of course, drama often merges with religion to represent sacred themes or to help preserve traditional values. (vi)

Shaffer's use of ritual and religion in Amadeus, however, is not a strictly postmodern quality. Shaffer's exploration of sacred themes functions to criticize the role of religious authority and traditional values rather than to preserve or
defend them. Writing on Amadeus in Modern British Literature, Joan F. Dean states:

The failure of modern society to provide a constructive vehicle for man's religious impulses and need for ritualistic worship, the decrepitude of western religion, and the resultant fragmentation of personality form an important thematic nexus among Shaffer's recent work. (476)

Underlying first-person narrative confession is Shaffer's use of the narratee, another fictive construct employed specifically throughout the dramatic narrative to engage the audience in self-examination. By means of this device, explained by Gerald Prince in "Introduction to the Study of the Narratee" and reserved for later discussion, the reader takes on the role of the narratee, or receiver of the narrative, who knows only what the narrator discloses.

Acting in the capacity of the narratee and in turn assuming the role of confessor, the reader is ultimately brought to shoulder the burden of guilt for Mozart's untimely death and the repercussive demise of classical music in this century.

More striking than any other feature of Amadeus is the use of first-person narrative confession; however, in terms of controlling audience response, the device creates particular problems in the relationship the narrator has with the reader, spectator, and viewer. That problem of
manipulating response first emerges when Shaffer permits the narrator, in the character of Antonio Salieri, to approach the edge of the stage, order the house lights up full, and speak directly to the real theater audience.

This break with theatrical convention puts the audience in the uncomfortable and unexpected position of suddenly being seen by others and exposed as vulnerable to the actor-narrator’s control. And the break most certainly forces the audience to align themselves with the narrator as Salieri’s confessor. Gerald Prince, writing in "Introduction to the Study of the Narratee," explains that this literary technique is easily recognizable by "signals" from the author to the reader in the form of references to the second person "you" or "dear reader," to indicate the presence of the narratee (13).

The purpose of the construct of the narratee, Prince explains, is to function as the receiver of the narrative and gradually to give the reader clues about the identity and character of the narrator until a "profile" of the narratee as an informed source on the subject of discussion begins to emerge. How the narrator addresses the narratee provides clues and relates details about the personality, background, and attitude of the narrator, thus offering the reader yet another way to interpret the text and to "make meaning" (9-11).
An understanding of how postmodern dramatists employ various literary devices, including classical Aristotelian shock and violence to evoke emotional and intellectual responses from the audience, is critical to discovering what Amadeus as dramatic discourse means. Equally important is how this knowledge enables the reader, spectator, and viewer to ascertain what this play written in the form of narrative confession does to audiences.

Comprehensively, narrative confession functions dramatically in Amadeus to control the narrator-audience situation to move the audience toward a specific interpretation and desired intellectual and emotional response. However, the normally fictive device poses a problem in the adaptation process when the play is translated to the screen and subjected to the extensive artistic and rhetorical expression film can achieve.

Of prime importance to this discussion is how Shaffer resolves the dilemma of controlling audience response when the narrative moves from the closely controlled and intimate environment of the theater to the "larger than life" and impersonal environment of the film audience.

That Amadeus disturbs spectators and viewers alike results directly from Shaffer's experimentation with, and incorporation of, a variety of fictive devices into his dramatic works to achieve effect. In Amadeus, Shaffer capitalizes on narrative confession to achieve the
disturbing effect. Pertinent to Shaffer's preference for non-traditional use of confession is an absorbing and fascinating definition by Joseph T. Shipley, identifying confession as "a type of autobiography, sometimes honestly intended, sometimes painting the portrait one would like posterity to hold" (62). Shipley's definition of the anti-hero may serve to elucidates Shaffer's use of the device:

The confessional anti-hero introduces himself as afflicted, disillusioned, groping for meaning in a dark and brutal world. He may embrace pain and trouble as a way of being aware he is alive. He turns from rebellion to self-laceration, in search of self-understanding—though he may ultimately question the possibility of self-knowledge. (63)

This definition closely fits Shaffer's characterization of Salieri and accurately reflects the content and aim of Salieri's first dialogue with the audience that opens scene 2 of Act 1. That he is "afflicted" is indicated by the preceding stage directions that serve further to describe Salieri, as well as to prepare the reader and spectator for Salieri's introduction:

[The VENTICELLI go off. The VALET and the COOK remain, on either side of the stage. SALIERI swivels his wheelchair around and stares at us. We see a man of seventy in an old stained dressing
gown. He rises and squints at the audience, as if trying to see it.] (7)

That Salieri is "disillusioned, groping for meaning in a dark and brutal world," and that he "may embrace pain and trouble as a way of being aware he is alive" are evidenced in his opening lines of dialogue, prefaced by and interwoven with stage directions:

SALIERI
[Calling to audience]. Vi saluto! Ombri del Futuro! Antonio Salieri— a vostro servizio! [A clock outside in the street strikes three.] I can almost see you in your ranks—waiting for your turn to live. Ghosts of the Future! Be visible. I beg you. Be visible. Come to this dusty old room—this time, the smallest hours of dark November, eighteen hundred and twenty-three— and be my confessors! Will you not enter this place and stay with me till dawn? Just till dawn— smeary six o'clock! (8)

Shipley's definition of a confession as being one made up of "what he'd not tell even his friends," and one in which "its value springs from the intensity of his inner life," can be applied to the lines that follow after Salieri has ordered his servants to leave the room:

[They bow, bewildered, and leave the stage. He peers hard at the audience, trying to see it.]
Now, won't you appear? I need you—desperately! This is the last hour of my life. Those about to die implore you! What must I do to make you visible? Raise you up in the flesh to be my last, last audience? ... Does it take an invocation? ... 

Appear with what sympathy incarnation may endow you! Appear you: The yet to be born! The yet to hate! The yet to kill! Appear ... posterity!

Finally, that Salieri "turns from rebellion to self-laceration in search of self-understanding" is what the audience expects to read and see, for such a state of humility would be in keeping with the principles of Confession in accordance with the Church of that time.

Instead, and shockingly, Salieri is not the least bit remorseful or even guilty for his now-confessed insidious contribution to Mozart's death. In a further attempt to decanonize the Church as the leading authority over the morals and values of society, and to claim victory for the self, Shaffer takes a final jab at religious doctrine while Salieri gets even with God during the final moments of the play.

In the following soliloquy, Salieri confidently pontificates on the subject of how he will attempt to outsmart God by inventing a false confession that will
lessen the degree and nature of the mental anguish God has inflicted on him in punishment for his sins against God and Mozart. By waving this false statement in the face of the Church and society, Salieri openly devalues the sanctity of Confession, denounces the Church's influence over his decisions to act in ways unfavorable in the eyes of God, elevates himself to a position of supremacy that is equal to that of God and the Church, and thus commits blasphemy:

SALIERI

[To audience].

Dawn has come. I must release you--and myself. One moment's violence and it's done. You see, I cannot accept this. I did not live on earth to be His joke for eternity. I will be remembered! I will be remembered!--if not in fame, then infamy. One moment more and I win my battle with Him. Watch and see! ... all this month I've been shouting about murder. "Have mercy, Mozart! Pardon your Assassin!" ... And now my last move. A false confession--short and convincing! [He pulls it out of his pocket.] How I really did murder Mozart!--with arsenic--out of envy! And how I cannot live another day under the knowledge! By tonight they'll hear out there how I died--and they'll believe it's true! ... Let them forget me then. For the rest of time whenever men say
Mozart with love, they will say Salieri with loathing! ... I am getting to be immortal after all! And He is powerless to prevent it. [To God] So, Signore--see now if man is mocked! (148-49)

Probably nowhere else in the play is the hold Salieri's confession has over the audience so marked as it is here, for at this point the confessors are made to feel powerless and repelled by being made accomplices in his blasphemy and heresy. Salieri is beyond their need for compassion now, and beyond redemption, even salvation.

In his speech of self-righteous indignation, Salieri denounces the faith, trust, and obedience with which he once served God. Out of jealousy, envy, and anger, Salieri challenges the validity of God's promise of immortality, denies God's promise of unconditional and eternal love, and declares the self to be all humankind needs to leave this earthly life in the holy state of Grace:

SALIERI

Amici cari. I was born a pair of ears and nothing else. It is only through hearing music that I know God exists. Only through writing music that I could worship ... all around me men seek liberty for mankind. I sought only slavery for myself. To be owned--ordered--exhausted by an Absolute. Music. This was denied me, and with it all meaning. [He opens the razor.] Now I go to become
a ghost myself. I will stand in the shadows when
you come here to this earth in your turns. And
when you feel the dreadful bite of your
failures—and hear the taunting of unachievable,
uncaring God—I will whisper my name to you:
"Salieri: Patron Saint of Mediocrities!" And in
the depth of your downcastness you can pray to me.
And I will forgive you. Vi saluto. (150)

The effect the strong language and powerful imagery of
Salieri's final declaration of independence and remorseless
detachment achieves is that Shaffer successfully leaves the
reader and spectator with a sense of unreality, disbelief,
and loss. Feelings of powerlessness are magnified when the
scene is realized on film, and given the added benefit of
coming between two very mournful scenes depicting the
circumstances of Mozart's burial in the "drizzle of rain
that has now become heavy" (162).

The power of confession as a form of rhetorical
discourse becomes more pronounced when Salieri's confession
is translated from the figurative language of the stage to
the cinematic language of film. The effects of the
confession on both Salieri and Fr. Vogler are heard in the
compelling dialogue and seen in the strongly drawn visual
images that constitute the scene between the emotionally
distraught Salieri and the grieved confessor:
INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM. MORNING. 1823.

Morning light fills the room. OLD SALIERI sits weeping convulsively, as the music stops. Tears stream down his face. VOGLER watches him, amazed.

VOGLER
Why? ... Why? ... Why? ... Why add to your misery by confessing to murder? You didn't kill him!

SALIERI
I did.

VOGLER
No--you didn't!

SALIERI
I poisioned his life.

VOGLER
But not his body!

SALIERI
What difference does that make?

VOGLER
My son -- why should you want all Vienna to believe you a murderer? Is that your penitence? Is it?

SALIERI
No, Father ... From now on no one will be able to speak of Mozart without thinking of
me. Whenever they say Mozart with love, they'll have to say Salieri -- with loathing! ... And that's my immortality -- at last! Our names will be tied together for eternity -- his in fame -- mine in infamy! ... At least it's better than the total oblivion He'd planned for me -- your merciful God! (162-63)

The effect of the confession, in all its anger and bitterness, is best realized when we look at what a confession is and does and think about what might have happened if Salieri had not chosen to unburden himself by this means. What good is a confession that is never read, heard, seen, or felt by another? What good is a confession if it is not delivered to a listener who has the capacity to listen without interjection of judgment, without the capacity to imagine the speaker's reality, without the capacity to take the speaker's emotional pain to heart, and without the capacity to offer some sort of sympathy? What value is derived from a confession that "falls on deaf ears"?

At the heart of the personal confession is one's need to relieve oneself of the burden of guilt--or some unwanted secret that if known can change the state of affairs for one or many and alter the course of lives. The personal confession is a powerful instrument of communication,
begging to be heard, seen, felt, and shared—relying solely on the listener's response for its own success.

How Salieri's confession is delivered in the play and playscript, film and filmscript is important to measuring the device's overall effectiveness on the reader, spectator, and viewer. In the interest of the interactive relationship between the "texts" (primary and secondary), the choice of highly descriptive words and images conveyed by the camera directions should not be overlooked as discourse that is in and of itself powerful.

With these questions and observations in mind we can gain a clearer understanding of the combined effort of Shaffer and Forman to blend their particular writing skills and perceptions of human emotional response to create both written and visual discourse predictably disturbing the reader, spectator, and viewer as the dialogue between Salieri and Fr. Vogler continues:

VOGLER
Oh my son -- My poor son!

SALIERI
Don't pity me! Pity yourself! ... You serve a wicked God. He killed Mozart, not I. Took him! Snatched him away, without pity! ... He destroyed His beloved -- rather than let a mediocrity like me get the smallest share in his glory. ... He doesn't care. Understand
that! ... God cares nothing for the man He
denies -- and nothing either for the man He
uses. He broke Mozart in half when He'd
finished with him, -- and threw him away.
Like an old, worn out ... flute. (163)
The real shock of Mozart's death and Salieri's lack of
remorse in his unconscionable confession is heightened by
the scene that immediately follows:

EXT. THE CEMETERY OF ST. MARKS. LATE AFTERNOON.
1790s 1 PRIEST, 2 GRAVEDIGGERS, 2 CARTDRIVERS, 2
BOY ACOLYTES. The rain has eased off. A LOCAL
PRIEST with TWO BOY ACOLYTES is standing beside an
open communal grave. MOZART'S body is lifted out
of the cheap pine box in a sack. We see that the
grave contains twenty other such sacks. The
GRAVEDIGGER throws the one containing MOZART
amongst the others. An ASSISTANT pours quick-lime
over the whole pile of them. The ACOLYTES swing
their censers.

THE LOCAL PRIEST
The Lord giveth! The Lord taketh away!
Blessed be the name of the Lord! (163)

When the formal diction and elevated language of the
theater is translated to the less formal, more auditory and
visual language of the film, the words and pictures impact
sharply on the viewer, who becomes a third party to the
conflict and can objectively observe Salieri's interaction with the Priest and a hospital attendant:

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM. MORNING 1823.

OLD SALIERI
Why did He do it? ... Why didn't He kill me?
... I had no value! ... What was the use, keeping me alive for thirty-two years of torture! Thirty-two years of honours and awards --

He tears off the CIVILIAN MEDAL AND CHAIN with which the EMPEROR invested him. . . . and throws it across the room.

OLD SALIERI (cont'd)
-- being bowed to and saluted -- called "distinguished!" -- "Distinguished Salieri!"
-- by men incapable of distinguishing!
Thirty-two years of meaningless fame to end up alone in my room, watching myself become extinct! My music growing fainter, all the time fainter, -- till no one plays it at all -- and his growing louder! Filling the world with wonder! -- and everyone who loves my sacred art crying, "Mozart! ... Bless you, Mozart!"

The door opens. An ATTENDANT comes in, cheerful and hearty.
ATTENDANT
Good morning, Professor! Time for the water closet ... And then we've got your favorite breakfast for you! Sugar-rolls. (to VOGLER) He loves those! Fresh sugar-rolls! ...

SALIERI ignores him and stares only at the PRIEST--who stares back.

OLD SALIERI
Goodbye, Father. I'll speak for you. I speak for all mediocrities in the world. I am their Champion. I am their Patron Saint. On their behalf I deny Him, your God of No Mercy. Your God who tortures men with longings they can never fulfill. He may forgive me: I shall never forgive Him.

He signs to the ATTENDANT, who wheels him in his chair out of the room. The PRIEST stares after him. (164-65)

The effect of Salieri's confession is reflected on the face of Fr. Vogler in the form of a silent stare; the shock renders the priest speechless. Again, feelings of powerlessness pervade Shaffer's language and prevail to disturb audiences by transcending the forcefulness of theatrical expression and exploding potently via the rhetoric of film.
Perhaps in no other scene is effect on audience more pronounced than in the final scene, which so prominently relies on un-lovely, grotesque visual images juxtaposed against the strains of the extraordinarily beautiful music to magnify the pointless and everlasting waste:

INT. THE CORRIDOR OF THE HOSPITAL. MORNING. 1823. The corridor is filled with patients in white linen smocks, all taking their morning exercise walk in the care of NURSES and NUNS. They form a long, wretched, strange procession — some of them are clearly very disturbed. As OLD SALIERI is pushed through them in his wheelchair, he lifts his hands to them in benediction.

OLD SALIERI

Medicrities everywhere — now and to come — I absolve you all! ... Amen! ... Amen ...

Amen! (165)

Finally, he turns full-face to the camera and blesses us, the audience, making the Sign of the Cross. Underneath we hear stealing in and growing louder, the tremendous Masonic Funeral Music of MOZART (165).

These astutely orchestrated rhetorical devices have a profound effect on the audience and accomplish a threefold task: on the surface, they invite the audience to reconsider views, impressions, or opinions formerly held of Mozart. On the cognizant level, the devices impel the
audience to internalize the reality of being potential "victims" of psychological, emotional, and spiritual conflicts and to identify with Salieri as one simply forced out of control for the sake of survival. Ultimately, Amadeus effects change by compelling audiences to re-assess the relevance of Mozart’s incomparable musical legacy.

While a great deal of criticism is devoted to reader-response and audience response, little is said of the convergence of reader-response with the "act" of reading itself—the reading process and what that process has to do with the act of composing in any form of written, spoken, or performed discourse.

Communication occurs when audiences engage in this process. Communication is not fully achieved until the sender and receiver agree on perception of the form, recognize and accept the language codes, are willing to act and react as part of the communication process (predict, confirm, associate, and assimilate by means of translating and interpreting to derive meaning), and then to arrive at mutual understanding.

J. L. Styan hints that "dramatic communication" does not merely end with translation, interpretation, and response when he states in Drama, Stage, and Audience:

A study of the passage of signals and responses in theater, like that of semantics, cybernetics, or any other system of communication, must be
descriptive before it is prescriptive. The activity is alive and organic, constantly escaping our vigilance. (26)

Criticism should not stop with discovering what the text means but must continue to explore how the script, stage, and performance, realized in performance or examined as separate forms of dramatic discourse, interact with audiences to create meaning.
Dramatic literature deserves serious criticism as a form of discourse extending in rhetorical impact far beyond realization in theatrical or film performance. Critics may argue that the playscript and filmscript are written to be performed, but the unique powers of the scripts to elicit strong intellectual and emotional responses from readers qualify them as effective forms of discourse worthy of more critical/scholarly investigation.

Drama has historically existed as a universal form of entertainment and instruction. Why a writer elects drama as the form of discourse for a particular idea is addressed by James Moffett in Teaching the Universe of Discourse: "One reason an author works in the dramatic medium is that he wants the deeds he has invented to hit us at the same 'gut' level that actualities do" (62). Elucidating the power of dramatic discourse as a means of conveying a message, Moffett adds:

A play of course only pretends to be raw, unabstracted phenomena; actually it is a highly sophisticated conceptual creation. Characters, settings, words and deeds are carefully selected and patterned . . . so in this sense a play is very abstract. Characters tend to be
representative, the actions symbolic, the words and deeds significant. By selecting and shaping, the artist abstracts reality into forms that mean something to the audience. The impact of a play is dependent on some resonance between what is happening on stage and what has happened in the life of the spectator. (63)

Moffett's explanation of how dramatic impact is achieved and meaning is made is clarified when he points out that none of us needs to be a king or a murderer to identify with feelings of betrayal, guilt, and need for acquittance when we are spectators of a revenge tragedy. Quite apart from Aristotle's belief that tragedy must be concerned with the dramatic imitation of an "action of high importance," the modern tragedy still features evil, long suffering, and death or spiritual crush of the tragic hero but does not require audiences to seek redemption in response to human failing (Barnet 832).

Kenneth Cameron and Theodore Hoffman, in "The Critical Analysis of Drama: Drama as Narrative," draw on the concepts of structuralism and semiotics as means of explaining how structured systems of signs and symbols convey shared meanings within a cultural community receiving the discourse. The spectator sees the dramatic action, hears the dialogue, and perceives the signs and symbols
inherent in visual and auditory effects as the dramatic narrative unfolds (207).

In this instance, the spectator is simultaneously being manipulated by "symbolic discourse"—a system of visual and auditory signs and symbols selected and patterned to elicit a specific type and level of intellectual and emotional response from the spectator (207).

Cameron and Hoffman argue the need for criticism to be more seriously and consistently aimed toward this form and power of discourse, adding: "There is much more to theater than stories . . . it is theater as a discursive form, more than as mere narrative that criticism must learn to describe" (207). The power and impact Amadeus achieves on stage, film, and as literary discourse lie not only with what Shaffer tells and shows outwardly through the dramatization of the narrative, but also in what is implied beneath the surface when the dramatic action and dialogue are heightened by theatrical and film effects designed and executed to elicit specific intellectual and emotional responses from the reader, spectator, and viewer. J. L. Styan describes the theater experience as circular, one in which "the actor interprets and the audience responds: everyone contributes to the performance" (4).

The audience identity shift from spectator to viewer sets up the problem of measuring audience response because the personal actor-audience rapport observable in the live
theater is virtually non-existent in the context of film where two-way mental and physical interaction is impossible.

The process of adaptation initiates a writing problem because confession is a personal act of self-disclosure and relies on a sympathetic audience in order to bring about feelings of guilt, remorse, and the hoped for sense of relief or comfort that confession is supposed to bring from an intimately involved observant listener as audience.

The adaptation of Amadeus the first-person dramatic narrative implies answering the following compositional questions:

1. Should the camera focus on the faces of the listener(s) as it responds to the narrator's personal story, or should the element of first-person narrative be replaced by a more conventional device?
2. Would such a situation of "us" watching "him" telling "them" and "us" observing "him" and "them" simultaneously bring about a high level of intellectual and emotional response from the viewing audience?
3. How should the setting of the narrative be expanded to serve the unlimited artistic capabilities of film?
4. Can the basic structures and elements of composition remain intact when the receiver of the
narrative becomes a camera that interprets for the viewer?

5. Will the effect of the rhetorical language in the play be lost or enhanced in translation in the same way much of the poetic language and rhetorical effect of Shakespeare is lost when his dramatic works are subjected to this process?

6. How closely will the primary and secondary texts of the play translate into effective on-screen dialogue and camera directions?

7. How will this translation from the context of the theater to the medium of film influence the overall interpretation?

In *Film: A Montage of Theories*, Richard Dyer MacCann states that:

the heart of any film is its contact with life, its concern with humanity, connecting creator and audience. The great film-maker uses his knowledge of technical tools with respect, understanding, and an "iron heel." Because he is concerned with humanity, not with pure theory, he presses hard against the limitations of his art. He makes them work in his favor. He has something to tell us that finds the film a congenial medium but ultimately transcends the medium. The artist who
shows us the human condition shows us the true transparency of film. (19-20)

In 1936 Allardyce Nicoll suggested in "Film Reality: The Cinema and the Theatre" that the difference between theater and film in terms of what the audience experiences is that theater "stands for mankind" while cinema "stands for the individual" (113). Nicoll contends that while theater audiences recognize and accept stage characters as unreal "types speaking lines" who do succeed in challenging mankind "within the dramatic realm," film audiences "impute greater power of individual life to the figures we see on the screen" (113). Acknowledging this attribute of film, Nicoll does not downplay the capabilities of theater, reminding us that "the greatest playwrights have always aimed at presenting human personality in bold theatric terms" and Shakespeare’s Hamlet lives "because in Hamlet there are bits of all men; he is a composite character whose lineaments are determined by dramatic necessity, and through that he lives" (115).

Though a staunch proponent and monolithic scholar of theater, Nicoll concedes to film’s capabilities for recreating life more realistically and thus effecting response that is of greater magnitude. Given the freedom film has to move audiences through time, space, location, and situation without the limitations peculiar to the theater, film profoundly shapes and controls audience
response in ways theater cannot. To clarifying this aspect of film as a more truthful and credible medium of expression, Nicoll asserts:

What we have witnessed on the screen becomes the "real" for us. In moments of sanity, maybe, we confess that . . . we do not believe this or that, but, under the spell again, we credit the truth of these pictures even as, for all our professed superiority, we credit the truth of newspaper paragraphs. (116)

In a discussion of two major contextual and structural differences between the mediums, C. J. Gianakaris asserts that "motion pictures are primarily (not exclusively) a visual medium; theatre is primarily (not exclusively) verbal, hence largely metaphoric" (85). He calls on realist critics such as Panofsky, Kracauer, and Bazin, to explain that film's "natural zone of greatest effectiveness involves that part of the physical world that can be seen and known phenomenologically" (86). Gianakaris maintains that the strength of live theatrical performance lies in its ability to represent reality as it might be. He acknowledges film's power to present reality as it actually is via the presentational quality of photographic imaging and adds, "Its force lies within the realm of thought and speculation--the 'what if's of life'" (86).
In Gianakaris' view, these major differences caused the translation of *Amadeus* from stage to film to be an enormously difficult task for Shaffer and Forman. Shaffer's plays rewritten for film (*The Royal Hunt of the Sun* and *Equus*) are described by Gianakaris as "cinematic misfortunes" because of the changes made in response to the demands of film, philosophically and technically (86). Kevin Thomas opens his *Los Angeles Times* review of *Equus* on that point:

One of the most crucial decisions any artist has to make is determining how much to leave to the imagination--especially in the ultrarealistic medium of film. Sidney Lumet's decision to portray the blinding of the horses at the climax . . . as graphically as he has is likely to be debated hotly by viewers, especially those who admired the play in which the blinding of necessity had to be presented in stylized fashion. Doubtlessly, it can and will be argued that the literalness is essential to the drama's meaning and catharsis; however, the horrifying effect of the blinding might well have been even more powerful had we been allowed to complete it in our imagination. (58)

Gianakaris describes how Forman held out for two years in his efforts to persuade Shaffer to collaborate on
Amadeus, and, that after four months of "hard and trying work," Shaffer confided in correspondence with Gianakaris on the subject that "so far there's not one scene from the play in the film!" (88). The process of adaptation required Shaffer to reconceive and reconstruct in terms of structure, language, and style, notes Gianakaris:

For Shaffer, it eventually became clear, the Amadeus film would provide a challenge for expressing his interrelated concepts about Mozart, music, creative genius, and metaphysics in another new format. (88-89)

Overall, Gianakaris concludes that "Shaffer's most striking and effective technique was to steep the film in great quantities of Mozart's own music on screen and in the background, via the sound track" (90). Shaffer's decision to center the film on Mozart's music is attributed to a lifelong love of music and an unfulfilled dream to perform as a concert artist, his prized collection of Mozart's letters, and his belief in the "transcendent values he knew existed in musical art" (91).

In Henry Kamm's New York Times article, "Milos Forman Takes His Cameras and Amadeus to Prague," Shaffer states, "What I wanted to emerge clearly from the play is the obsession of a man, Salieri . . . with finding an absolute in music" (92). Kamm also reveals that Shaffer preferred to
think of the new project as "a parallel work" rather than an adaptation (92).

With the translations from stage to film came a natural avenue for Mozart's music to act as perhaps the most influential of all the rhetorical forces at work on the intellect and emotions in the film. To explain Shaffer's concept that Mozart's music could accomplish several important tasks related to theme and effect, Gianakaris states, "Through music Shaffer hoped to help movie audiences understand what it was in Mozart's music that became Salieri's ideal as well as his torment" (92).

The importance to Shaffer of viewer as active listener throughout the film is an interesting aspect that few critics address in their reviews and critical commentaries. Gianakaris, as a more informed critic and a scholar of dramatic theory, who is also concerned with dramatic structure and effect, focuses on the inclusion of Mozart's music as an element that clearly functions beyond the level of enhancement or entertainment. In his discussion of conceptual differences that arose between Shaffer and Forman during the adaptation process, he states:

With so much of Mozart's music playing on the sound track, and with samples of Salieri's music, as well, Shaffer intended that audiences should actually hear a contrast between Mozart's voice and the conventional musical sounds of the era.
Thus, people attending the movie could draw their own conclusions concerning the musical tastes of Mozart's day which reflected disapproval of his daring, threatening tonalities and musical forms. (92)

To illustrate the differences between stage and film performance conventions, Gianakaris provides an insightful glimpse into Forman's concept of Shaffer's original characterizations of Mozart and Salieri, as well as Forman's reason for agreeing to use Mozart's music so extensively when he observes, "Forman envisioned a Mozart figure portrayed as more sympathetic in the film than he was shown in the theatre" (92).

Shaffer and Forman had their differences about how audiences perceive and react to characters and actions presented in the different performance contexts. Gianakaris points out that "Forman also wanted Mozart positioned more prominently in the action," and he quotes Forman as saying in Kamm's article, "The portrait of Mozart in the film will be more balanced. We are trying to show more a drama of a man who, without knowing it, is destroying himself" (92). In response to Forman's view, Gianakaris credits Shaffer for agreeing with Forman's perception "at least on cinematic grounds" (92).

Turning again to Kamm's interview with Shaffer, Gianakaris purports that both Shaffer and Forman agreed to
treat Mozart as "a more ordinary, rather childish man," and
that "His marriage and his relations with his father are
treated in a more detailed way" (92). The relevance of film
reality and effect of characterization on audience are
amplified when Shaffer states, "We had to humanize him and
make him a more rounded character. This is sensible because
of the literalness of the camera" (92).

Critics of Amadeus on stage and film have offered much
in the way of negative and positive criticism concerning the
effect Mozart’s compositions achieve. How Mozart’s music
extends and enhances the altered characterization of Mozart
and helps strengthen the overall impact Amadeus achieves on
the viewer is precisely expressed by Gianakaris:

Mozart’s own compositions, played throughout the
film, help to keep attention on him at all times,
while also providing a shocking contrast between
the "voice of God" and the "obscene child"—both
of course being the single person, Mozart. (92)

Most often the musical score is composed around the
theme, dramatic action, and structure of the film. In the
case of Amadeus music was given the highest priority. The
actual musical heritage of Mozart not only provides the
needed background music for the film, but, in Gianakaris’
view, "reinforces our awareness of Mozart’s unsurpassed
genius at composition" (94).
The way the score punctuates, connects, and illustrates cause and effect in the various character relationships occurs perhaps with greater subtlety. Scenes 63 and 64 of the filmscript involve the impulsively arranged and quickly conducted marriage of Wolfgang to Constanze despite Leopold Mozart’s written request that his son "Take no further steps" toward the marriage until he can get to Vienna (47).

The camera directions tell the reader what will be seen and heard simultaneously: the wedding in progress even as Leopold urgently pens his orders, Wolfgang and Constanze’s shared joy at triumphantly carrying out their own wishes, and Leopold’s angry response while reading Wolfgang’s letter informing him, "Most beloved father -- it is done" (48).

The music, highlighting the dramatic spectacle of the moment, also acts rhetorically by reinforcing Wolfgang’s triumph and by underscoring Leopold’s great dismay and fatherly remorse as the primary and secondary texts of the filmscript demonstrate:

PRIEST

I now pronounce you man and wife.

The opening kyrie of the great C Minor Mass is heard. MOZART and CONSTANZE kiss. They are in tears. MADAME WEBER and her daughters look on approvingly. The music swells and continues under the following:
INT. A ROOM IN LEOPOLD'S HOUSE. SALZBURG.
NIGHT. 1780's.
VIEW OF CASTLE IN BACKGROUND. LEOPOLD sits alone in his room. He is reading a letter from WOLFGANG. At his feet are his trunks, half-packed for the journey he will not now take. We hear MOZART's voice reading the following letter -- and we see, as the camera roves around the room, mementos of the young prodigy's early life: the little forte-piano made for him; the little violin made for him; an Order presented to him. We see a little starling in a wicker cage. And we see portraits of the boy on the walls -- concluding with the familiar FAMILY PORTRAIT of WOLFGANG and his sister, NANNERL, seated at the keyboard with LEOPOLD standing, and the picture of the MOTHER--on the wall behind them.

MOZART (VO)
Most beloved father -- it is done. Do not blame me that I did not wait to see your dear face. I knew you would have tried to dissuade me from my truest happiness -- and I could not have borne it. Your every word is precious to me. She is wonderful, Papa, and I know that you will love her. And one day soon when I am a wealthy man, you will come
and live with us, and we will be so happy! I long for that day, best of Papas, and kiss your hand a hundred thousand times!

The music of the Mass fades as LEOPOLD crumples the letter in his hand. (48)

An even more striking and profoundly powerful example of how Shaffer maximizes Mozart's original compositions to achieve rhetorical effect appears in Scene 70 when Salieri finally brings himself to look on Mozart's manuscripts in the portfolio Constanze has brought him as "samples" of Mozart's qualifications for the "royal appointment" (53).

At the exact moment we see and share in the experience of the young Salieri's revelation, we also hear the voice of Old Salieri retelling the incident in great detail to Fr. Vogler:

INT. THE SALON IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT. LATE AFTERNOON. 1780's. C.U. The manuscript in MOZART's handwriting. The music begins to sound under the following:

OLD SALIERI (VO)
Displace one note and there would be diminishment. Displace one phrase, and the structure would fall! ... It was clear to me. That sound I had heard in the Archbishop's Palace had been no accident! Here again was the very voice of God! ... I was staring
through the cage of those meticulous
ink-strokes -- at an absolute, inimitable
beauty!

The music swells. What we now hear is an amazing
collage of great passages from MOZART'S music,
ravishing to SALIERI and to us. The COURT
COMPOSER -- oblivious to CONSTANZE, who sits
happily chewing chestnuts, her mouth covered in
sugar -- walks 'round his Salon, reading the pages
and dropping them on the floor when he is done
with them. We see his agonized and wondering
face: he shudders as if in a rough and tumbling
sea; he experiences the point where beauty and
great pain coalesce. More pages fall than he can
read, scattering across the floor in a white
cascade, as he circles the room. Finally we hear
a tremendous "Qui Tollis" from the C Minor Mass.
It seems to break over him like a wave -- and
unable to bear any more of it, he slams the
portfolio shut. Instantly, the music breaks off
-- reverberating in his head. He stands shaking,
staring wildly. (56)

According to classical Aristotelian theory, the basis
of modern dramatic criticism, music is fifth in the
hierarchy of the six necessary dramatic elements that
interact to achieve effect. Aristotle's definition of music
encompasses all aspects of sound production, including the tonal quality of the human voice. Although dialogue dominates modern drama and film, music performs an essential role in establishing and reinforcing the context, atmosphere, and emotional climate of the performance.

Theodore Hatlen observes that "although the motion picture has always exploited the evocative power of music to heighten its effects, naturalistic and realistic drama has rejected music as an artificial intrusion" (61). Yet, the importance of this "intrusion" emerges with successful stagings of such realistic dramas as Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* and Fugard’s South African drama, "Master Harold"... And the Boys, in which distinctive musical stylings and dance sequences heighten effect and influence meaning.

The scope and magnitude of the musical effects combined with the visual effects in *Amadeus* on film are most pronounced in the "dictation scenes" appearing in the latter half of the film. During these scenes, the now deathly ill Mozart prevails on his trusted "friend" and colleague, Salieri, to finish the Requiem Mass. Gianakaris describes how the visual and aural effects are directed to manipulate response:

As soon as the notations are imprinted on paper, the sounded music of what had just been dictated is heard over the sound track. By such fits and
starts, verbal dictation is conveyed to paper, the written version in turn transformed into the powerful music of the Requiem which we then hear.

Simultaneously, brief visual shots interjected into the dictation pattern show Mozart's wife, Constanze, boarding a coach to begin an overnight journey back home to be with her husband. The total effect is of contrapuntal visual shots and musical phrases. The fusion of visual pictures with enveloping music creates a powerful movie effect not soon forgotten. (95)

Whether Shaffer over-extended the reach of the musical effects is a critical issue, according to Gianakaris. While Shaffer recognized the danger of "subverting the drama and turning the event into a concert," Gianakaris points out that Shaffer maintained that film, by contrast to drama, "positively welcomes music in floods" (95). The result, and most likely the effect viewers more frequently recall, is how the music given to the theater audience in fragments becomes magnified as "a profusion of music flowing around the audience in the movie theatre" (95).

Going beyond the musical effects to the overall success of Shaffer's "parallel work," Gianakaris contends that when viewers have to see everything literally, a loss of intellectual activity occurs. The result is that the viewer tends to focus attention more on the essence of the dramatic
conflict and less on the complexity of the characterizations.

Martin Esslin, reviewing the film in Contemporary Literary Criticism, elucidates this point, arguing the story really belongs to Salieri. This is an important distinction to be made between stage and film, for the power of Mozart's musical voice and the forgivable quality of Mozart's character in the film tend to outweigh Salieri in Mozart's favor.

Attempting to counteract the film's tendency to shift the attention away from Salieri by quite literally garnering more sympathy for Mozart's situation, Esslin fights for the film's intellectual integrity and success over the literal qualities, asserting, "It is Salieri whose tragedy we see: the tragedy of the man of modest talent, musical enough to recognize (perhaps alone among his contemporaries) the true greatness of genius, but not talented enough himself to match it . . ." (477).

For some the throttling effect of a well-staged theatrical performance of Amadeus lives on beyond the visual and aural opulence of the film. Conceivably, the lasting power of theater is testimonial to the realization that the total effect of a live performance can never be duplicated or reproduced exactly, unless filmed, in which instance audience community is lost. Roemer points out in "The Surface of Reality" that:
the film-maker uses the surfaces of life itself—literal photographic images and accurately reproduced sounds. But the arrangement of these images and sounds is totally controlled. Each moment, each detail is carefully coordinated into the structure of the whole—just like the details in a painting or poem. By artfully controlling his images, the film-maker presents an unbroken realistic surface; he preserves the appearance of reality. (261)

Though these differences in dramatic performance and response are necessary and vital to furthering our understanding of the human experience, that quantity and quality of human interaction that transpires in the intimacy of a theater deserves to be encouraged, nurtured, protected, and preserved as the more prevailing, and more forceful, form of human discourse.
Notes

When I showed the film to my students enrolled in Freshman Composition and Literature at Riverside Community College, their reactions were varied. For some, the experience soon became boring and repetitive, indicated by restless behavior and unrelated conversation during the film. These students were more vocal than the majority of the students in expressing their responses with such remarks as: "I hated it!" and "I don't get off on all that highbrow stuff!" One student, an admitted "Punk-Rock" enthusiast, observed that he had never paid much attention to classical music and that this experience showed him what he had missed. Those students who expressed a strong interest in music and indicated some form of musical training and/or performance experience were the least vocal but more visible in their responses. These students appeared to be highly involved in all aspects of the film. For example, while others gathered their books when the credits, (underscored by the 2nd movement (Romanza) of Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor) ran, these students remained seated and silent through to the end. After the majority of the students departed, a few of these students initiated their own discussion of the film.
In the interest of integrating literary, composition, and dramatic theory, Edward Rocklin appeals to critics for a more concerted effort, aimed at "bridging the gap" between theorists and practitioners in those communities, and toward devising a unified theory that would bring about a convergence of multiple theories.

Writing in "Converging Transformations in Teaching Composition, Literature, and Drama," Rocklin recognizes efforts being made but argues that not enough work is being done to bring the diverging theories and their representative communities together. Rocklin proposes that rather than maintaining and striving for distinctively autonomous stances, teachers of composition, literature, and drama "create unified theories of the writing-and-reading process as forms of symbolic action" (178) as a means of linking rather than separating or diverting the processes.

Such a transformation in both theory and application, Rocklin suggests, could be brought about by a successfully devised unified theory (178). While evolutions have occurred in literary and composition theory, Rocklin contends that transformations made in both realms "overlap in their focus on and re-conception of the text as both
deriving from and being the source of a process; but they diverge in focusing, respectively, on the writer and the reader of that text" (182).

To remedy this tendency, some theorists are attempting to effect the convergence of multiple theories by focusing more on how meaning is derived when readers and writers approach a text in the same way critics might assess a musical or theatrical ensemble performance. In this respect, the strength and overall rhetorical impact or aesthetic effect of the performance is determined by the individual contribution each player makes to the interactive process that culminates in conveying the chosen interpretation.

In order to achieve collaboration, each player must be willing to enter into a give and take relationship with the other members of the ensemble. Though the impulse toward individual recognition may be preferred, the impulse defers to the ensemble's commitment to recognize each player's particular expertise for the contribution it makes to the performance. When the writer and reader engage in discovering the interactive parts of a piece of writing, and approach the writing as text, they make the same kind of commitment.

Like readers and writers, ensemble members also engage in the activity Phelps describes as "symbolic interaction" and make meaning by focusing mainly on the text (162). What
the text and "performance text" come to mean can be said to be the result of what Phelps identifies as the "set of meanings so constructed and attributed by readers to a writer and a text" (162). Phelps considers this transformation one that "changes the root metaphor of composition from that of creation to one of symbolic interaction," leading theorists to ask "how texts effect the joint construction of meaning as a basis for the complex negotiations between discoursers over attitude, belief, and action in the world" (163).

Robert Scholes defines the concept of symbolic interaction more precisely in "Semiotics and Interpretation," by explaining that texts and works are two distinct entities, and that how a piece of writing is interpreted and said to achieve meaning depends on the action or lack of it taken by an individual or group of readers (181). Whether the writing is perceived as a work or as a text is determined solely by the reader's approach. Scholes holds that acceptance of the writing as "work" or "text" is a product of the reader's experience and involvement in the reading process.

A piece of writing becomes a "work" when the reader accepts only the limited interpretation and meaning assigned by the authorized community. Approached as "text," a piece of writing becomes freestanding, invitational, and available to multiple interpretations based on investigative methods.
that liberate the reader and writer to participate in what Rocklin describes as the "dance of interacting parts" (Rocklin 182) or that kind of symbolic action and interaction Phelps describes.

Making the shift from considering a piece of writing as text requires the reader's willingness to recognize the significant roles context and community play in the process of composing discourse and the making of meaning as the starting point for the discovery process. Scholes explains this prerequisite, stating that "a piece of writing must be understood as the product of a person or persons, at a given point in human history," and studied in the context of a "given form of discourse" that takes meaning from the "interpretive gestures of individual readers using the grammatical, semantic, and cultural codes available to them" (181).

The majority of modern theorists in literature, composition, and film accept the transformation from product to process, and from work to text—a shift that culminates in moving away from asking what a passage of writing or frame of film "means" to asking what a passage or frame "does." Yet the transformation toward acceptance of the playtext and the actualized performance engendered by the playtext as performance "text" is slow to be won because of the conspicuous differences between the literary text and the playtext, and because of the reluctance of literary
critics to consider performance as a form of composed discourse.

Rocklin argues that the transformation in drama begins with the playscript being critically approached as "text" rather than "work". Even though the playscript is perceived as "incomplete," Rocklin defends the significance of the playtext as composed discourse for what the playtext offers to studies informing the reading and composing processes. By "incomplete," Rocklin means that the script, unlike a literary text, "provides only the words of the play, not a full verbal-and-physical score" (183).

In professional and educational theater, Rocklin points out, the playtext actually functions as the "starting point for a larger compositional process through which actors realize one set of the potential inherent in those words in their performance" (183). Viewed from the perspective of an actor or director engaged in script analysis for the purpose of preparing the playtext for performance, the playtext as script has the potential to offer what Rocklin terms "producible interpretations" ("Producible" 149). In their efforts to create a more "integrated study of drama," Milhous and Hume invented the concept and define "producible interpretation" as the product of "a critical reading that a director could communicate to an audience in performance," a reading derived from engaging in the activity of production analysis (152).
Milhous and Hume argue that literary criticism neglects to consider two kinds of critical activity: performance analysis and production analysis. Performance analysis consists of "analysis attentive equally to the script and its realizations," while production analysis "draws on all the possible kinds of criticism to produce a sense of the multiple possibilities in actual performance" (152). This move to reading a playtext with the understanding of it as a performance vehicle, or "reading with a directorial eye," in Milhous and Hume's terms, avails the critic of the same methods directors employ to define and clarify possible meanings and results that lead to an enhanced awareness of what the play has the potential to do in performance (153).

The next step in performance analysis shifts the critic away from asking "What does the play mean?" and to asking, "What range of meanings might this play be able to communicate?" inviting the critic to move from a limited perspective to an explorative and investigative stance. By nature, both forms of analysis result in the discovery and identification of an equally wide range of ambiguities. Rather than discount these ambiguities that arise with multiple interpretations, the aim of production analysis, unlike much literary criticism, Rocklin asserts, is to "discover if these ambiguities can be analyzed so as to produce one or more coherent production concepts" (153).
Rocklin contends that these integrated approaches to the script and performance as forms of text worthy of critical analysis will, at the very least, better equip the critic with a new set of investigative skills that "may allow the critic to discern openings in a script and make suggestions to directors and actors about as yet unrealized potentials in a play's design" (164). Production and performance analysis will, in Rocklin's estimation, lead critics to "discover in much greater detail the multiple patterns of the play" and focus attention on the question: "What might a performance of this play do?" (164). The implication is for literary criticism that such transformations in the critical approach suggested by Milhous and Humes (in keeping with the spirit of recent Structuralist and Post-Structuralist literary criticism) and encouraged by Rocklin lead to the question of how production and performance analysis as viable forms of criticism will influence literary interpretation and published criticism.

While Bert States and Gary Taylor, essentially concerned with dramatic theory and criticism, acknowledge that plays can be interpreted as printed literature outside of realization in performance, they also see the value in exploring in more detail how the interactions between reader-playtext and spectator-performance differ (166-67). Building on this transformation in literary and dramatic criticism, Rocklin reports that recent work has begun "to
replace this either/or attitude with a both/and starting point" with the introduction of Hodgdon’s term "performance text" (168).

Hodgdon states that the term "freely acknowledges the perceived incompatibility between the (infinitely) flexible substate(s) of a Shakespearean play and the (relative) fixity of the term "text" (Rocklin 169). Hodgdon asks critics to approach Shakespeare's plays in performance with the same degree of passion, skill, and theoretical knowledge they would bring to the play as literary text. Rocklin clarifies this approach, stating:

Hodgdon asks us to read the performance descriptively, for what it is trying to communicate before doing what the literary part of the profession does, which is, mainly judge the performance against the ideal performance that literary critics in general, and readers of Shakespeare in particular, carry in the mind’s eye. (169)

Hodgdon maintains that if critics and spectators do not weigh the performance "piece by piece" against the text, then the performance as text emerges in its own right. Receiving the performance as text, according to Hodgdon's approach, enables the critic and spectator to better discern the presence or lack of validity of certain elements in the performance.
The desire for a unified theory in dramatic criticism dates as far back as 1954 when Raymond Williams observes in *Drama in Performance*, "We have very few examples of the necessary next stage: a consideration of the play in performance, literary text and theatrical representation, not as separate entities, but as the unity which they are intended to become" (Rocklin 149). Yet the transformation has taken at least thirty years to get underway. The lean toward developing a more unified critical approach that focuses on what the playtext "does" and what the performance "does" converges with Phelps' vision for a unified theory of composition that envelopes rather than "bridges the gap" between the processes of reading, writing, and performing (Rocklin 177-92).

The extension of performance and production analysis to the literature classroom is a natural progression toward the convergence of dramatic theory with composition and literary theory. To illustrate more clearly how Stanislavski's method of script analysis, for example, is emerging as a model for literature and composition teachers, Rocklin provides an example that should do more than "bridge the gap" between theories when he offers this description of the process at work with his university students:

We now analyze, and teach our students to analyze, the words Shakespeare gives to Hamlet, looking for that character's objectives and exploring his
subtext in order to arrive at a coherent set of interpretive choices from the range offered by that character's speeches. We are thus beginning to understand the process of choice-making by which a cast negotiates the journey from words on a page to words on the stage—and hence to understand the incredibly detailed way the range of interpretive possibilities might open up to any reader of the text. (185)

From the perspective of literary theory, Stanislavski's critical approach most closely resembles the constructivist view. Helen Rothschild Ewald succinctly defines this view in "What We Could Tell Advanced Student Writers about Audience":

The emphasis shifts from the structure of the text as an independent, immutable entity to structure and meaning as imposed on the text by the reader. It is assumed that although the text constrains the possible meanings, readers with different knowledge, interests, and perspectives, or the same reader in different contexts, may construct quite different interpretations. (148)

Whether readers and writers approach the text from the perspective of production analysis, performance analysis, script analysis, Burke's Pentad, or the constructivist point of view, each process relies on "symbolic interaction" as a
means of discovering how the ensemble performance of parts within the text functions to generate meaning.

In *A Primer for Writing Teachers*, Foster notes that the majority of theories converge in their focus on the writer-reader relationship with the text but faults Burke for his emphasis on purpose and power of language as pertaining mostly to spoken rather than written discourse. Foster argues that the Pentad and its key elements rely strictly on relationships and ratios, and that the elements of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose have no meaning until each is connected to the other in a relationship.

The problem Foster finds with the Pentad is its controlling nature: "In Burke's view, any piece of discourse must be treated as an intentional seizing of an occasion to communicate something, by an actor-agent who is free to make the meaning he chooses" (37). Foster claims that Burke's theory places too much emphasis on purpose and for that reason is best suited for writing intended as a "verbal act" in which rhetorical effect on a listener or spectator is the prime objective. As a theory informing composition as process, Foster maintains that Burke's emphasis on "identification" (who did what to whom, how, when, where, and why) best serves as a heuristic for persuasive rather than expository writing.

Jerry Morgan and Manfred Sellner show in their research on the composing process that "certain content assumptions
made by the reader and brought to the text account for the phenomena the researchers [in linguistics] are examining" (150). Their findings suggest that "meaning is not exclusively, or even primarily a function of linguistic or textual properties" (150), supporting the need researchers in composition, literature, and drama have for a unified theory to guide the instruction and criticism of writing, reading, and performing as processes.

As a result of this direction in discourse theory, Ewald suggests that writers, instead of thinking, "this is what I want readers to know," need to reshape their approach in order to produce reader-based prose that flows from "this is what I believe the reader needs to know, respond to, and feel" (150). Ewald holds to the position that writers must learn to "project accurately the various schemata that readers will bring to the text" (150), reasoning that the writer should not aim to determine how much the reader might know about the topic and judge the use of details accordingly, but should aim instead to deal with such questions of schemata as:

1. What schemata (including organizational frameworks) might the reader associate with the subject?
2. What schemata are necessarily embedded in or appropriate to the subject?
(3) Does the reader possess the "appropriate" 
schemata? (150-51)

While Ewald does not break the schemata down into 
recognizable elements, Richard Beach and JoAnne 
Liebman-Kleine, writing in Peterson's *Convergences: 
Transactions in Reading and Writing*, present four components 
they believe writers employ to become their own "best 
readers" and writers of reader-based prose. In their 
article, "The Writing/Reading Relationship: Becoming One's 
Own Best Reader," they list those components writers use to 
make connections with their readers as "the schemata for 
audience attributes, intended effects, assessment criteria, 
and rhetorical strategies" (64).

The examples they provide clarify this theory and are 
reminiscent of Burke's "Dramatistic Method" or Pentad. For 
instance, they set up the situation of a writer who composes 
a letter to ask his mother for money. They identify this as 
a rhetorical strategy in the form of a "speech act" the 
writer makes with the knowledge of certain reader 
attributes, namely that the reader will expect to know if 
the writer's mother has the money to lend and that the 
writer is genuine about the nature of the request, and that 
the writer really "deserves" the money. Then, in order to 
create the "intended effects," the writer must call upon 
certain "audience attributes" to develop "assessment 
criteria." This feat is accomplished by looking at how the
audience thinks logically about the request—that the writer must truly need the money, that the writer is sincere about the request, and that the motive behind the writing act is justifiable and reasonable, as well as ethically sound (65).

What Ewald, Beach, and Liebman-Kleine offer is that student writers will eventually create reader-based prose when they write with more concern for reader needs and shift their focus away from the confines of structural linguistics. In other words, when writers "go there" as their own "best reader," they develop a sense of taking the reader along with them through the writing and reading process.

Student writers, especially, could achieve reader-based prose more readily if they would think of writing as "scripting" for a viewing audience or actively engaged reader rather than as mechanical drudgery they are forced to do in order to meet the requirements of a writing assignment for a particular course. When composition and literature teachers ask students to write the typical narrative-descriptive, classification and division, and cause and effect essays based on assigned readings, too few students know how to begin or what the writing task actually asks them to do. They lack the ability to conceptualize—to visualize the content, structure, and style of the essay in advance, or even as they write it, line by line.
Even more apparent is the lack of thought given to the needs of the reader as audience. When asked "Who is your reader?" the majority of students respond, "The instructor." Student writers enrolled in basic composition courses seldom view themselves as writers of texts read beyond the classroom; as a result of this self-imposed limitation, they generally assume their writing has little real worth or life beyond a technical score or academic grade earned. Beach claims that even though instructors normally encourage students to consider their audience, merely asking students to give some thought to a reader’s needs is not enough. Beach argues that students need to be taught how to think "as readers," able to "adopt their readers' presumed perspectives, assessing their writing in terms of how their readers may react to or comprehend that writing" (64).

Despite this advice from instructors, student writers most often compose, in Beach’s terms, for the "teacher as audience" not thinking very carefully about audience attributes even then (70). In many instances, the instructor is in fact the only reader for the finished product. But if teachers of composition continue in the assumption that the student writer’s discourse has no "real" reader outside the boundaries of the academic community and disregard student writers as "real" writers deserving of "real" readers who may constitute a variety of target audiences, then the job that teaching writing asks be done
is not. Perhaps the solution to the problems of audience can be solved by turning to how audience is approached by those who teach writing in other disciplines.

In this context, student writers have the opportunity to become acutely aware of writing guided in composition by a specific purpose, audience, and occasion related to their chosen career goals or fields of interest. Because students composing in this context can more readily conceive of the immediate results of their business letters, memoranda, or technical reports, such student writers become necessarily conscious of the communication process, paying attention to rhetorical strategies, purpose, and reader need.

While the technique of audience analysis is an integral part of instruction in basic public speaking courses, seldom are the concepts and techniques of audience analysis introduced into and practiced routinely in basic composition courses. Beach and Liebman-Kleine’s experiment with a variety of writing assignments designed to motivate the students to identify and analyze audience proved that once the writing purpose was established and audience need was clarified for each type of writing activity, students who had previously focused on "teacher as audience" became empowered as writers, able to visualize a specific audience.

From the act of audience analysis emerged the profile of the perspective reader as audience with its own set of "needs, prior knowledge and experience, beliefs, and
expectations" that required the writers to assess their own writing in those terms, and, as Beach notes, to "apply their knowledge of readability strategies and recognize how these strategies influence a reader's comprehension" (80).

The task of identifying audience becomes more complex as readers take on multi-cultural characteristics. Now student writers must consider cultural differences and associations made by readers for whom standard English is a second or third language, and typically American scenarios based on assumed common cultural experiences are foreign. When Beach states that "simply thinking about the reader" is not enough, he is really addressing only one aspect of the larger problem of the process of communication, for our introductory writing courses are now heavily multi-cultural, and our textbooks, designed to stimulate critical reading and analytical writing, are required to contain material that crosses cultural ethnic and gender lines.

Consequently, student writers have difficulty relating their writing beyond their own cultural experiences, but audience analysis routinely conducted in writing and speech classes illuminates reader and listener for the student writer and speaker.

This core concept is taught in other process-product or performance-oriented courses where listener, spectator, or viewer is of direct importance to the speaker, actor, performer, composer, or filmmaker, because students in these
contexts are trained early on to consider themselves "real" performers, aiming to achieve an effect on an audience. If student writers were given that same sense as performing artists, they might more readily think of themselves as "real" writers, addressing the needs and interests of "real" readers.

One way of enabling student writers to make connections to readers as they work through a writing assignment or to become engaged in the invention stage of the writing process is to borrow from the concepts guiding scriptwriting for video production. For example, the scriptwriter works with a split-page format, on which the blank page is divided in two vertical sections, separated by a vertical line. The top left side of the page is labeled Video and the right side of the page is labeled Audio. As the writer reveals a situation in dialogue under the audio heading, the writer must also specify what the viewer sees simultaneously and must provide those exact details under the heading of video. The writer must also include, along with the audio and video descriptions, technical information, such as indicating cues for the camera operators, sound, and lighting technicians.

Achieving writing that is viewer-based or visual and auditory requires the scriptwriter to envision what the viewer needs to see, hear, and feel—not only in response to the dialogue and camera shots, but also to music, voice-over narration, and other effects. In addition, the writer must
think about how much time can be devoted to any one aspect of the video portion of the script, and how much sound, and at what levels can and will be accepted by the viewer.

The challenge and difficulty of writing for video or film is that the writer must see, hear, think, and feel simultaneously as the viewer might in order to meet the audience’s needs for auditory and visual details. To write successfully and effectively, the scriptwriter must have knowledge of the discourse community and certain injunctions that exist to govern the process and the product, just as the student writer must have some definite idea of the reader in terms of shared language codes, cultural experiences, prior knowledge, and probable associations that guide reader or audience response within the context of the targeted discourse community.

The significance of audience analysis and inference can be demonstrated by a simple acting exercise, in which the actor is asked to jot down five items commonly found on a shopping list. Then the actor is called on to read his or her list aloud with no particular vocal emphasis placed on any one word. Generally, the list is heard and seen as a straightforward recitation: flat, colorless, and free of any psychological associations or complex social interpretations. Such a list looks and sounds like this:

    FRUIT LOOPS

    DIET PEPSI
But the list has the potential to become far more meaningful to the actor and spectator when an acting objective is assigned to the list, and it is again read aloud by the actor when a specific motive or psychological intent silently precedes the delivery.

For example, the actor may be asked to mimic the writer of the list. As a result, the actor would deliver each item with an attitude of ridicule. When the actor makes fun of the list with vocal inflections, facial expressions, and bodily gestures, then the list takes on the interpretation given to it by the actor according to his or her own agenda or audience attributes. In turn, the performance of the list affects the intellect and emotions of the spectators, who then draw conclusions about the motives of the actor.

The list can be read with an infinite number of assigned and contrasted objectives where the general purpose, audience, and occasion are altered to achieve a specific goal or to bring about a desired effect. When the simple grocery list is performed, for example, with the psychological motivation being to seduce the spectator, the thought of green beans or mouthwash having the power to seduce anybody seems ludicrous. But the effect of such an unexpected performance is highly successful in conveying
motive and evoking an interesting array of emotional responses, depending on the age, gender, and cultural experiences of the listeners or spectators.

For some spectators, the performance of the list with the intent to flirt or seduce draws laughter; however, for some whose cultures condemn outward display of suggestive or deliberately provocative behavior, the performance causes an uncomfortable type of laughter related to embarrassment. While this simple exercise may be considered merely a useful tool for actors involved in the process of script analysis and line interpretation, this same tool can be employed by readers and writers engaged in the process of discovering motives for writing and possible interpretations of the written text.

In Rocklin's view, all texts need to be viewed as scripts or forms of action that "function as cuing systems designed by writers to shape constructive cognitive activity and inventive corporeal activity by the actors as readers," and that "in order for those actors, in turn, to evoke constructive cognitive and visceral activity by the spectators—who themselves must transform the sights that constitute their re-reading of the action" (184), then will we be able to come closer to a unified theory.

When the listener, spectator, or viewer decodes, associates, and assimilates the words and actions performed, these actions are defined by Bert States as "... the
different biopsychologies of reading and seeing" (130). The importance of and the need for teachers of reading, writing, literature, and drama to re-conceive the text--any text--and even the simple list as a performance text, script, or actor's text is best stated when Rocklin adds: Such comparisons are one means by which we can teach ourselves and our students a much more fine-grained understanding of what the words of a text might do--and open the door for further exploration of the different ways in which speaking and writing, listening and reading can function. (187)

In basic agreement with Rocklin's observations that the converging multiple theories in literary criticism need to be unified, Richard Hornby argues in *Script Into Performance* that "The most common error in criticism, particularly dramatic criticism as it exists today, is reification--treating playscripts as if they were catalogues of imagery, or psychoanalytic case studies or games. Hornby further points to the inadequacies of the structuralistic approach to criticism when he claims, "Even structuralism can become reifying when it puts forth a diagram or formula and treats it as if it were the playscript, rather than a means of understanding the playscript" (112).

In support of the concept of reading, writing, speaking, and performing as symbolic action, Richard Hornby
maintains that criticism should be aimed toward opening the text to multiple interpretations rather than toward closing the text to further investigation. Hornby's final contention is that "Criticism, including its components of analysis, interpretation, and judgment, is not a thing but an act" (118). He subsequently states that dramatic criticism, like the acts of critical reading and informed writing, also needs to be treated as process rather than product (118).

"A proper critical method," Hornby asserts, "must involve close reading; the habit to be developed is constantly to ask 'Why?'" (118) He explains dramatic criticism as a process by suggesting that "instead of passively accepting the details in a playtext, the critic must constantly say to himself, 'What is this doing here?' Why this particular detail and not another?'" (118).

Hornby's position is that a critical approach should offer the reader an opportunity to engage in a "functional relationship" with the script—that the point of criticism should be to "enable a person to grasp the significance of a playscript as a whole . . . a playscript is noumenal, incomprehensible in itself; the unifying principle is a description after the fact, a sounding, an exploration" (120).

Hornby, like Phelps and Rocklin, also speaks of the need for a unified theory but specifically defines what he
terms the "unifying principle" indirectly, in terms of Stanislavski's theory, when he states:

An example of the valid application of a unifying principle can be found in the criticism of Francis Fergusson. In *The Idea of A Theater*, Fergusson describes the "action" of various classical playscripts in terms of simple infinitive phrases: the action of Hamlet is to find and destroy the hidden 'impostume,' which is poisoning the life of Claudius Denmark. The approach is of course drawn from Stanislavski's notion of "the objective" but applied to entire playscripts rather than individual characters alone . . . the approach is merely a way into the playscripts, a tool for understanding, and the phrases themselves are summations of a lengthy critical process, a bit of shorthand notation. (121)

The findings of researchers and practitioners in composition, literature, and drama such as Ewald, Beach, Liebeman-Kleine, Rosenblatt, Phelps, Hornby, Styan, and Rocklin show that a convergence of theories is occurring. But while the transformation away from product and toward process in these fields continues, not enough research is being done to bring the converging theories together into one that holds to the belief and recognition that all
composition is truly and simply grounded in the art of performance, as Rocklin so eloquently states in this appeal:

All composition, including literary composition, can be seen as performance by the writer; that all texts can be seen to function in ways that are analogous to the ways that play texts function as scripts; that all reading, and particularly literary reading, can be seen as a form of virtual performance; and that all teaching is also a form of performance. (189)

The implication for the future is that the concept of reader as audience, writer and speaker as performer, and the critic of written and performed discourse as spectator and viewer is central to instruction and criticism in all forms of discourse.

Research in discourse theory indicates that identity and analysis of audience clearly define purpose, context, rhetorical mode and strategies, and effect for the speaker, writer, actor, and reader. Furthermore, this concept of the reader as audience clarifies goals for writers of reader-based prose in the decision-making and problem-solving processes that accompany invention and final evaluation.

We should not settle for approaches to teaching reading, writing, and literature that imprison us in a world of interpretative silence. Instead, we should encourage our
students to read everything they can aloud, to "breathe life into the text" as Peter Elbow suggests in A Community of Writers, (430-36) so that their own writing, the writing of their peers, and the works of greater writers come to "mean" through the process of translating the written word to the spoken word, thus opening the work to additional interpretative possibilities that can only enhance and enlarge the meaning that emerges for the reader and the writer in the solitary reading process.

By showing the connections between the processes of reading, writing, speaking, and performing, researchers in composition and literary theory move closer to creating a single unified theory that would reconcile these symbolic actions, speech acts, and performance acts. Such a unified theory could result in a profitable merge for instructors in these related subjects as opposed to a continuation of co-existence as separate entities within the academic and discourse communities.

Shaffer's play and film Amadeus function ideally as vehicles to which principles of script analysis, Burke's Dramatistic Pentad, and semiotics can be applied as a new way of looking at dramatic discourse.

Seldom is the playtext approached and considered in composition and literature courses in terms of what it does to the two sets of readers, or to the spectators when actualized in rehearsal and performance. Yet, for students
in theatrical production courses, the playtext is unequivocally the focus of that level of in-depth critical analysis and investigation that necessitate an accurate and authentic translation of the playtext into performance.

According to Rocklin, the transformation in literary and dramatic criticism concerning the function of the playtext as an integral and significant part of the performance process is finally underway; he observes that critics and teachers are finally coming to analyze the playtext by paying close attention to "what the text makes the actor make the audience do," as Styan suggests (Rocklin 183).

That this kind of analysis is taking place supports Phelps' concept and reveals how plays should be considered literary texts, according to Phelps' model that describes texts as "cuing systems designed by writers to shape constructive cognitive activity (and response) by readers" and that "function like a playscript to evoke performances from its readers that are both bound and free, receptive and interpretive" (Rocklin 184). Rocklin further asserts, "It is illogical . . . to continue to ignore drama while attempting to articulate a unified theory," (184). The integration of drama, he contends, will produce "the sort of unified theory sketched out by Phelps, producing a fuller, more precise, and more detailed understanding of how the
larger system, of which writer, text, and reader are the most evident participants, operates" (184).
Notes

1 Beach and Liebman-Kleine define schemata as "cognitive structures or scripts that help us organize information hierarchically" (64). They use the process of registration for classes as an example, stating, "In this schema, there are a series of categories defining the steps involved in registration" and go on to list those categories and describe the associated steps (64–5).
"Like the writer who builds his narrative out of paragraphs, each of which presents us with a separate idea or further development of an idea," observes Stanley Glenn, "the playwright must construct his total play with the parts or materials of his own particular medium" (97).

Drawing a comparison between the analysis of narrative and dramatic writing for the purpose of discovering meaning, Glenn notes that a meaningful method of investigation focuses on how the structure of a play reveals character development. Glenn points out that the dramatist should develop characters in such a way that they influence or are influenced by the plot and represent a particular perspective or point of view taken on the subject matter.

The investigation of character development for the purpose of discovering what the playtext means requires some knowledge of dramatic structure. Not only does the playtext function to convey via dialogue and action an overall idea or view, it also informs the reader or spectator of significant prior events, pertinent occurrences offstage, and a clearly defined pattern of cause and effect leading to the conflicts, complications, crises, climaxes, and resolutions that constitute the dramatic narrative.
The application of script analysis as a means of more complete investigation reveals how the internal components of the scene, unit, and beat are employed to emphasize the external elements that comprise the playtext as a whole. The subdivision of the scenes into units is normally marked by the arrival and departure of characters, and each episode (unit) usually draws attention to a single aspect, such as a complication, moment of discovery, a reversal of attitude, or character trait (Glenn 98).

The "chief task" for the actor and reader, Glenn points out, is to focus mainly on how the character develops in each unit by looking for hints and asking questions associated with physical traits, prior actions and experiences, and desires or objectives the character attempts to satisfy in each scene as he or she appears (99). No part of the playtext should be overlooked since important details about a character may also surface in those scenes in which he or one does not appear.

Scene 5 of Amadeus, for example, demonstrates two units for Salieri and two for Mozart, with a series of beat changes occurring within each unit. A beat change occurs when a line or action signals a character's change of attitude or stance toward what is happening at the moment. Scene 5 opens in the library of the Baroness Waldstaaten, with Salieri entering to "take first a little refreshment," noting:
My generous hostess always put out the most delicious confections in that room whenever she knew I was coming. Dolci, caramelli, and most especially a miraculous crema al mascarpone—which is simply cream cheese mixed with granulated sugar and suffused with rum—that was totally irresistible! (23)

The focus remains on Salieri's pleasant reaction to the discovery of his greatest weakness, confections, until his private revery is rudely interrupted by an offstage sound and Constanze's entrance followed shortly by Mozart's. These entrances mark the first unit for Mozart and Constanze and the second unit for Salieri.

During this scene, Constanze and Mozart play their favorite game of cat and mouse, unaware of Salieri's presence. This playfulness identifies their first beat. Not knowing who they are, Salieri is made privy to their vulgarities and "[sits appalled]" (26). His change of mood identifies his second beat.

As Mozart begins his backwards spelling game with "Hey--hey--what's 'Trazom'?" and asks Constanze what it means, he reveals his identity with "It's Mozart spelled backwards--shitwit! If you ever married me, you'd be Constanze Trazom" (26).

Following more of this teasing and the mention that Mozart's father would never give his consent ("Your father's
never going to give anything to us" via the primary text [dialogue]), Mozart's mood changes momentarily as indicated by the secondary text (actor's text) with "[The sense of fun deserts him instantly]" (26). This mood change identifies Mozart's second beat. His third occurs with his impulsive marriage proposal. Their wrestling and giggling on the floor is suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the Majordomo, who "[stalks in upstage]" and announces "[imperviously]" (27) that the music is about to begin.

The Majordomo's entrance marks for both Salieri and Mozart a new unit and another beat change when Mozart responds, "Ah! ... Yes! ... Good!" and "[He picks himself up, embarrassed, and helps CONSTANZE to rise. With an attempt at dignity]" followed by "Come my dear. The music waits" (27). His change of attitude marks Mozart's next beat.

In response, "[SALIERI sits shaken]" (27) and then begins a monologue directed toward the audience, signaling the last and probably most revealing unit and beat change that establishes the extremes of the Salieri-Mozart character delineations.

While each unit contributes a piece to the profile of the complete character, overall objectives for the playtext, acts, and scenes also need to be considered. Character objective is not to be defined as the character's function
in the scene, but rather as the "goal or fundamental desire of the character" (Glenn 101).

When readers approach the playtext as script, they must first recognize that characters are not simply one-dimensional figures drawn to convey theme, but that well-written characters are unified by individual motives, desires, and actions that are interdependent and interactive.

Through the process of script analysis, readers and actors determine motive by identifying the unit objectives. To accomplish this task, the actor as reader approaches the unit by identifying with the character's position, asking in each of the character's scenes, "What do I want" and "How do I plan to go about getting it?" more often than asking "Why?" (Glenn 101).!

Once the surface objectives are identified, the underlying and subtle desires must be discovered. Probing the surface of the playtext for implied objectives is defined as identifying the subtext. For example, readers accept that Salieri simply enters the library before the concert because the text indicates he seeks "refreshment" but the actor as reader asks, "What does he really want?" to discover what motivates Salieri on a deeper level.

The way Salieri lavishes over every detail of the confections and renders a near professional and titillating judgment might suggest that Salieri really wants to indulge
a fantasy. Shaffer's use of the personal pronoun, I and the highly descriptive and evocative language of the text, including romantic Italian phrasing, suggests Salieri delights in the confections as if they were created expressly for his "royal" consumption alone—as he might delight over a woman he finds equally irresistible and worthy of his seduction.

Salieri's secret desire expressed quietly and politely is magnified by the behavior of Mozart and Constanze who, by contrast, indulge openly, loudly, and crudely in their no longer secret desires.

For the actor as reader, gathering clues from the objectives, the units, beats, and subtext, as well as evidence provided by other characters, reveals the patterns that will eventually solidify the actor's perception of the character and become the foundation for the actor's interpretation.

For the reader approaching the playtext for the purpose of understanding character development, script analysis initiates that form of symbolic interaction Phelps describes. The interaction between writer and reader opens the inexperienced, unenlightened, or passively involved reader to the intricacies of dramatic structure, literary critical analysis, composition, and rhetorical effect by giving the reader a set of specific tasks to achieve in the discovery process.
More specifically, reconceiving the playtext as script requires the reader to analyze what the script cues the actor to do physically and emotionally in the process of interacting with, interpreting, and conveying the signs and symbols inherent in the play in performance. Unlike most other literary texts, the playtext, by its very nature has two sets of readers in the actors and the spectators both performing separate operations in the reading process (Rocklin 183). During the reading process, Rocklin points out, actors as readers simultaneously "interpret the text before and during the very process of preparing to perform it, and then proceed to dissolve the text in that performance" (183).

Spectators as readers, Rocklin observes, interpret the signs and symbols explicit in the language of the stage as expressed within the context of the theater and "re-interpret the now-vanished text as it is embodied in their experience of the performance" (183).

An outgrowth of Method theory of acting developed by the co-founder of the Moscow Art Theater, Constantin Stanislavski, in the early Twentieth Century, script analysis grew out of Stanislavski's belief that the theater's purpose is to teach the truth. To discover and convey truth, Stanislavski insisted that stage action and dialogue must be the expression of natural thought and understanding as opposed to affected or pretended behavior.
Key elements of script analysis function as a "set of tools" used to excavate beneath the surface to uncover ambiguities; to discover the possibilities of multiple interpretations, and to shed light on layered or concealed and obscured meanings. Only one aspect of production analysis, script analysis, is the first of six aspects of dramatic production pertinent to current research being done in the fields of literature and composition, Rocklin notes (184). He enumerates and describes the current research status of the other aspects as follows:

Second, we have begun to study much more closely the separate yet overlapping processes by which spectators also recreate meaning from their experience of the incarnate world. Third, we have begun to analyze the temporal and incarnational aspects of the medium. Fourth, we have begun to unravel the way in which spectators must respond to the play simultaneously as both direct and indirect discourse. Fifth, we have begun to think about the process by which a group of disparate individuals become that transient community we call an audience. Sixth, we have begun to sharpen our sense of how spectators perform in ways that are both like and unlike the performance of the solitary reader. (184)
The significance of this critical approach to dramatic literature and its application to literary and composition theory is evidenced by Rocklin’s observation that “in particular, we have learned to use the key elements of Stanislavski’s method, including the practices for defining the character’s objective and subtext and for defining the units that constitute a scene” (185).

This concept of reading the playtext as script with a directorial eye produces that sort of split vision or duality of purpose more commonly experienced by writers in the media of theater and film.

Like writers composing the script for film and video are trained to envision how the characters they create might think, act, and feel in a situation, and then must describe that behavior in language that shows and tells, actors are similarly trained. "Getting into character" is the term actors use to psychologically prepare as they assume the characteristics and actions of someone (or in some instances something) other than themselves. This process requires the actor to make a conscious effort to create (and recreate) a separate identity based on details of the script. To accomplish this temporary psychological split (away from his or her own identity) to the invented identity of the character requires a high degree of self-control, physical stamina, energy, and concentration. Throughout and during the process of getting into and holding character, the actor
is always aware (often more acutely) and sensitive to the present conditions and can, at will, "break character" at any moment. The actor, like the writer, momentary splits from the external self to focus energy on the internal self, thus integrating reality with unreality to develop a believable, naturally evolved characterization or persona. This "split" is explained by J. L. Styan in The Dramatic Experience:

The poet can speak in his own voice, whereas the playwright must always translate his thoughts into terms of the theater, splitting his mind into two or more minds, those of his characters, each with an individuality and life of his own. (3)

Acting is the art of achieving that level of reality and truth in performance that succeeds in moving spectators to feel what the character feels. Stanislavski's Method recognizes the actor as an "instrument" used to convey the meaning of the playtext by drawing entirely on the physical, intellectual, and emotional components of the self (the three dimensions). Recreating that reality present in the playtext in performance requires the actor to train diligently in body, mind, spirit, and emotion, "complete with thoughts, sensitivity, imagination, honesty, and awareness" (27), as Easty states.

Of the several complex components of Stanislavski's Method, sense memory, the ability to recall sight, sound,
touch, taste, and smell, is the most vital. By consistently exercising each of the five senses by means of recalling certain experiences from the actor's past and applying those exercises to the acting situation, the actor can use sense memory to recreate the sensation needed in reaction to an object or situation on stage. Through intense concentration and focus on explicit details of an experience, the moment is not pretended but realized. Recalling any one or all five of the senses requires continuous and rigorous training by practicing specific acting exercises designed to focus the actor's concentration on the situation, context, and moment involving one particular or all five senses.

One exercise Easty provides in *On Method Acting* is designed to teach the actor how to recreate the object, a simple coffee cup, and the sensation related to picking it up by drawing on sense memory alone. Perceived at first by an untrained actor as a seemingly simple task, the carefully measured and choreographed steps required to recreate realistically the act and sensation within a particular context reveal how complex and demanding of time, energy, and unbroken concentration this relatively easy exercise can be.

The following set of instructions comprises only the first of eight steps involved in reconceiving the cup, lifting it to the mouth, drinking, swallowing, and replacing the cup to its original position. The first step is
reproduced here in its entirety to suggest how valuable such training could be to the composing process:

Trace the outlines of it [the cup] letting your eyes fall on each part of it from the top down to the handle, down to the bottom, and back up to the other side. Focus your eyes on the exact location where you wish the cup to be. Then, try to see the color and contour as a whole. These should come to you after one or two tries.

Next, slowly reach out your hand and place the index finger through the imaginary cup handle. Gently lift the cup and while doing so, become aware, by remembering, of the shift in weight and balance as the cup is raised. The rest of the fingers and the hand play an important part in this stage.

You will notice that in life a full cup is not lifted with one finger alone. The whole hand comes into play and, indeed, the whole arm and shoulder. Remember, too, that when any object is picked up, the thumb and index finger do not touch.

In doing the exercise, you must leave room for the object, in this case, the handle, to fit inside the fingers. Try to judge the right amount of space between the fingers in any object you
choose to pick up and consciously try to remember the texture, weight, and anything else that would occur if you were doing the same thing in real life. (Easty 40)

Such heightened awareness developed on the part of the actor, writer, and reader transforms the unreal into the real, lending authenticity to the moment being recreated and essentially relived on stage, in the text, and in the imagination of the reader. Time, space, sequence, and detail become increasingly important when the actor is directed to recall other senses involved with the actual drinking of the coffee as the fourth step demonstrates:

Can you now begin to feel the warmth of the liquid through the handle of the cup? Remember that in life you can almost tell if the coffee is too hot to drink by the temperature of the cup in your hand. Try to create for yourself the warmth of the cup, then slowly bring it toward your lips. As the cup gets about halfway between the imaginary table and your mouth, you should then begin to realize the first strong aroma of the coffee. Here you must just make the effort to work for the sense of smell. (Easty 40)

While this basic acting exercise is primarily intended for actors as a means of discovery and rediscovery, the exercise is extremely effective as a means of focusing beginning
writers on the importance of sequence and detail to the
descriptive and process analysis writing modes. Reconceiving
the act of drinking a cup of coffee within a particular
context, analyzing the process by breaking the act into a
series of steps, and recreating the experience as actor
bring the writer to a more acute level of awareness of
relationships and interactions between persons and objects.

Reenacting the moment in context via sense memory
personalizes and makes real by drawing on a writer's own
experiences such physical properties of the object as size,
shape, volume, density, color, texture, and temperature with
precision and authenticity. Once the writer establishes the
"what" and the "how," other acting exercises can be employed
to create or recreate the context.

Spolin's Improvisation for the Theater provides a
series of increasingly difficult "where" exercises designed
to help actors create part of the context by focusing on
three aspects of the playing environment: immediate,
general, and larger (89). The where exercises focus the
actor's attention on the relationships between what Spolin
terms the "primary (where), and secondary (Who and What)
Points of Concentration" (90). Some questions Spolin asks
in the where sessions include, "How do you know where you
are?" and "Would you know a kitchen if it had no stove in
it? If it were in the jungle, for instance?" and "Why do
you usually go into a kitchen?" (91-92).
What this line of questioning produces is a specific environment in which particular activities take place and eventually a reason for the actor's being there. For the purpose of strengthening the actor's awareness of the relationship and interaction between the actor and environment, problems are introduced. Problems in "where" here might include the inclusion of establishing the where with obstacles, with or without time, the presence of a "who" as an unknown person, and the arrival of a second actor to help create or resolve the problem.

Throughout these exercises, the point of concentration is stated in showing rather than telling terms such as "receive the objects the environment has to offer" or "feel the time in your feet, in your spine" (105-08). Eventually, the "who," the "what," and the "why" are added to the "where" to fill out the three levels of environment and establish the context.

Based on Stanislavski's approach to discovering the truth from the text, these simple acting exercises can be studied or practiced to aid the novice writer in developing context with attention to what the reader needs to experience, for the composition to be maximally effective. The exercises can be adapted to Burke's Pentad to help the writer discover the relationship between the elements of scene, act, agent, agency, and purpose. The layering on of factors or conditions within the established context in the
form of "problems" also helps the writer develop an understanding of the basic components of dramatic structure and the role the reader as audience plays in composing and discovering texts.

Actors indicate that among the more challenging and enjoyable exercises are the well-known and respected "animal exercises," consisting of animal characterizations designed to "assist the actor in a more complete understanding of his fellow man in order to portray him more truthfully on the stage, and to use the animal characterizations, partially or even totally, in an actual role" (144). Andrew Lloyd Weber's musical, *Cats*, is an example of a work where such technique could be employed.

On occasion, an actor may encounter difficulty portraying or completing certain aspects of a character. As a means of resolving the problem, the actor might conduct a careful study of the posture, appearance, personality attributes, or behavior patterns of a particular animal that resembles the nature of the character he or she is playing. In the instance of *Equus*, Shaffer gives specific notes to the actors who play (simulate) the horses, cautioning:

> Any literalism which could suggest the cosy familiarity of a domestic animal—or worse, a pantomime horse—should be avoided. . . . Animal effect must be created entirely mimetically, through the use of legs, knees, neck, face, and
the turn of the head which can move the masks through all the gestures of equine wariness and pride. (v)

Easty recalls how Lee J. Cobb created the role of Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* based on an elephant: "I can best describe the role that incorporates a physical image of tremendous burdens into the character; an oppressive weight brought about by guilt and failure" (148). Explaining how animal characterization enhances character development and audience perception and interpretation, Easty adds:

It is generally known among theater people that he [she] had used an Animal Exercise throughout each performance to achieve the desired effect. It wasn't hard to guess which animal because the lumbering, yet surefooted, and sometimes stoic nature of the character could only have come from the patient, long-suffering elephant. (148)

The study and application of Stanislavski's Method and its components lead students of literature and composition to a greater awareness of the subtleties of characterization in literary texts as well as performances on stage and in film. Perhaps another example of the animal exercises used by an actor to achieve effect is evident in the film *The Graduate*, in which the role of Mrs. Robinson, performed by Anne Bancroft, reveals an incredibly skillful and consistent
characterization of a feline. The "cat on the prowl" and "stalking cat" images are enhanced by costuming that is equally consistent, relying primarily on black fabrics and spotted leopard patterns to carry out the characterization. Similarly, the role of Margaret ("Maggie the cat") characterized by Elizabeth Taylor and Jessica Lange in the film performances Tennessee Williams' Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, are quite possibly based on such exercises. By conceptualizing human beings in animal terms, writers and actors can discover and convey through written or performed discourse significant and underlying nuances that might otherwise be lost to readers, spectators, and viewers in the interpretative process.

As Rocklin observes, the world of written discourse is heavily influenced and nearly outweighed now by visual performance—constructions in the form of multi-media presentations. Writing in "Film as Composition" William Costanzo asserts:

Films are compositions, too. So are news shows, situation comedies, and commercials. The more we learn about these primarily visual constructions—how they are created, shaped, and understood—the better equipped we will be to help our students move from the world of movie screens and television tubes to the universe of written discourse. (79)
Such recognition of film as composition is an increasingly important and necessary task, and an obligation of both practitioners and critics. The implied deficiency in visual literacy is thought by some to result from the intrusion of electronic media into western culture. Robert Pattison states in *On Literacy* that the media have been blamed for the deterioration of language and communication skills and "they [the media] threaten established literacy by offering a continuous stream of vernacular raised to the level of popular art—an art without the restraints of correct English" (202-03). Pattison discounts this view as extremely biased and contends that "established American literacy, with its emphasis on mechanical skills and its assertion of the limitations of language, thwarts man's desire to feel himself fully represented in words" (203).

Since Pattison's observation, directed mostly toward the use of language in rock music of the late 1970s and early 1980s, the music video has arrived as a powerful form of discourse. Critical reaction to rock star Madonna's unlimited artistic expression and Rap artists music videos supports the argument for language and performance standards that will help guide the artist's "desire to feel fully represented in words," protect the artist's rights, and still offer audiences the benefit of somewhat liberated artistic expression (Pattison 203).
Displeased with the media's power to influence students, one concerned parent argued for the return to "established literacy" in a letter to the editor of a local newspaper. The parent denounced the school district's expenditure on additional televisions and VCRs and related A-V instructional media as a waste of money, claiming that no amount of machinery could or should replace the valuable and dedicated instructional aides laid off because of budget cuts. More to the point, the parent contested the presence of television in the classroom and maintained that teachers should focus entirely on teaching students how to read and write rather than "entertaining" them with television programs.

While the parent's argument favoring the replacement of electronic equipment with instructional aides who could work with students on a one-to-one basis to ensure learning is viable, the argument fails to address a critical point. The electronic age, with its music videos, games, and educational video programs has surpassed traditional pedagogy in terms of capturing and sustaining student interest and motivation. As a result of the pervasive influence of the computer screen on the young, particularly, more students now presume (and often expect) a visual dimension to accompany the learning process. Since computer literacy is now an academic requirement for obtaining the high school diploma, the majority of students come to higher
education relatively visually literate. Though the textbook has not yet been replaced as the mainstay of classroom instruction, the text is frequently supplemented by software packages containing a wide variety of related skills development and practice oriented activities. This pairing of written and visual texts necessitates further efforts by educators to encourage students to bring to the written text the same positive attitude they normally attach to the interactive learning experience (reading, writing, reacting, and performing) made possible by engaging with the visual text.

The use of visual aids in the classroom to enhance learning and communication extends far beyond wall charts, flip charts, maps, filmstrips, and slides to include elaborately and professionally produced multi-media presentations. Teachers at the secondary level, in particular, routinely incorporate into their teaching units the highly sophisticated teaching "packages" designed, produced, and distributed by the entertainment industry to accompany such television mini-series programs as Shogun and Centennial.

These glossy and appealing packages offer everything from historical perspectives to language lessons and focus on the use of television as a teaching supplement, not as a form of entertainment. The electronic media can be a blessing or a curse depending on how, why, and to what
extent they are incorporated into the learning experience. The case for overuse and abuse of computer games and educational programs, TVs, and VCRs can be made when teacher competency is concerned, but seldom is such a case brought to public attention.

On the roles visual media play in the lives of younger students, Costanzo observes that "film and television continue to dominate a major portion of their formative years, creating expectations, shaping attitudes, influencing language patterns, and providing a common frame of reference" (86).

However and wherever our children, youth, and adults view it, the world we live in "performs" on film twenty-four hours a day, is reproduced for viewing at any time, and is seen in every conceivable space around the globe. Discourse communities are being filmed, recreated, interpreted, and assigned interpretation in and out of context. Trained or not to decode, translate, and interpret correctly, we, in our own discourse communities, "read" the sounds we hear and the pictures we see based primarily on information imparted by the media.

Such a predominance of video, television, and film over other forms of discourse demands a visually literate audience. Joseph M. Boggs, discussing film analysis in The Art of Watching Films, states, "We must direct most of our attention toward responding sensitively to the simultaneous
and continuous interplay of image, sound, and motion on the screen" (5). The difficulty, Boggs contends, lies in being able "somehow [to] manage to remain almost totally immersed in the 'real' experience of a film while at the same time maintaining a fairly high degree of objectivity and critical detachment" (5). Concerned that audiences generally, and students, specifically lack the necessary skills to recognize and respond competently to visual language at the critical level, Boggs adds, "this skill can be developed, and we must consciously cultivate it if we desire to become truly 'cineliterate'" (5).

With the current popularity of the on scene reality-based television programs and talk shows, which expose every conceivable and at times incomprehensible aspect of the human condition, one wonders that if Wordsworth had made the "Quantum Leap" when he declared simply, "The World is too much with us; late and soon, / we lay waste our powers." The question for educators becomes one of beating or joining the rush to lay hands on the riches higher technology brings to the academy. This defensiveness versus integration often serves to energize negative or positive attitudes held by educators concerned about the use of technology to assist instruction.

Moving out and ahead of the majority of college level writing instructors by incorporating film and television into teaching composition as process, Costanzo states, "My
own experience in the classroom has confirmed the value of finding even closer, clearer, and more comprehensive ties between visual and verbal forms of communication" (79). As a means of improving visual literacy among college freshmen, Costanzo teaches composition from the cinematic perspective (80).

As a result of approaching the writing process visually and focusing on basic principles of composition shared by writing and filmmaking, Costanzo claims more of his students "can recognize the compositional elements of clarity, unity, completeness, continuity, and mechanics more readily in visual terms than they can, initially, in their own writing" (80).

Costanzo quickly points out that his approach is not to be regarded as a set of rules, but rather thought of as a "pedagogical convenience" suited more to "unpracticed" writers because of the progression of steps required to achieve a specific task (80). Using the example of what normally occurs when he asks students to write about some aspect of the campus, he describes the effort, saying, "too many get no further than . . . picking up a pen and writing until the time runs out," as opposed to their reaction to being asked how they would like to "make a film on location" (80).

The vagueness associated with simply writing about the campus gives way to visualization as the students become
aware of the process of composing in terms of shooting film. As writers, the students suddenly become alert to the need for a purpose and controlling point of view of the subject matter. They must answer questions of positive and negative perspectives and, based on that decision, they must then consider possible locations, camera angles, lighting options, and editing sequences.

Most entering college students are experienced viewers of television programs, popular films, and amateur videotapes, enough to recognize and critically analyze problems with such elements as lack of sequence, incongruity between subject and context, incomplete framing, lack of continuity between shots, and inappropriate musical or special effects. The next step, Costanzo contends, is to translate their knowledge of what constitutes good filmmaking into their own written discourse (80).

The link between filmmaking and composition is achieved by structuring a course such as basic composition into eleven units. Costanzo attempts to align his course to the traditional approach to teaching introductory writing by following the usual sequence of steps involved in the writing process. The eleven units include Seeing and Writing, Clarifying Impressions, Seeing Patterns, Arranging Ideas, Completing the Picture, Editing for Continuity, Shaping a Style, Selection and Arrangement, Focused Thinking, Persuasive Strategies, and Methods of Research.
Costanzo makes the distinction that the methodology leads the writers through the investigation and discovery process, and he considers how he teaches the concepts more important to the learning experience than the actual topics covered in the units (81).

In the ideal situation, Costanzo introduces the major principle of composition first by film, allowing "his" students to identify or define it collectively as he guides them through a question and answer process. Once each concept is presented and studied in cinematic terms, he presents the same material in written form so that students may see the similarities and differences between the verbal and visual expression of the basic units of composition.

When beginning writers focus their attention on specific and concrete visual images, they come to their own writing with a greater awareness of precision and detail, especially in diction and syntax. Examining descriptive writing with "camera eyes" forces the writer to take more control over the composing process by deciding and selecting what the reader as viewer needs to see, feel, or hear.

As a means of teaching the importance of clarifying impressions, for example, Costanzo incorporates homemade videos and slides of familiar objects, but viewed from unusual angles. To make the images more difficult to discern, he employs a variety of lenses, distances, and exposures. The point is to help writers become aware of how
decisions made with a camera directly affect how the viewer will perceive the object, and how those cinematic decisions parallel those made in the writing process (81).

Joan Didion’s writing process, for example, includes keeping a journal filled with images having the same qualities of "snapshots," or pictures taken quickly without serious study or philosophical aim. Simard and Stone, in *The Whole Writer’s Catalog*, use one of Didion’s comments to point out how constructing a sentence in writing and presenting a visual image in photography correlate: "To shift the structure of a sentence alters the meaning of that sentence, as definitely and inflexibly as the position of a camera alters the meaning of the object photographed" (85). Simard and Stone further explain how the writers can borrow from photographic technique to influence reader response: "Writers, like photographers, can present several different 'pictures' of the reality of the same material, depending on how they approach and arrange that material" (85).

In *Anatomy of Film*, Bernard F. Dick explains that cinematic shots taken using the snapshot method of focusing are "like excerpts," and that "just as some excerpts communicate more information than others, so too do shots" (39). Didion uses this camera technique, also known as a "flash cut," in the essay "On Going Home" to describe a brief but significant moment that reveals an important aspect of her relationship with her husband: "We miss each
other's points, have another drink and regard the fire" (169). The "flash-shot" suggests the two feel strong emotions that are never conveyed. Though brief, the "excerpt," as Dick points out, is "part of the work, just as the shot is part of the total film in which its meaning resides" (Dick 39).

Turning to the rhetoric of film, Costanzo points out that a high angle shot of a figure tends to make it appear insignificant, while a low angle shot from the ground up makes the figure appear controlling and intimidating. He likens these shots to synonyms and metaphors, explaining how the subject can appear diminutive or powerful based on the decision the writer makes.

One such memorable shot in Amadeus occurs when Mozart lightheartedly makes his way home down a busy street in Vienna, surrounded by crowds of street vendors, "pedestrians, carriages, carts, and wheelbarrows," and in the same mood "enters the door of his own house" (75). Then the camera goes to the interior hallway:

Suddenly, he stops. He looks up the stairs. The grim opening chords from the Don Giovanni Overture cut across the March from Figaro. What he sees, looking up the stairs, is a menacing figure in a long, grey cape and dark grey hat, standing on the landing. The light comes from behind the figure so that we see only its silhouette as it unfolds
its arms towards Mozart in an alarming gesture of possession. (75)

The benefit to be gained by employing aspects of film theory to the teaching of reading and writing as processes is that learning to "read" a film critically heightens the reader's and writer's awareness of how texts are composed to achieve specific effects on audience. In terms of teaching the grammatology of film, Costanzo states:

A study of how film producers combine images, what movie editors call 'montage,' can lead productively to exercises in sentence combining. Attention to a film's use of transitional cues, like fades and dissolves, can help to clarify the nature of conjunctions and some forms of punctuation. (83)

An ideal scene in Amadeus demonstrating the art of montage and visual punctuation occurs early in the exposition, when Salieri describes his father's lack of encouragement in contrast to the domineering force Leopold had over Mozart's life. While Salieri recounts how he prayed in church as a boy for God's gift of perfect music, the eloquent strains of Pergolesi's moving Stabat Mater accompany the ardent prayer. The script states, "The music swells to a crescendo. The candles flare. We see the CHRIST through the flames looking at the boy benignly" (11). Old Salieri's voice continues over the montage of scenes in
the church. He continues, "And do you know what happened? . . . A miracle!" (11). The ceremoniously beautiful music continues while the camera reveals the Salieri family sitting down to a large meal over the celebratory Quando Corpus Morietur.

As the elder Salieri receives his plate of fish and "starts to eat greedily," the music begins to swell. Suddenly, the elder Salieri gasps and chokes on a fish bone as the music rises to a crescendo. The victorious "Amen" begins as the women "crowd around him, thumping and pummeling at him -- but it is in vain. FATHER SALIERI collapses" (11), on the spot as the eleven Amens are raised up in a triumphantly rapid succession of exclamation points juxtaposed against the shocked faces of the Salieri family looking helplessly on.

As the last of the Amens decrescendo, the camera cuts quickly to the interior of Old Salieri's hospital room. Salieri strikes the last blow with his gleeful pronouncement, "Suddenly he was dead. Just like that! And my life changed forever!" (11), as the soprano voices sing out the final AH-MEN!" The juxtaposition of these particular scenes, so diametrically opposed and so deliciously diabolical in content and nature (ranging between the saintly and the fiendish), exemplify Forman's use of the "shock" cut. As David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson explain in Film Art, this camera technique is
commonly used in film to reinforce the narrator’s shift in time and to manipulate order and duration (284). In this instance, Forman employs the shock cut to reinforce Salieri’s shift from present to past. To emphasize the significance the elder’s Salieri’s sudden passing has on young Salieri’s fate and life, the shock cut is used to create what Bordwell and Thompson generally describe as “some jarring juxtaposition,” that is usually marked by, “both a sudden shift to a higher sound volume and a considerable graphic discontinuity. "Such transitions," they point out, "create surprise and sharply demarcate one portion of the plot from another" (284).

Costanzo suggests that "what filmmakers imply through close-ups and camera positioning, writers can suggest through their attention to descriptive details and the connotations of words" (83), but he warns that the method succeeds only when the focus remains steadfastly on the parallels between the two creative composing processes.

In the Afterward, written five years after Costanzo first introduced this method to his students, he explains that the "step-by-step" approach has been replaced by a "more fluid notion of composing" in keeping with the transformations in the approaches to teaching writing:

I view both filmmaking and writing as more recursive, dynamic activities . . . the early focus on principles (clarity, unity) has shifted
to an emphasis on process (clarifying impressions, making connections). And I give a good deal more attention to structural and stylistic strategies as ways of forming meaning. (85)

The problem facing practitioners in composition and literature courses today is that visual and verbal discourse dominates the life experience of first year and second year college students, particularly. With the reliance now on the media for basic information and the preponderance of the telephone over personally written communication, little attention is given to written discourse, still the most respected, important, and lasting form of human communication.

The goal for researchers in composition and literary theory, in Costanzo’s opinion, is to discover more about how visual constructions are "created, shaped, and understood" if we are to be better prepared as teachers of reading, writing, literature, and drama as processes.

In addition to the transformations made in composition, literary, and film theory, contributors to contemporary dramatic theory such as Esslin with The Field of Drama, Hornby with Script Into Performance, and Styan with The Idiom of Drama have generated a willingness on the part of critics and practitioners to reconceive of the script as "text," a move that offers the script up as a form of
rhetorical discourse more capable of explaining the human experience than before realized.
Notes

In the interest of applying Stanislavski's Method with brevity, clarity, and practicality to this study, I prefer to use Glenn's interpretation and explanation of subtext and objectives.
Writing on language and narrative in *Studying Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Roger Webster states:

An understanding of the ways in which narrative functions helps us to make sense of literary texts in ways that traditional criticism was unable to; it also helps us to interpret other texts and forms of knowledge which circulate in the social world and our relationship to them. (54)

The composing techniques governing both the playscript and filmscript deserve more critical attention for the contribution they make to composition and literary theory. Shaffer’s deliberate and experimental use of first-person narrative technique, together with the device of confession, suggest how the wide range of literary techniques and stylistic devices can be used to achieve effect and generate meaning.

The use of narrative technique in dramatic discourse invites reader-response theorists to consider *Amadeus* as the basis for further investigation of complex multiple or "symbolic" interactions. Whether the play and film are encountered in performance as "texts," or the playscript and the filmscript are read as "texts," symbolic interaction is taking place in both cases because the spectator and viewer
respond to the performance in quite the same way as the reader responds to the text.

Ronald Harwood, in "The Language of Screenwriting," explains that because the filmscript is yet to be measured or scrutinized by any generally accepted critical standard, the "dialect is individual and capable of infinite variety" (290). Reader-response theory espouses that realization of the filmscript in production depends entirely on the writer’s ability to compose a text capable of rendering what Harwood terms a "visual blueprint" that will set in motion the symbolic interaction between writer and reader (291). The symbolic interaction between the text and the reader, from Harwood’s perspective, relies on "one deceptively simple test"—the reader’s ability to "obtain from the written document a visual impression of the film" (290).

The oxymoron, "deceptively simple," is an accurate description of the text, which, at first glance, appears simple, economical, and clear-cut. A closer reading of the text discloses the technical language or "film jargon" Harwood defines as "a vocabulary often reduced to abbreviations which enables the writer to employ a sort of shorthand for complex instructions" (291-92). Using his own filmscript for Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich as an example, Harwood demonstrates how words and abbreviations such as "FADE IN," "1. EXT. THE CAMP --HIGH ANGLE (HELICOPTER SHOT) BEFORE DAWN,"
"SUPERIMPOSE MAIN CREDITS AND TITLES," and "CUT TO 2. INT. HUT BEFORE DAWN" (292) form what he terms an "intricate calligraphy which governs the placing of instructions, descriptions and dialogue" (292). This system of symbols must set up, in the community of readers specifically trained to recognize and decode them, a complex series of reactions if the filmscript is ever to be produced.

Unquestionably, the most difficult task the text must accomplish is to persuade readers to invest in an unseen product by risking large sums of money and time because "the screenwriter's voice is the first to be heard" (291) as Harwood goes on to explain:

The screenplay has to instruct all those who need to understand the narrative, the interplay of characters, the atmosphere and style; the screenplay must inspire lunatic enthusiasm and passion in those who are to be persuaded to make available several million pounds, but usually dollars, by putting their signatures in the bottom right-hand corner of checks. (291)

The interaction between reader and text must result in activating the imagination. Short and descriptive, the phrases "THE CAMP" and "BEFORE DAWN" immediately demand the reader to visualize a situation. Harwood describes the writer-reader interaction works:
The description of place—THE CAMP—may be as detailed or general as the writer deems necessary. HIGH ANGLE not only gives a technical instruction to the camera crew, but also prods the reader’s imagination into the required point of view, yet it is the parenthetical helicopter which obliges him to look down. The description BEFORE DAWN is unusually precise on my part; most screenplays would settle for either NIGHT OR DAY, but I wanted to communicate the essential element of extreme cold as quickly as possible. (293)

The basis of this response is explained by reader-response theory as the operation of symbols that bring the reader into an interaction with the text. Whether the text is realized in theatrical or cinematic performance, this symbolic interaction between text and audience leads to the production of meaning in the community of either readers, actors, spectators, or viewers.

Used as a springboard for a writing exercise, the work as "text" in any of these forms can act as a catalytic agent to trigger student response because response in each case is based strictly on symbolic interaction. In "Authors, Speakers, Readers, and Mock Readers," Walker Gibson suggests that the literary experience involves two readers, the "real" reader (you and I) and the "mock reader". He explains that when the real reader enters into the reading
process, he or she willingly "become[s] a new person" who is "recreated by the language" (1). Gibson contends that as real readers willingly align themselves with the narrator as the intended receiver of the narrative, they "assume, for the sake of experience, that set of attitudes and qualities which the language asks us to assume" (1). By taking on the "mask and costume" of the mock reader, the real reader can "experience the language" (2). Once in this interactive relationship with the mock reader, the real reader moves beyond the somewhat distanced author-text relationship and into a personal relationship with the mock reader (2). The interaction between the real reader and the mock reader results in a projection, or what Gibson defines as the "fictitious modification," of the reader's own self (4). This interaction is similar to what transpires between the actor and the script in the process of script analysis for the purpose of developing a character based on what the actor perceives the language of the text to suggest. Like the actor emerging from the "projected" characterization, the real reader resumes his or her own identity, changed and enlightened by the investigation and discovery process. In both instances, the actor as reader and the viewer as reader are rendered more capable of reconstructing the text, forming possible interpretations, and discovering meaning.

For purposes of demonstrating the benefit to beginning writers of a "film as text" writing exercise, an actual
assignment based on an in-class viewing of *Amadeus*, and resulting excerpts, are referenced as "Letters to Salieri" ("Letters") and incorporated herein as Appendix A.

Such letters, though natural, spontaneous, and relatively unpolished, enable the beginning writer to become engaged with the narrative, and its cinematic impact, from the personal, yet safe perspective of an adopted persona. Writing to an imagined reader requires the writer to envision the reader personally reacting to the writer's choice of words and phrases and possibly making judgments about the writer. During this monitoring process, the writer acts as his or her own "best reader" and can begin to develop that sense of self-consciousness that enables more experienced writers to perfect their own work as reader of his or her own text (Brandt 116-17).

The letters also encourage less experienced readers and viewers to attend to the more subtle linguistic features of a text, whether written or performed, and to discover the context clues that aid in the making of meaning.

The writer's self-consciousness and attitude toward the reader as audience is reflected in how formally or casually the writer addresses the reader. Writer #1, for example, follows the more formal and respectful style of salutation with "Dear Antonio Salieri. Writer #2 prefers the more casual yet ordinarily acceptable form, "Dear Mr. Salieri," while Writer #3 dispenses with formality altogether in the
straightforward and more assertive approach that begins simply with the reader's last name, Salieri. Equally interesting is each writer's closing sentiment. The first two writers close with simple authority, signing "Fr. Vogler"; the third writer, however, leaves on a more personal note with "Yours truly, Fr. Vogler".

Northrup Frye, in The Well-Tempered Critic, states: "What the critic as a teacher of language tries to teach is not an elegant accomplishment, but the means of conscious life" (47). This study of Amadeus, in translation from one artistic medium to another and across literary genres, attempts to redefine the concept of the script as a mere "springboard" for performance by challenging critics to reconceive the playscript and filmscript as separate and unique "texts" that are each capable of generating meaning independent of theatrical or cinematic realization.

Too few critics have recognized Peter Shaffer for his experimental approach to dramatic writing and his ability to blend stylistic devices with other art forms into singularly dramatic works. Worth noting is the manner in which Shaffer uses first-person narrative as a base for Amadeus with marked assurance while more conventional writers might consider taking such a calculated risk with less confidence.

What can be drawn from the Peter Shaffer-Milos Forman "marriage of two minds" is the realization that all forms of human discourse share a common aim: to disseminate
knowledge and promote understanding of the human condition. The Shaffer-Forman collaboration offers audiences their respective visions of the postmodern era as one marked by the death of idealism, where dreams and aspirations are replaced by doubt, cynicism, loss of faith, despair, and confusion.

William Ellery Channing observes, "Life is a fragment, a moment between two eternities, influenced by all that has preceded, and to influence all that follows. The only way to illumine it is by extent of view (284). Through the empowering effect of Mozart's perfect and original musical compositions and the unlimited artistic capability of the medium of film, Shaffer and Forman provide such an "extent of view"(284).

Frye writes, "Literary education should lead not merely to the admiration of great literature, but to some possession of its power of utterance" (47). Words, Frye explains, operate on three levels—the natural level, the practical level, and the visionary level (48-49). Amadeus offers students, teachers, critics, and scholars more than an enjoyable and thought-provoking dramatic narrative that "entertains and disturbs" as literature to be read, or as discourse realized in performance.

Essentially, the work explains Mozart as a rare individual whose "voice," in the form of musical language
set quite apart from his ordinary speech, rises to the level of high style or the sublime. High style, Frye observes, rises from communication to community, and achieves a vision of society which draws speaker and hearers into a closer bond. It is the voice of the genuine individual reminding us of our genuine selves, and of our role as members of a society, in contrast to a mob. (45-46)

One conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that Shaffer's perception of Mozart, as both the ordinary man struggling to be heard above the crowd and the divine practitioner of his art, serves to illustrate the power of language in whatever form and medium expressed.

Another conclusion one might draw from this study of Shaffer's play and film is that if the "ultimate aim" of a literary education is, as Frye argues, "an ethical and participating aim" as opposed to an "aesthetic or contemplative one" (47), then surely the critic should not disregard the presence of what Frye identifies as "high style in action"—language that is "moving not on the middle level of thought, but on the higher level of imagination and social vision" (46) in modern dramatic discourse.

Finally, we might conclude that one small contribution the simplicity, honesty, and directness of the "Letters to Salieri" make to our understanding of the writing process is that they give credence to Frye's claim that literature that
"seems to us true" is "literature we feel we can trust" (141). Whether the playscript or filmscript is approached as literary text or experienced in the theater or cinema, drama as literature "participates in our lives" as we participate "in its articulateness" (141). Thus, drama as literature should be taken more seriously and investigated more actively for the role it plays in helping readers, writers, spectators, and viewers "make sense" of, interpret, and strike a balance between the vision of the ideal and the presence of the real and countless human dramas that play out in our imaginations and in our own lives.

If truth and instruction are the aims of literary and dramatic works and such works can and do offer us learning experiences, then we should pay some attention to Iris, the heroine of Bernard Malamud's novel and film, *The Natural*. Roy Hobbs, too, is gifted but not enough to be recognized as "the best there ever was" (26).

When all of Roy's dreams cave in and he realizes he was blinded by his own ambition, he looks to Iris for some sort of understanding and forgiveness, much in the same way Salieri cries out to Mozart for forgiveness.

In his despair, Roy tells Iris, "Everything came out different than I thought" (141). Salieri, in his quest for perfection, his jealousy, and his rage against God agonizes because his life didn't follow the course he had so carefully designed. Do any of us possess that level of
insight that protects us from the intrusion of reality on our visions of the ideal life? Iris states her credo simply and clearly: "I believe we have two lives—the life we live with and the life we learn with" (143).

Perhaps her response, as fateful as it is impassioned, will comfort those who embrace the postmodern view that self-worth, personal satisfaction, and happiness are derivations of prolonged self-examination, self-service, and self-interest. We might have found Salieri sitting among the patients of psychiatrist, W. Beran Wolfe, who described them as "ghostly malcontents crowding the corners of his room," adding:

People are unhappy because they look inward instead of outward. They think too much about themselves instead of things outside themselves. They worry too much about what they lack—about circumstances they cannot change—about things they feel they must have or must be before they can lead full and satisfying lives. But happiness is not in having or being; it is in doing. To find happiness we must seek for it in a focus outside ourselves. (Watson 12-13)
Notes

1 The Latin phrase "Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum santis tults in aeternum, quia pius es" was borrowed by Mozart from the Ordinary of the Mass and incorporated into Mozart's Requiem dated 1882 and appears in part of the Prayer for the Dead (Angus Die) as a soprano solo. Translated to English for music publisher G. Shirmer, Inc. by courtesy of Pius X School of Liturgical Music, New York, the phrase reads, "Let perpetual light shine upon them, O Lord, in the company of Thy saints forever, because Thou art forgiving" (Mozart 71).
Appendix A

"Letters to Salieri"

The following writing exercise invites students as readers/viewers to experience the film as "performance text" by assuming the role of the persona (the narratee), the young Fr. Vogler, who comes to the confession (the narrative) as a "zero-degree narratee" (Prince 12).

By means of a handwritten letter addressing Salieri on the personal level, students are asked to compose a response to his confession in which they:

1. Describe as fully and specifically as possible, how they, as Fr. Vogler, were intellectually and emotionally affected by Salieri's physical and psychological manner throughout the confession;

2. Decide, based on textual evidence, Salieri's guilt or innocence in the eyes of the Church and from the perspective of a court of law; and

3. Conclude the response by explaining the decision and offering Salieri counsel in seeking forgiveness and absolution.

The following excerpts from selected "Letters to Salieri" were composed immediately after viewing the film as part of the final examination without time for revision. The letters, reproduced herein in italics to simulate the
appearance of handwriting, are purposely not edited to preserve their integrity and spontaneity.

Writer #1, Melissa: This writer is a first semester re-entry student who, early in the semester, expressed doubt in her ability to write as well as her peers because she had been away from the classroom for twenty years.

Dear Antonio Salieri:

My heart aches when I think of the circumstances in your life that have caused you to turn away from God. I felt sorrow as you described your prayers and the death of your father as "a miracle" that resulted from those prayers. I felt a joy, a delight as I watched you describe the music that you and Mozart wrote. I felt chills as I saw the quiet excitement that reached the core of your heart as you spoke of the music that Mozart wrote. I feel so helpless in trying to let you know your value in the eyes of God.

I should have felt anger when you referred to Mozart as an "incarnate," someone who was put here by God to mock you, but instead I felt compassion. You see, my son, I understand the hurt and the pain that you have been through. As a man of God, I must let you know that you had no right to deliberately hurt Mozart by taking advantage of his weakness in dealing with his father.

What you did, in most cases, would not be considered illegal—but in the eyes of God, they were immoral. Salieri, I can see that you were a man who was driven by many things. You were driven by your deep love for music, your contempt for Mozart and your disappointment in God. If I can understand these things, than I am sure that God can also understand. If I were your judge and you were sent to me with the charges of murder, my ruling would be both simple and at the same time difficult. I would have to rule that you were "not guilty" to the charges of murder, yet you were "guilty" of attempting to drive him to an emotional breakdown, which, in turn, weakened his body by draining every ounce of strength from him by means of the Requiem Mass.
My sentence for you would be severe; one that some would say to be worse than death itself. I would sentence you to a life of deep thought on the actions that you have taken towards Mozart. It seems that God has sentenced you to the same. You have tried to kill yourself, yet God intervened. You may think it was because God wants to punish you further by making you suffer over your past mistakes, but I believe that it was God's way of giving you a second chance to confess your sins.

I feel as though God is using me as a way of telling you that you have punished yourself enough and you must take stock of your worth as a composer and as a human being. Turn your eyes back toward God and live your remaining time on this earth in peace. May God be with you, my son.

Fr. Vogler

Writer #2, Jimmy: This writer is a high school junior who came to the United States from China. He has spoken English for three years and is concurrently enrolled in coursework at both the community college and university level.

Dear Mr. Salieri:

After I heard your confession, I couldn't talk for a long time. My thoughts were completely messed up by your words and I tried to clean my brain in these days. I cancelled all my appointments on the schedule. I didn't do anything but sit on the sofa and stare at the picture of Jesus on the wall while I thought about your words. I felt that I had so many things to tell you that I didn't know where to start. Finally, I concluded all my ideas.

I felt that Mozart was nothing but a lucky man. He was great at music because he had the talent for instruments. At the same time, his family provided him the best musical education and life protection. Everyone has his own talent, but only ten out of one hundred people can figure out their talents when they are young. Of these ten people, some could not get a good education because their
families were so poor. Also, some of them didn’t have a strong family, so they couldn’t sound personalities and concentrate on training their talents. Mozart was one who had all the factors—wasn’t he lucky?

All you had was your talent to compete against Mozart, the best professional music player; of course you were beaten up. From your story, I felt you misunderstood God. When you placed your belief in God, it didn’t mean that God could give you everything you wanted. If that were true, then all Christians could ask anything they wanted from God without working. No matter which religion you believe in, whether you believed in Buddha, Allah, or any other gods, they don’t have the power to change the truth. You shouldn’t place blame on Jesus. Evil is anything inside a person’s mind that he doesn’t understand and can’t control. You never had the courage to face and understand that you weren’t as good as Mozart. This made you deceive Mozart. Some people said that you killed Mozart indirectly, which was reprehensible and without reason in the eyes of social justice.

I saw your motive when you deceived Mozart. He was like a beautiful flower that grew in the greenhouse but never stood up in a storm. Mozart received the best education and protection when he was young, but he didn’t experience any pressure from the society when he went out into the world; he couldn’t stand against struggles. In society, competition exists all the time. You just acted the role of competitor and I felt what you did is justifiable. In fact, you didn’t do anything against the laws—but you defeated Mozart’s mind, which destroyed him as a person completely. If I were the judge, I couldn’t charge you with anything according to the laws, but I know your conscience would bother you for the rest of your life and that is the best punishment. Anyway, it is fun to talk to you and I learned many things after listening to your story—I hoped that you could feel better after you told me your confession.

Fr. Vogler
Writer #3, Michelle: This writer is fairly representative of the majority of two-year college students in background, academic preparation, and age level.

Dear Salieri:

Regarding your confession, I really enjoyed it—even though some of it bothered me. Why is it that you seem to think that you caused Mozart's death? Because you brought him home the night he collapsed? Granted, you played a few evil tricks on him, but I do not believe that you murdered him, and it really bothered me to see you thirty years later, still driving yourself crazy over this "murder". I also cannot understand how you can be so happy that a "miracle," as you called it, resulted in your father's death and later in the planning of Mozart's murder. Really! (In the end, I did enjoy your confession and stories, though).

The atmosphere and time period is very good for a confession such as yours. I enjoyed the elegance of the balls and the palaces they took place in—the music, whether yours or Mozart's—was beautiful. Never before have I really enjoyed classical music. And now I have a respect for the music and the operas.

You never actually came out with a knife or a gun and outright murdered Mozart: it is merely hinted at. So, how do you think that you murdered him and the drinking and stress he was under had nothing to do with it? I do think it was a rather evil thing to do when you dressed up as Mozart's father and then visited Mozart to hire him to do a "work" for you, though. Jealousy had taken hold of your heart at a very young age, which explains your happiness at your father's death. But unfortunately, you couldn't control the jealousy. Mozart became a victim of your jealousy, but it did not cause his death. The evil, jealous type things you did anyone would do if put into your shoes without too much of a conscience.

If I had to be the judge that would preside over your case, I would not give you too steep a sentence. I would look at the evidence a doctor would submit after an examination to discover what actually did kill Mozart. If it was decided that
he died of a disease, I would let you go. If he
died entirely of insanity, I would sentence you to
a light sentence of a couple of years. Now, if
you came to me with a self-defense plea, I would
laugh you out of the court room. Mozart did not
attack you intentionally—it was all in your mind.
So how could you claim self-defense to an attacker
who didn’t know he was attacking you? Either way,
I do not believe that you are the sole cause of
Mozart’s death and I think your actions could be,
in some weird way, justifiable.

Yours truly,
Fr. Vogler
Notes

This exercise was designed for and conducted with my students enrolled in the literature portion of Freshman Composition (English 1B) during the spring of 1991 at the campus of Riverside Community College located in Moreno Valley, California.
Medical Diagnosis of Mozart's Last Illness

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Keywords: Mozart; glomerulonephritis; tuberculosis; leukaemia; rheumatic fever

Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart was born in Salzburg on 27 January 1756 and died on 5 December 1791, at the age of 35, in Vienna where he had spent the last 10 years of his life. In Vienna at that time life expectancy at 55 was another 26 years, so Mozart's death can be regarded as premature.

The nature of Mozart's last illness and cause of death were not ascertained. No medical records of his illness survive, nor was there a postmortem. His death certificate gave the cause as 'heated miliary fever', a loose term indicating a pyrexia with a non-specific military rash.

Some details of Mozart's health were recorded in contemporary letters. Other symptoms and events were documented many years later. The limited medical history which can be reconstructed is important in deciding whether the fatal illness was an acute epidemic fever, as his own doctors thought, or whether it was the culmination of a chronic disorder.

As child prodigies, Wolfgang and his sister, Maria Anna (Nannerl) were exhibited around the courts of Europe. The detail available in their father, Leopold's letters led Clein to conclude that Wolfgang was a frail, sickly child. However, most of his early illnesses seem to have been merely upper respiratory tract infections. Two illnesses were serious. When he was almost ten he suffered a life-threatening illness which may have been typhoid fever complicated by Stevens-Johnson syndrome. Two years later he had smallpox. Neither of these illnesses is likely to have affected his later health.

At the age of six, two or three weeks after an attack of 'catarrh', he had a fever, and some painful, tender, red, slightly raised patches 'the size of a kreutzer' (i.e. 2-3 cm) erupted over his shins, elbows and buttocks. Dr Bernard, Professor of Medicine at Vienna, attended and diagnosed 'a kind of scarlet fever', but it is recognizable today as erythema nodosum. In view of Wolfgang's preceding catarrh, a streptococcal infection was perhaps the likeliest cause, but a tuberculous infection cannot be discounted and could have engendered later complications.

When he was almost seven and again at ten he had febrile illnesses in which his feet and knees were so painful that he could not walk. The second illness lasted about 10 days and the first was probably also transient as Leopold mentioned it only when reminded of it by the second. These illnesses have been diagnosed as rheumatic fever.

The only Jones criteria satisfied in these illnesses were fever and arthralgia - both minor criteria. A confident diagnosis of rheumatic fever cannot therefore be sustained, particularly as the illnesses lasted only about 10 days, whereas untreated rheumatic fever typically lasts 6 weeks to 6 months.

More likely Mozart's arthralgia accompanied viral illnesses such as rubella or adenovirus. The only other known illness in Mozart's early years which could have had later sequela occurred when he was 16 years old and was apparently jaundiced, according to his sister writing 47 years later. He may have had hepatitis A, which raises the possibility of later liver disease.

Mozart had no further serious illness until he was 26 years old. At the same time of day for 4 days he perspired profusely and had attacks of a 'fearful colic' ending with violent vomiting. His doctor diagnosed 'a chill on the kidneys'. The symptoms are consistent with renal colic. This brief although unpleasant illness seemed to have no lasting effect and his musical activities continued unimpeled. Between 1780 and 1790 Mozart completed almost 300 compositions, the sheer labour of committing the notes to paper corresponding to an estimated 8-hour working day. In addition, he gave numerous performances and lessons. He often wrote until two in the morning and rose again at four. These habits of work argue a robust constitution. They are not consistent with chronic, debilitating disease. In July 1789, however, when he was 33, he began to complain of intermittent depression, headache, toothache and malaise, and his musical productivity declined.

There was a resurgence of activity in 1791, the year of his death. But during his visit to Prague he appeared ill. On his return to Vienna, he completed The Magic Flute, although he 'sank over his head in an undated memorandum that 'afew days before his death. But during his visit to Prague he appeared ill. On his return to Vienna, he completed The Magic Flute, although he 'sank over his head in an undated memorandum that 'afew days before his death. But during his visit to Prague he appeared ill. On his return to Vienna, he completed The Magic Flute, although he 'sank over his head in an undated memorandum that 'afew days before his death. But during his visit to Prague he appeared ill. On his return to Vienna, he completed The Magic Flute, although he 'sank over his head in an undated memorandum that 'afew days before

Mozart became bedridden in November 1791. His symptoms included a 'swelling of the hands and feet and a hindrance to his movements'. Later, he suddenly developed vomiting, fever and diarrhoea. Mozart's elder son, who was seven at the time, noted in an undated memorandum that 'a few days before...
my father died, his whole body became so swollen that he was unable to make the smallest movement, moreover there was a stench which reflected an internal disintegration and after death increased to the extent that an autopsy was rendered impossible*. Despite his weakness, on the day of his death he sang part of the Requiem, and afterwards told Susamay how to finish the work. Later that night he developed a high fever. Dr Cloeset performed a venesection, and asked for a cold towel to be applied to Mozart's forehead. This provoked a 'slight shudder'. Unconsciousness followed and Mozart died two hours later.*

In summary, a 35-year-old man died after a fortnight's acute illness characterized by painful and swollen hands and feet at its onset. He was feverish and later developed more generalized swelling, severe weakness, vomiting and diarrhoea. He may have had a rash. He was not dyspeptic - he could sing - and his consciousness was unclouded until very shortly before death.

For some 2 or 3 months before this illness he had been pale and subject to lapses of consciousness, and had complained of loin pain. For one to two years he had suffered intermittent headaches and depression. He had a history of possible renal colic and, in childhood, typhoid and smallpox. He may have had atypical rheumatic fever and perhaps hepatitis.

Postmortem decomposition began unusually rapidly. Most published attempts to classify the final illness can be classified under four headings: infection, heart disease, renal disease or poisoning.

Infectious causes include 'rheumatic inflammatory fever'*® and septicaemia with bacterial endocarditis*®; and cardiac causes, 'dropy of the heart'*®, rheumatic heart disease*® and congestive cardiac failure combined with renal disease*®. Most modern authors favour kidney disease, for example post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis (PSGN)*®-®®, chronic pyelonephritis*®, polycystic kidneys*® and Henoch-Shonlein Syndrome*®-®®.

Rumours of poisoning were documented within a month of Mozart's death*®, and he himself blamed Aqua Toffana - a slow poison containing mainly arsenic and lead. Salieri, a popular rival composer, confessed to the deed in his dotage but later retracted his confession. Mercury poisoning in self-medication for syphilis has also been suggested*®,®®. Mozart's physician diagnosed a 'deposit on the head' - the interpretation of which is obscure. Excessive venesection may have contributed to the fatal outcome.

The contention that Mozart was only one of many victims of an epidemic disease is in favour of an acute infection. Von Lobes wrote: 'This malady attacked at this time a great many of the inhabitants of Vienna and for not a few of them it had the same fatal conclusion and the same symptoms as in the case of Mozart*®. However, without the advantage of knowing the causative organism it is notoriously difficult in many fevers to make a firm diagnosis even with the benefit of the extensive clinical experience possessed by physicians of the time. Mozart became acutely ill in winter when deaths from many non-infective as well as infective causes increase. Furthermore, Von Lobes based his assertion on second-hand knowledge of Mozart's case, and wrote his account 27 years afterwards. The evidence that Mozart succumbed to an epidemic infection is not compelling. Of the infections suggested, typhus and septicaemia are unlikely because Mozart remained lucid almost until death. Bacterial meningitis, a possible interpretation of a 'deposit on the head', is excluded for the same reason. When acute polyarthritis is the presenting complaint, onset of acute rheumatic fever is often abrupt with high fever*®,®®. As was true for his childhood fevers with arthralgia, the Jones criteria are not fully met, but acute rheumatic fever would account for the painful and swollen hands and feet, headache and weakness.

Myocarditis, perhaps leading to heart failure with consequent pulmonary and systemic oedema, can be fatal in the acute phase. Bar held that the 'deposit on the head' was a rheumatic nodule in the scalp, supporting his diagnosis of rheumatic fever*. However, vomiting and diarrhoea are not typical, and Mozart's oedema was probably not caused by cardiac failure because he was not breathless. Breathlessness was not mentioned and his ability to sing the alto part in the Requiem on the day of his death indicates that it was unlikely. Rheumatic fever deserves a place in the differential diagnosis but should not head the list. Bacterial endocarditis occurs without pre-existing heart lesions in 10-20% of cases in 15-20-year-olds®®. It deserves consideration whether or not Mozart had a history of rheumatic fever. Its insidious onset with malaise and anorexia, pallor, low-grade intermittent fever and frequent headaches and arthralgia could account for Mozart's prolonged period of illness preceding his final fortnight. Bacterial endocarditis is always fatal if untreated, with a time course compatible with Mozart's history. Again, however, heart failure would be the cause of oedema, and the objections made above apply. Furthermore, Mozart was rather vain of his small, shapely hands and had finger-clubbing developed, he or Constanze would probably have commented on it. Nevertheless, bacterial endocarditis also deserves a place in the differential.

Tuberculosis was rife in Mozart's day. It is unlikely that he had pulmonary tuberculosis because he had no cough, haemoptysis or constitutional symptoms until at least 1790. A case can, however, be made for renal and/or peritoneal tuberculosis. The genitourinary tract is a common site of reactivation and symptoms may not appear until 5-20 years after primary infection®®. Mozart was 28 when he had symptoms compatible with ureteric colic caused by renal tuberculosis. This was 21 years after the attack of erythema nodosum which could have marked his primary infection. In renal tuberculosis the constitutional symptoms of tuberculosis may be absent but chronic renal failure with uraemia may develop. Many of Mozart's symptoms in the last year or two are consistent with ureaemia (see below).

Although renal tuberculosis does not usually produce 'swelling', tuberculous peritonitis is a cause of painless aetiology. However, tuberculous arthritis is not typically an acute symmetrical polyarthritis such as Mozart had and the 'deposit on the head' was probably not a tubercule as there were no seizures or focal neurological deficits. Neither can tuberculous meningitis have been the fatal illness because of its short duration with clear consciousness almost to the end. Hence tuberculosis could explain many, but not all the features of Mozart's final illness.
The insidious onset of pallor, headaches, blackouts, depression, preoccupation with death and delusions of poisoning (assuming he was not poisoned - see below), as well as abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and weight loss could all be attributed to renal disease resulting in hypertension and worsening uraemia during 1790-91. Mozart's loin pain also draws attention to his kidneys.

Fluker attributed kidney damage to chronic pyelonephritis when Mozart was 28 years old. Chronic pyelonephritis is now believed to arise from infection in infancy rather than in adulthood.

Immune complex deposition is the commonest cause of chronic glomerulonephritis. Mozart may well have experienced infection by a nephritogenic strain of streptococcus and PSGN may give rise to the nephritogenic syndrome which could have accounted for Mozart's generalized swelling. Nephritogenic syndrome also produces a high susceptibility to infection which may be fatal. PSGN accounts well for the features of Mozart's illness, although haematuria usually occurs and was not commented upon.

Henoch-Schönlein Syndrome (HSS) is a multi-system IgA immune-complex vasculitis. The symptoms are haematuria, a purpuric rash, especially of the feet, legs and buttocks, arthritis and abdominal pain with gastrointestinal haemorrhage. It is rare in adults, but when it occurs, 60% progress to chronic renal failure and/or hypertension within 5-10 years. According to Davies, Mozart had his first attack of post-streptococcal HSS when he was 28. Recurrent attacks produced vague symptoms of fever, arthralgia and headaches in early 1790. His depression and delusions in 1791 were the result of uraemia from acute pyelitis when he was 28. This account seems to over-interpret the known facts. In 1790-91 Mozart was in continual financial difficulties and his popularity as both composer and performer had waned. His wife was frequently unwell and away taking the waters. In November 1789, his daughter died immediately after birth and was buried away taking the waters. In November 1791, Mozart's final illness began three days later, and venesection aggravated his renal failure. After a week the associated hypertension caused a hemiparesis, and 2 hours before death he convulsed and became comatose. The final high fever was due to bronchopneumonia which was the immediate cause of death.

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In my view the differential diagnosis of the body could have been massive septic, the causes of which are most commonly cirrhosis, neoplasm, chronic heart failure or tuberculosis.

The only factor favouring cirrhosis is the questionable attack of hepatitis in Mozart's youth, and there is no evidence of encephalopathy. Liver disease is unlikely. A leukemias, however, would be consistent with increasing pallor for some months, with headaches and fatigue. Joint pain, swelling and tenderness are common in leukemia and oedema may occur. Even the questionable erythema of the "milky fever" could refer to a petechial rash. Susceptibility to infection is a prominent feature of leukemia, consistent with a terminal "epidemic" fever and also with overwhelming sepsis which could account for the rapid swelling of the body after death. Leukemias is, however, uncommon in 35-year-olds.

In view of the imprecise and uncertain evidence, diagnosis of Mozart's fatal illness can only be speculative. In assessing the probabilities it is tempting to make the simplifying assumption that he suffered from a reasonably common disease with a more-or-less typical presentation. However, he was an individual and a population. The important features of his illness seem to be increasing pallor over a few months, loin pain for at least a few weeks, and an acute fever with swollen hands, feet and then generalized swelling, in the presence of an unclouded intellect and good breath control.

In my view the differential diagnosis of the underlying cause of death in order of probability is:

- Post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis
- Henoch-Schönlein syndrome
- Renal and peritoneal tuberculosis
Leukaemia
Rheumatic fever
Bacterial endocarditis.
In the first four cases, the immediate cause of death probably would have been bronchopneumonia.

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