

Wednesday October 9th, 2024 at 2:30 pm  
Schwartz Theater Lab

# GENERATIONAL CROSSROADS

*an experimental ethnographic theater  
sampling of original student projects  
on generational knowledge,  
generational wisdom,  
and generational conflict*

## PROLOGUE

Particles in Motion

## ACT I      PHYSICAL THEATER SCENES

*These scenes activate elements from documents, using physical theater techniques.*

### Scene 1      Above the Clouds      ARI, DEVAN, JOSH, NEIL

*Above the Clouds* is a scene about forced change, specifically regarding the forcible removal of families from tenement flats in Glasgow, which were old and dilapidated but were renowned for having strong, almost village-like communities, into high-rise flats in the suburbs in Hamilton, Castlemilk and other places around the city of Glasgow. This scene highlights the generational experience and perspective of change across generations. In the scene, a son confronts his parents about why they became more strict after they left.

**Source Elements:** Connolly, B. (2020). *Tall tales and wee stories*. Two Roads. Physical Theater techniques: Musical Chairs (adaptation), p. 69 and Crossing the Room, p. 107. *The jeely piece Song Scots lyrics*. Scottish Book Trust. <https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/songs-and-rhymes/the-jeely-piece-song>. Cats in the Cradle. (1974). Cat's in the Cradle [Song]. On Verities & Balderdash. Elektra.Zadworna, M., & Stetkiewicz-Lewandowicz, A. (2023b, October 4). *The*

*relationships between wisdom, positive orientation and health-related behavior in older adults.* Nature News.  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-43868-3>.

## Scene 2      Pots and Pans      AKASH, DANIEL, FATIMA, VINAY

This scene is about the importance of storytelling to how values and knowledge can be transmitted over generations. It discusses a relationship between an elder teacher and a student, and how the importance of perseverance is conveyed through a story passed down from ancestors. The scene uses equilibrium with objects, where the elder teacher shows a student how to cook by making the pot an extension of their self.

### Source Elements:

[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042813044200?ref=pdf\\_download&fr=RR-2&rr=8cfb68ea0d5853b6](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042813044200?ref=pdf_download&fr=RR-2&rr=8cfb68ea0d5853b6)      Boal      Page      3-4:      Equilibrium      with      Objects  
[https://www.econedlink.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/1139\\_crowpitcher1.pdf](https://www.econedlink.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/1139_crowpitcher1.pdf)  
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/storytelling-and-cultural-traditions/>

## Scene 3      Misery Loves Company      JAY, KARINA, PADRAIG, WILL

This scene is about the depiction of generational differences and the way the older and younger generations convey transmission of knowledge. It explores how sometimes the younger generation is misunderstood and ultimately ridiculed for the songs they listen to, the way they think, etc. In essence, it is a way that we can bridge the gap between the younger and the older and emphasizes that life is too short to bicker about these differences.

**Source Elements:** Boalian Physical Theatre Exercises: “Object as extension of the body” “Difficulties” “Walk, stop, justify”. Parry, E., & Urwin, P. (2011). Generational differences in work values: A review of theory and evidence. *International journal of management reviews*, 13(1), 79-96.

Troll, L. E. (1987). Gender differences in cross-generation networks. *Sex Roles*, 17, 751-766. Jennings, M. Kent, et al. “Politics across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined.” *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 71, no. 3, 2009, pp. 782–99. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022381609090719>. Accessed 17 Sept. 2024.

[https://x.com/whotfisjovana/status/1834563176719176070?s=46&t=9vf\\_3eqz3Q\\_N0hY669951w](https://x.com/whotfisjovana/status/1834563176719176070?s=46&t=9vf_3eqz3Q_N0hY669951w)

Brief explanation: Shel Silverstein’s “The Giving Tree” cover is replaced with Charli XCX’s lyrics to “Apple,” which is a song about generational trauma and parental behavior (<https://genius.com/Charli-xcx-apple-lyrics>). Angelou, M. (1993). Advice from my grandmother. In *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (pp. 123-124). Random House. <https://cmc.marmot.org/Record/.b10694845>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?volume=151&issue=1&page=26>

“To My Mother” by Wendel Berry. <https://www.instagram.com/browngirltrauma/p/CyCVcrXtPy4/>

## Scene 4      Leaning through Generational Conflict      ANITA, SARA, SIA, TOM

This scene shows the journey of an immigrant parent and their child as they walk through life together. They are leaning on each other in order to show their dependence on the other, but the parent slowly puts more and more pressure on their child until the child can not take it anymore and leaves their parent alone to pursue their own freedom. However, the parent collapses because they do not know how to

survive without their child. The child briefly relishes in their freedom, but when they realize they left their parent behind, they return to them to reassure them that they are not leaving them.

**Source Elements:** Physical Theater technique: Leaning against each other. Zauner, M. (2023). *Crying in H mart: A memoir*. Vintage Books. Deepika. (2014, January). *Generation gap. a poem by Deepika* - All Poetry.

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/11300126-Generation-Gap-by-Deepika> Rothman, J. (2024, September 17). *Is culture dying?*. The New Yorker. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/open-questions/is-culture-dying>

## **ACT II TALKING SCENES**

*These scenes activate elements from original interviews, using thematic coding and composite script writing techniques.*

### **Scene 1 Chairs of Change AKASH, FATIMA, NEIL, VINAY**

This scene is based on interviews with individuals who all come from a South Asian cultural background, but have varying experiences: first-generation immigrants, children of immigrants, and those who have navigated different cultural contexts in their lives. It highlights the struggles and growth that occur when individuals face the tension between traditional values and modern influences, and captures the interplay between maintaining cultural roots and adapting to new environments.

### **Scene 2 Bridging the Divide DANIEL, DEVAN, JOSH, JAY**

This play is about the interviews we had with people from our generation and people from the older generation. It talks about the simplicity of life through friends, coping mechanisms, balance, courage, and different methods of transmitting knowledge. Additionally, it explores the interplay with how wisdom and perception grow and differentiate with age. We interviewed a total of 8 people, 2 each from an older and younger generation. Interviews included professors, family members, physicians, medical students, and college students.

### **Scene 3 Untitled ANITA, KARINA, SIA, TOM**

This scene portrays the generation disconnect between immigrant parents that were brought up in another country and their children, who were brought up in America. We each interviewed two people, parent and child, and pieced together sections of their interview in order to create a cohesive plot to portray the differences in their experience of generational conflicts. Ultimately, we hope to portray that the children have come to appreciate their experience and the way that they have embraced their American side and native side as part of their combined identity.

### **Scene 4 Bridging the Gap: Voices from Then and Now ARI, PADRAIG, SARA, WILL**

This scene approaches a generational divide in opinions and communication. Methods of parenting, political ideologies, and opinions of outsiders are dependent on intersecting identities – this scene puts

age at the epicenter. Using the interviews of college-aged, middle-aged, and elderly individuals, we pieced together a narrative that captures the impact of generation on personal narratives. The use of voice, bodily movements, and actor blocking were crafted with intentionality to tell the story of our project's interviewees.

## CAST

**Ari Ophir:** I am a senior at Emory studying Anthropology and Human Biology with a minor in Religion. Much of my coursework implicitly revolves around generational knowledge transmission and focusing on how human ideas and behaviors have evolved throughout time, so this topic felt very natural to me. Though I am not experienced with theatrical performance, this space has allowed me to break out of my shell and explore new methods of information and theme transmission.

**Karina Esquer:** I am a junior at Emory majoring in Human Biology and Anthropology and minoring in Linguistics on the pre-medical track. Much of my coursework so far has revolved around biological and cultural anthropology. Though I had never been involved in a theatrical performance before, the environment has encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and discover new ways to convey ideas and concepts.

**Anita Osuri:** I am a junior at Emory studying Anthropology and Human Biology with a minor in Quantitative Sciences. Most of my coursework has delved into ethics, culture, and life sciences. Although I was involved in theatrical performances as a stage hand before college, I have never delved into college theater before. This class encouraged me to explore theater through an anthropological lens and frame various perspectives into a work of art.

**Fatima Safdar:** I am a junior studying Accounting and Organization & Management at Goizueta Business School with an Anthropology minor in the college. In my free time, I like to read memoirs, spend time with my cat Chewy, and listen to jazz. I've always been interested in all things arts, so exploring theater blended with anthropology has been a very enjoyable and enriching experience!

**Devan Fritz:** I am a junior at Emory, double majoring in Biology and Chemistry. Most of my experience performing in front of others has been through sports in high school as a member of the basketball and track teams. This class has allowed me to step outside my comfort zone and act in front of others, something I never imagined myself doing at the beginning of the year! Additionally, it has allowed me to develop new skills in presenting research findings and articulating information through theater production.

**Jay Patel:** I am a junior at Emory University studying neuroscience and behavioral biology. This is my first theater class and I am excited to explore what this class has to offer. I like to play tennis for fun and also love to workout and self improve. I am excited to step out of my comfort zone.

**Padraig Pantoja:** I am a junior at Emory University majoring in anthropology and human biology with a minor in Latin American and Caribbean studies on the pre-medicine track. I have been performing onstage since my freshman year of high school, and I am excited to tap back into theater at Emory. Generational differences are a topic I am constantly thinking of as I grow older, look at my past, and navigate future relationships. I believe this class has strengthened my ethnographic skills and I am excited to show my dramatized representations of lived experiences!

**Daniel Sorungbe:** I am a junior at Emory University majoring in Anthropology and Human Biology and minoring in Religion. Much of my coursework and research interests have to do with the ways in which generational knowledge and activities cascade into the present, and as an enthusiastic musician and performer, I'm more than excited to explore these topics in a theatrical light!

**Josh Rankin:** I am one of this year's Robert T Jones scholars, having graduated St Andrews University in June with a Modern History and Social Anthropology degree i am now studying at Emory for the year. I have previously been part of an amateur Opera group in Dundee called Tayside Opera. I'm looking forward to mixing my anthropological knowledge with my experience at opera to deliver an accurate representation of my interlocutors' experiences.

**Sia Kripalani:** I am a junior majoring in Anthropology and Human Biology and minoring in Spanish on the Pre-Physicians Assistant track. I perform in front of people often with my dance group and I used to participate in theater in middle school, so I am excited to return to it and combine it with anthropology! I have learned so much about the benefits of using theater to portray the human experience, especially generational wisdom, interactions, and conflicts.

**Will Owusu:** I'm a third year in the College majoring in Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology with Physics on MD/MPH track. Theater is pretty out of my comfort zone and I don't have much experience performing theatrically. Most of my performances manifested through sports and instruments. I'm excited to delve into new adventures through the lens of an actor. Specifically, topics surrounding generational resistance and pushback against what were otherwise known as "societal norms".

**Vinay Devulapalli:** I'm a junior at Emory majoring in Anthropology and Human Biology on the Pre-Medical track. I am relatively new to theater and I chose this class because it is something that is out of my comfort zone. Generational wisdom is a topic that I am really interested in because I feel it is a common theme that exists in all of our lives. More specifically, I want to understand more perspectives on the reconciliation of generational differences because it is an attempt to unite people with differences closer together.

**Sara Gotkin:** I am a junior on the Pre-Med track majoring in Anthropology and Human Biology. I used to be involved with theater growing up. I was a camp counselor for a theater day camp working as the assistant dance instructor. I haven't been in a play/musical since 6th grade, but I have always appreciated performance. I feel the theme of generational wisdom and conflict is especially significant today with people living longer and our generation entering the workplace and society. It is really important to delve into these issues and explore how we relate to them.