

## PLAY AND PERFORMANCE

---

### *Confronting Vulnerability through Karaoke*

JEFFREY S. BRYAN, FALLON BRYAN, & QUINN BRYAN

When karaoke began in the United States, it was commonly seen as a stepping-stone toward rockstardom (Drew 2001). Though a Japanese import, karaoke was quickly adapted to an American audience (Drew 2001). Thus, as karaoke became a more known phenomenon, notions of stardom have faded and instead karaoke has become a form of leisure entertainment meant to draw crowds to venues. But more than just leisure entertainment, karaoke is a unique sort of casual simulation game (Bryan & Tanenbaum, 2019) that relies on performance for its primary method of engagement, turning that performance into social play. As detailed in “Adapting the Empty Orchestra” (Bryan & Tanenbaum, 2019), karaoke is constrained within a sparse set of explicit rules, an amorphous list of implicit rules, and open-ended goals that are set by and for the individual, toward a community of shared performance. Karaoke’s design, eschewing competition in favor of collaboration and community, allows players to explore themselves and grow from that exploration. In this paper, we explore the experience of a father and his two daughters playing out our projected selves, confronting our vulnerabilities through the “as if” of karaoke. Performance play through karaoke allows players, and play communities, a unique opportunity to explore identities, and confront vulnerabilities, in a safe public space, using the

expressive potential of music and a built in audience community support system.

## PLAY CONTEXT

Our games of karaoke were held at The Decades Bar and Grill in Anaheim, California, which bills itself as an 80s and 90s themed bar. This location was chosen because it is a bar and restaurant and as such, children are allowed entrance until 10PM. Karaoke at this location is held on Sunday nights, from 6PM to 10PM, making it an excellent choice for observation because the kids could play from start to finish and still make it home at a reasonable time. The patrons that attend karaoke here are a mix of locals and one-time visitors. The local regulars tended to be middle aged, blue collar workers out for a date night before heading back to work in the morning, or young 20-somethings partying in small groups of fellow college-aged friends. The one-time visitors tended to be young professionals attending business conventions or team building retreats, as Anaheim is a popular destination for that. Each participant played in concert with each other as both performers and audience, needing no formal explanation of how to play, informed by the ubiquitousness of karaoke in popular culture toward playing “as if” together.

Appropriate to the theme of the bar, the interior decor is stenciled with silhouettes of famous musicians from the 80s and 90s, like Run DMC, Freddie Mercury, Gwen Stefani, etc. On the exterior, the windows are decaled with typical words and phrases ubiquitous during the 80s and 90s, like “Party On!” and “Radical.” The logo and the primary coloring for advertising the bar, including window decals and bar lighting, are in hot pinks and neon blues, while most of the walls are black with white accent walls, and silver metal accent panels, while the exterior is a simple, stark white. The menu is also themed, featuring appetizers, salads, and burgers with names like “I Will Always Love You Nachos,” “Little Red Corvette Flatbread,” “Wang Chung

Asian Wrap,” and the “This Is How We Do It Burger.” Even the bathrooms join in on the theme by including photos of 80s and 90s musicians in various bathrooms along the walls of each bathroom. The theming is more facade than anything, not going much deeper than simple decoration, but the KJ for the karaoke held here adds his own flair that elevates it a bit.

Every Sunday, Kevin Cable, otherwise known as Kevin Karaoke, hosts karaoke at The Decades. He comes with a laptop loaded with a huge selection of karaoke music, books cataloguing that music, and his often sparkly, colorful outfits complete with 80s and 90s themed sunglasses. He also brings his tiger-striped guitar, which he plays sporadically throughout the night, with either an impressive ear for impromptu music re-creation or a huge catalogue of memorized songs. Kevin is the consummate host and karaoke jockey. He performs his role with panache, incorporating play and playfulness into his engagement with his players. In his role as host and facilitator of the game of karaoke, Kevin acts as a performer himself, usually opening his shows by singing the first song, keeping himself in the queue when the night is slow, graciously pulling out as the queue fills up, and constantly staying engaged with the other players. He fills the evening with small jokes, like ringing a call bell when lyrics reference sexual themes, or using puns related to song titles. And he persistently maintains positivity in the play space, encouraging audience players to take on the singer role, congratulating singers on their efforts, and personally reaching out to individuals all throughout the play space. Players at Kevin’s shows go up not only with the support of knowing the crowd is implicitly encouraging, but that they will have Kevin’s support. He not only fills awkward lyric-less moments with guitar playing, he also adjusts the soundboard to enhance singers’ performances. His years of experience hosting games of karaoke shines through during every game, as his multiple nominations as best KJ in Orange County can attest. His expertise, and the

degree to which he knows how to encourage play in his players, is the reason his game was chosen for this exercise.

## PERFORMANCE PLAY

As Richard Schechner says in *Performance Studies*, “performance may be defined as ritualized behavior conditioned/permeated by play” (2007, 89), because play is at the heart of every performance. Schechner says, “Play is intrinsically part of performing because it embodies the ‘as if’” (2007, 89), echoing one of Caillois’s four rubrics of play, *mimicry*, “the pleasure of playing a role, of acting as if” (2001, 8). When one performs a role *as if* they were someone or something else, they are playing. In fact, Schechner goes further to claim that play is always performance “when it is done openly, in public” (2007, 89). In acting theory, Stanislavski describes this in terms of the “magic *if*” (2016, 60) whereby an actor acts “as if” (2016, 53), they are a person experiencing the “given circumstances” (2016, 53) on the stage. We see parallels in game studies, including Margaret Mackey’s work on the *subjunctive mode* in which a reader or player steps into the “as-if” (2008, 2) of a work of fiction. This is a performance of identity, a trying on, as it were, as if heart and soul were clothing toward an expression of self. Such performances negotiate incredible vulnerabilities, vulnerabilities we draw upon to perform, a concept discussed by Lesa Lockford and Ronald Pelias as a type of performative knowledge used when performing without direction, in which “inspiration comes less from the imaginative dwelling within a character or the circumstances, than from his/her affective understanding as a person in an uncomfortable, difficult, or alien situation” (2004, 438). We become, to use their term, “not me” (2004, 438), another form of “as if,” that allows us to explore and move beyond those vulnerabilities. John Paul Gee calls this an exploration of the *projected identity*, seeing the “as if” role as “one’s own project in the making” (2003, 50), defined by our own personal aspirations, that allows us to learn something about ourselves and grow. Gee

sees this as an interaction between the self and the “as if” of the persona we’re playing, developing a third identity that translates between who we are and who we want our persona to become. As such, the “as if” becomes a bridge for developing new literacies of self, a bridge that allows the player to explore the inner depths of who they might be. Karaoke is a game of performance play that is designed to facilitate personal goals, a design ideal for exploring the “as if” of the projected identity toward personal growth.

So this is how we spent our Sunday nights, a father and his two daughters playing karaoke together at the Decades Bar, performing “as if,” allowing ourselves to explore our projected identities, learning more about ourselves and each other by confronting deep vulnerabilities.

QUINN BRYAN – AGE 14

As someone who has been on stage and has performed in a crowd, karaoke should not be so different from the several plays I have performed, but this was not the case. I know how to play someone else, to put on another character. When I play a character, I play the emotions *they* feel. I imagine I’m them and place myself in their situations. I’m not a method actor, but I’m not playing a version of myself, I’m playing the character. But karaoke isn’t just playing someone else. In karaoke, I’m really playing a version of *myself*. When I go on stage, I imagine, and grab the emotion of, being confident. Singing is one of my insecurities. I love to sing, but my voice never seems to get the emotion, quality, and overall talent that I wished that I had. It just never does what I want it to do. So when I go on stage to sing karaoke, I learned to let go of that insecurity and play that confident emotion instead.

On the first day of karaoke, I felt largely out of place next to the loud and happy party goers who sang in groups in 80’s aesthetic

clothes. I did not want to go up on the stage, but knowing I had nothing else to do but watch as tipsy girls sang to songs I hardly knew, I prepared myself for going up to the stage. I tried to remember the beat, the rhythm, and the lyrics of the song “Misery Business” by Paramore (all while worrying if it was okay to say “whore” in front of an audience) and walked up towards the stage when my name was called. A familiar sort of panic swelled up in my chest— the sort of panic that usually flutters in me when I am in front of an audience, but this grounded me a little. “I’ve done this before, there’s no need to worry,” I try to tell myself. Once the music started, and the lyrics were shown, I was startled. These were not the same lyrics I’d blare out as we’d ride in a car. I was more focused on getting the lyrics right than I was with actually singing, and unsurprisingly was unimpressed with what I managed to sing. Normally I loved going up on the stage where I was wiped clean of my doubts and energized with adrenaline, but this time I enjoyed being in the audience watching my sister sing like I haven’t seen her do before, and listening to my Dad (unsurprisingly) nail every song he sang. The excited and happy adrenaline coursed through me now as I sang along to every song that played after my performance— stumbling and stuttering along to 80’s songs. Being in an audience (in the several nights that I’ve been to) was always fun and enjoyable, but I still wanted to own the stage.

On the second night of karaoke, I attempted a song that my Dad was amazing at. I was more nervous than the first night and all I could really think was what if I made a fool of myself? But I was still willing to try. I sang my best, but would not hit those low parts and gave up trying them, belting out the familiar yelling tunes and laughing off my bad attempts. Although I was not particularly good at that song, I found it enjoyable and settled down in my chair and watched the other players go. Again I found myself singing along to whatever song happened to play as I sketched in my book or played on my phone. These nights were

enjoyable, but I still wanted to prove to myself that I was good, or at least okay.

The rest of the karaoke nights went the same with a few differences here and there, singing “Let it Go” with my sister, listening to a little girl sing “Baby Shark” with her mother, and the one night when it seemed every person in the bar could sing at the levels of *America’s Got Talent*, and although I became more fluid and relaxed when I went to sing, I knew I wasn’t quite where I want to be. But on my latest karaoke night, when I sang a song suggested to me called “Ex’s and Oh’s,” I really tried my best. Originally I was skeptical that I could sing this song because it was a pop song. But, it was a good song, and one I was willing to try. And I partially knew the lyrics by heart because of all the times I’ve heard it played. Butterflies fluttered in my chest again, and I was again reminded of theatre and being on the stage. Though nervous at first, I felt myself begin to be wiped clean—all nervousness, fear, and doubt were gone and I was simply living in the present. I sang as if I knew what to do and how to sing. I let go and just sang, and before I knew it, I was done. This was by far my best performance in karaoke. And when I sat with my family and listened to them cheer for me, I was immensely pleased. Of course, I’ll never get to that emotional and perfect singing that I wish I could do, but I felt close to it. Singing has been something I’ve enjoyed since I was little, but I had kind of given up on it a while ago because I just didn’t feel like I was very good at it. It had simply become one of those things I wished I could do— like speaking spanish, being able to dance, or having the ability to do the splits— an idea I often visited, but only in my daydreams on a particularly boring day. But letting go of myself and singing “Ex’s and Oh’s” as if I could really just do it gave me confidence, just as theatre does.

Singing was different than acting because I have confidence in my acting ability, but not when I sing. So even though theatre and karaoke have a stage, speakers, performers, and audience, they

were different to me. But once I let go, I realized karaoke could be the same as acting, I just have to let go— and sing because I want to sing, not to prove my worth to an audience who may not care, or to perfect myself. Karaoke is a great game and one you should play to gain confidence.

FALLON BRYAN – AGE 16

My experience in karaoke has been incredible, and, dare I say, even life changing. I've learned what I'm able to overcome and gained back confidence in performing that has been gnawed away at for years, confidence I never even knew I was capable of in the first place! Through karaoke, I've discovered who I was underneath the person who desired perfection by pretending to be more than who I was on stage. I played as if I can do this. I played the part of me that I believe, or want to believe, can do this. Like I'm tapping into the part of me that fear blocks access to. And in doing so, I found a new connection to something I love to do.

Stage fright has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I can recall early performances I did as a kid, in ballet, piano concerts, singing groups, school presentations, etc. where I would feel the effects of stage fright. My heart would beat rapidly, my palms would sweat, my mind would run at a million miles per hour but I wouldn't be able to think of anything useful to help me with my performance. But back then, I was at least able to perform. I was quiet, and incredibly shy, but I could at least attempt to perform my songs.

When I was in middle school, I joined the orchestra, and started playing violin. Violin is a very complicated instrument to play. It requires a lot of resources outside the violin itself, and takes a lot of time and the ability to multitask with several developed skills at once. It's a formula set up to trap insecure kids like me. When I was put into higher level orchestras, I began to feel even more self-conscious. Many of the players had their own violins,



private tutors, and years more experience than I did. They were capable of things I couldn't even imagine doing. That feeling of inadequacy still lingers with me whenever I play the violin, and it's almost ruined my enjoyment of violin playing, of performing in general.

When we started karaoke, I began learning how to actually sing. I had to overcome my tendency to sing shyly, more inward, to myself. I had to figure out how my real singing voice worked, what it sounded like. I had to learn how to forget about my perfectionist needs and overcome my fear of my own failure by letting go of myself. And, to a certain degree, I was able to. Not perfectly, of course; I still fall under the stress of perfectionism from time to time. But, I am making steps towards letting it go by inhabiting a different me when I get on stage. That's how I had my best performance.

The restaurant and bar were busier than they had been the past couple of nights. It was later, and the crowd seemed enthused in the performances. It was the perfect circumstance for a good performance. I remember wanting to perform for the second time that night, when the crowd was more lively, and I was more able to immerse myself in the song. I wanted to amaze my family with my performance. I wanted to redeem myself after the half-failure I performed earlier that night. However, part of me didn't expect much. Or, more realistically, part of me didn't want to be disappointed if I didn't do too well. But, I wanted it to be a true performance. I spent several minutes playing the song quietly in the bathroom, dancing and practicing lip syncing while fellow players were in the stalls with the doors shut. I've been told in the past I needed to incorporate dancing, so I was going to. On that night, as I stood on the stage, I was able to access every part of who I am, despite the fears of judgment I always hold, especially when performing for a crowd.

I stood up, the song opened. Lady Gaga sang the intro, and I took a deep breath, and let my voice ring out.

*“Rah rah ah-ah-ah!”*

*Ro mah, ro-mah-mah!”*

I swung my hips to the side occasionally, and mimicked the dance moves my family was miming. I felt the rhythm of the song, and my voice sounded strong and confident. When the chorus would come, I sang out loud, and let my whole body move with the song. I sang, exposing myself and my singing, allowing myself to be vulnerable in front of this crowd of people, no longer yielding to the part of myself that wanted to stay hidden.

I was still nervous, of course, but I let it add to my performance. “The nervous kid overcoming her fear to sing on stage,” another new “me.” And yet, it also became who I was right at that moment, a projection of me and somewhere toward who I wanted to be, and I took advantage of it to make my performance *more*. It felt like I was telepathically allowing my fear to be communicated to the crowd. I wanted to immerse the audience in my performance, allow them to feel what I felt. I wanted them to understand the full effort, the full meaning, behind everything I was doing. So if my leg bounced, or if my voice cracked, I let a sheepish smile cross my face and coupled it with an awkward giggle, and continued on, not minding at all that I looked nervous and awkward. Even when I would mess up the dance moves I was miming, and missed a couple of lyrics by getting too focused on my dancing, I wanted my performance to be real, to be *honest*.

*“I want your love*

*And I want your revenge*

*I want your love*

*I don't wanna be friends"*

I felt the music building up, I felt my passion getting stronger. Orchestra taught me several things, one of which is musicality, and I was giving the song as much of a crescendo to build up the climax as I could. I had confidence in my french, and I was sure it would impress the crowd.

“Je veux ton amour

Et je veux ta revanche

Je veux ton amour ”

My dad motioned for me to move down stage. I always thought when people performed offstage, it was kind of cheesy.

*"I don't wanna be friends"*

But, the steps looked inviting. And the crowd was cheering. And I felt a buildup in the music and couldn't resist the call.

*"No, I don't wanna be friends"*

I had a brief moment of hesitation. My skin felt tingly on the edges as if I was being ripped off the background like a bandaid.

*"I don't wanna be friends!"*

But I took the first step, and each step afterwards gave me more strength and confidence. Everyone around me cheered, guiding me, dancing with me. I felt like the song was controlling me, guiding what I was doing, how I was singing as if I was truly a performer. I love music!

*"Want your bad romance!"*

And finally I was off the steps, singing my all into the microphone, arching my back into the performance.

*“Want your bad romance!”*

*“I want your love and*

*I want your revenge*

*You and me could write a bad romance!”*

I sang the part I always loved, and felt the release of all that tension. When I hit those higher notes near the end, it makes me feel so talented, and sometimes it's so easy to nail. At that moment, I knew I not only nailed that line, but the entire song too. Everyone around me was engaged with me, immersed in my performance. We were a group of people celebrating together. It felt pleasant to know I'd done a good job. I was so impassioned, I didn't really register the people dancing behind me, I could only focus on my own movements and nervousness, but somehow I felt the passion of the room. When the song ended, the crowd cheered, and I was complimented by a lot of people. My family was so proud of me. I was so proud of myself too. Watching the video of my performance later, it's not nearly as glamorous as it felt, which makes me laugh. If that small performance made me feel like *that*, then I wonder what an even better performance might feel like. I plan to continue karaoke after this. And, maybe, I can learn how to love playing the violin again, too.

JEFFREY BRYAN

I estimate that I have attended roughly 600 hours of karaoke performances as a researcher. Even before I began researching karaoke, I had been playing karaoke once a month, or so, for several years, on Friday nights, during happy hours with fellow teachers. I guess karaoke just appealed to me. I had always loved to sing, so karaoke provided an outlet that was otherwise unavailable to me in my adult life. And yet, when you start to examine a thing so closely, you can lose what had once drawn you to it. So when I began this little venture of father-daughter

karaoke, it was simply a matter of course for me. Gone was the strange mix of terror and excitement. Sure, I still got nervous as I approached the stage; that never really goes away. But there seemed no more mystery to it. It could no longer hold me in awe. And then my girls got on stage, their first time singing on a real stage, replete with stage lighting and a professional sound system, and all the novelty came back. I knew how vulnerable they had felt going up. I knew how hard it was to push down those insecurities. So watching them take that stage... I have never been more proud. That, right there, would have been enough. I could have watched them crumble on stage and still have felt as proud simply knowing they had challenged themselves to get up there. So imagine my elation as I watched them meet that challenge with strength and perseverance! And then, week after week, they grew and grew until they had hit that high-water mark of *performer*, using both body and voice to create a dynamic performance that energized and engaged. I needed to push myself just as much as they were. I needed to reconnect with those vulnerabilities and play as if I were as strong as they are.

When I signed up on that first evening together, I had done so simply to encourage them. Getting up is no big deal anymore, but I figured if I went first, they might feel better about it. So I got up and sang, like always, but this time I had two young faces staring at me with pride and excitement in their eyes. That was surprisingly intense. And vulnerable. You want, in those moments, when you're proving yourself in front of your kids, to come through. And certainly, I've had enough practice to know I would do fine, but suddenly I had a drive to *perform* in a way I hadn't felt in some time. But I couldn't quite register that feeling on the first song. I tend to lead with my voice, not that I have an amazing voice or anything, but I can hold a tune well and can belt out some very high notes to some very loud rock, so I can usually get a crowd cheering. But I don't really *perform* otherwise.

I don't move on stage. I don't embody my song. It's just *not me*. I can reflect some passion in my gestures, sure, especially when I lose myself to a moment, but I'm not one who can air guitar during the solo, or bust out the rock moves to punctuate that rock voice. I just feel too silly. So I leaned on my voice, letting it carry me through, and walked off stage. We watched some more, the girls got up and sang, doing an amazing job, and my turn came again. Yet again I couldn't muster the courage to push past my comfort zone. I should have danced or something, but I just *couldn't*. Finally, we hit the end of the night, after my girls had already proven themselves, and I knew that I needed to give it my all. I wanted to show them what this karaoke thing *could be*, show them its power to transform, its power to lift you up and hold you there, a god on the stage for four minutes while everyone suspends their disbelief and acknowledges you as a rockstar. It felt good to have that drive again. I had to do more this time. I needed to. So, I dug deep, clawing at myself as I found that hole inside that makes Radiohead's "Creep" so heartbreaking, until, at that most desperate moment, wailing "Run!" into the mic as I stumbled down the stage, I dropped to my knees, face to the sky, pulling on my shirt. In that moment, I projected into my performer self I had long imagined but never attained. I wasn't the dabbler playing at performance, I was the rockstar stripped clean and laid bare by passion. And once the moment was over, the "as if" evaporated and it was just me on that dance floor, awkwardly evaluating how to return the mic to the stage while still looking "cool." I'm pretty sure I looked the fool, but my girls didn't seem to mind. In fact, they seemed ecstatic.

On paper, it really doesn't take much to play karaoke. You show up, you sign up, and you sing. No matter how you do, the implicit rules of karaoke will protect you; the crowd will never boo, they will never call you out, and they will always provide at least a little placid clapping. But those simple set of procedures don't describe the challenge of performance play. When you get up

there, on stage, in front of a crowd of strangers, you're preceded by years of people's experiences watching similar performances. We have a literacy for musical performances and a clear, if varying, sense for what makes a good one, so in karaoke you're always up there performing against the specter of the original performance, embodying the "as if" toward a projected identity, whether it exists in the minds of the audience, or only in your own mind as you recall the voice and performance that typifies your song. It's that mimicry, that performance "as if," that's at the heart of play in karaoke, the amateur game of singing in public spaces. But karaoke is also an act of exposing yourself, standing up on a stage as the singular center of attention for all to see, because you have the audacity to stand up there and pretend that you have something to say, even though someone else has already said it before, and likely done so much better than you're about to. Still, it's in persisting at that projection of self, that wish to hold a crowd's attention, the desire to be noticed, the need to push beyond your own limitations, or even the deceptively simple act of challenging yourself to be there at all, where we find our strengths. I performed as I never do because I wanted to show my girls that I could face myself as much as I'm asking them to face themselves. Yet, there's a lie in there somewhere. I know my challenge is nothing compared to theirs. I know how much Quinn struggles with her voice, finding it hard to match what she hears in her head. I know how fearful Fallon is of that stage, of being the center of attention, of being scrutinized and judged. I know in that way a father does the vulnerabilities my daughters are confronting. And I'm glad, actually, that because they're there, looking at me with expectation, that my vulnerabilities made an appearance as well. Maybe they're always there and I just learned to ignore them. So how could I not challenge myself a bit? How could I not pointedly seek out my insecurities and face them like they were about to? I watched my girls stand up tall while feeling small, prove themselves amongst a crowd, and face their fears to come out stronger for it. I had to

at least play at being as brave as they are, these two teenagers in a room full of strangers, singing on a real stage for the first time.

## CONCLUSION

Karaoke has been an incredible bonding experience for us. Each game, we learn something new about each other. We find new songs we didn't know we liked, we try new things we didn't know we could do, and we face new vulnerabilities as we grow past our comfort zone. It's regrettable that there are so few family friendly karaoke venues, and yet, this also helps us to appreciate how rare this opportunity has been. We were able to expose our vulnerabilities through an act of public performance, protected and bolstered by play and by the structure of this particular game, playing as if we weren't quite as vulnerable as we felt, *as if* the "bad singer," the "shy girl," and the "awkward performer" were gone. We embodied our "as if," allowing ourselves to explore our projected identities, learning from our new selves just what we were capable of, and we did so as a family, together. In *Karaoke Nights*, Rob Drew says karaoke in the United States is seen as a chance to "be a star" (2001, 13). He says this not just in the micro scale of the moment, the star of the space for five minutes, but also as a legitimizing pathway to some sort of broader stardom, even if only on the local level. Maybe that was true of karaoke in the 90s, when it was new and fresh. But our experience of karaoke, as both performers and audience, watching so many others wear their personas and then take them off again, is that karaoke isn't seen as a launching pad to anything other than a vulnerable expression of self. Any stardom is fleeting and almost tongue-in-cheek, with a clear acknowledgement from both performer and audience that you are playing "as if" you already were the star and not toward aspirations of becoming one. In fact, that's the draw of karaoke and a lesson for designing games toward personal growth. When you design a game without establishing preset goals, with collaboration instead of competition, you build a play system



that supports personal development. No one is competing with anyone. No one is elbowing their way to the top. We're all just stepping on stage, playing "as if" so we can share our vulnerabilities with each other in a safe space.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Kevin Cable for hosting some truly awesome karaoke, and Amber Bitolas for helping us make song choices, encouraging us to do our best, and playing along with us as audience member, week after week.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benedetti, R. L. (1986). *The actor at work*. Prentice Hall.

Bryan, J. & Tanenbaum, J. (2019). "Adapting the Empty Orchestra: The Performance of Play in Karaoke." *2019 DiGRA Annual Conference Proceedings*

Caillois, R. (2001). *Man, play, and games*. University of Illinois Press.

Drew, R. (2001). *Karaoke nights: An ethnographic rhapsody*. Rowman Altamira.

Gee, J. P. (2003). *What Video Games Have to Teach Us about Learning and Literacy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Lockford, L., & Pelias, R. J. (2004). Bodily poeticizing in theatrical improvisation: A typology of performative knowledge. *Theatre Topics*, 14(2), 431-443.

Mackey, M. (2008). Stepping into the Subjunctive World of the Fiction in Game, Film and Novel. *Loading – The Journal of the Canadian Games Studies Association*, 2(3).

Schechner, R. (2017). *Performance studies: An introduction*. Routledge.

Stanislavski, K. (2016). *An actor's work*. Routledge.