

Summer 2015

This summer I participated in an research assistantship funded by Sewanee: The University of the South to research ways to improve theatrical environmental practices. I started off the research assistantship with many goals. Primarily, I wanted to research the materials and processes used in theatrical production and create charts and infographics that would allow workers and volunteers alike to make the most environmentally-conscious decisions. Afterwards, I wanted to assess the materials and processes used in the Tennessee Williams Center's own production and make a plan for sustainable improvement, and then take the information gathered and connect with local theaters to create a prop database so items used in various productions could be shared and reused instead of wasted.

Not all of these goals, however, have yet to be accomplished. So far, I have researched enough to create the charts and infographics but have yet to move onto the secondary steps. Although I have had to move from the campus, I live locally and can easily continue my work until I move in at the end of August, which I plan to do. Because of this, I will gladly write a secondary report once I have accomplished more of my initial goals. I feel this project is very important the Tennessee William Center and the local community, and I plan on continuing work on this project throughout the upcoming semester.

For the goal I have already accomplished, I have created six infographics and six charts. The different infographics I've designed include Wood Source, Fabric Dyeing, Care for Clothes, Paint Disposal, Common Practices, and General Resources. I've also organized my research information into Lumber, Textile, Paint, Other Materials, Lighting, and Bulb charts.

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The research assistantship thus far has consisted of much independent work, mostly because I have yet to make it past the first goal of my research assistantship. My work has mostly been isolated and accomplished online using different design apps and online services. Currently, I am very eager to start connecting my work with others and allowing it to have a wider impact.

My works range of influence will most definitely include the Tennessee Williams Center, whose authority I've been working under and, subsequently, the authority of Sewanee: The University of the South. I have been very pleased to work under the University and am eager to use my research to impact the theater and the campus community. Likewise, I hope the sphere of influence will extend past the local communities to local regions and even, in the slightest of ways, have a global impact, since effects on the environment can affect a multitude of areas.

Personally, the research assistantship's influence on my own development has been momentous and allowed me to develop many skills. The amount of time required for research is momentous, as I have learned, and organizing the information from that research requires a similar amount of time. Before the research assistantship, I didn't quite realize how much time that is required to gather accurate and complete information, and this research assistantship has provided me with essential perspective for the rest of this project and future ones. I have likewise learned how essential time management is, even outside of the hectic schedule of typical semesters. Although there wasn't as much to manage as during the schoolyear, any project that helps me improve the skill is helpful. Another welcomed improvement was with my graphic

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design skills. I tend to have great difficulty with creating online media. With this research assistantship, however, I had to do just that and create many infographics online. With the increasing usage of technology in the professional world, any experience in online work greatly enhances my possible potential in future careers.

The overall impact in my life has been more noteworthy, and the general experience has left a lasting mark on my future goals. For instance, I hope to continue working on this project for awhile, and even during the most difficult moments of the research assistantship when the isolation was making the experience very boring and difficult, I still wanted to continue it. Mainly, even when it became taxing, I wanted to keep going because of learning, the most rewarding aspect of the research assistantship. Throughout all of the work, learning about a variety of subjects fascinated me and drove me to keep working. The research assistantship has reaffirmed my interest in Theatre and academia in general. I have learned a lot from this experience and look forward to learning more as I continue my work.

The research assistantship has also critically impacted my career goals and helped me realize how I want my life after Sewanee to be. I normally enjoy isolated work, but I realize how tiresome it can be and that a career with a nice balance between solitary and connected work is what I truly want. Theatre offers that balance between isolated study and work on plays and the necessary collaboration between many people. Similarly, Theatre offers a balance between intellectual and active work; not only do I want to study and learn, but I also want to apply my

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knowledge to create. All of this has kept me focused on my intended major and reaffirmed my path at Sewanee and my eventual career.

In short, I have learned a lot from this research assistantship and will continue to do so as I complete this project and accomplish more of my goals. This opportunity has made a lasting impact on my life, and the skills I've developed will stay with me throughout my professional life. All of the positivity this research assistantship has granted has reaffirmed my confidence in myself and my future goals. I would soon like to return the favor and use my research to leave a lasting impact on Sewanee's community and other surrounding areas.