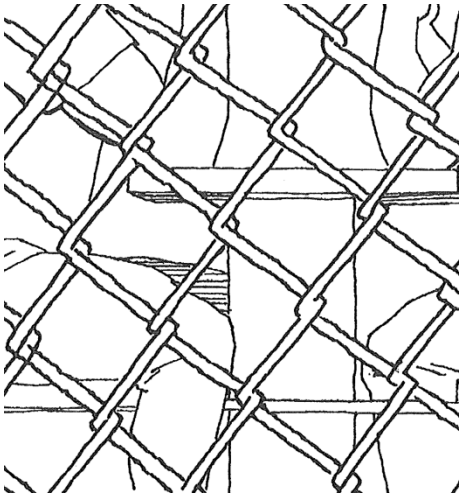


CHAPTER 4

IRONHAWK ON DEATH ROW

By Mariana Leal Ferreira



Sharp metallic noises, like a knife striking the floor, still make me jump. Awake or in my sleep, they take me back ten or eleven years to the cold steel walls of a maximum security prison in Nashville, where I visited American Indians on death row during my tenure as an anthropology professor at the University of Tennessee. As I passed through the multiple checkpoints into the visitation room, nerve-wrecking sounds of steel gates and electronic locks felt like torture. It's true what prisoners say: the haunting clatter is yet another form of cruel and unusual punishment added on to their death sentences.

This noisy penalty co-exists side-by-side with ringworm and other preventable skin diseases, outside cagings in inclement weather, solitary confinement, and gladiator fights staged by prison guards and the warden for their sheer enjoyment.

I taught long-distance courses to the inmates, who took advantage of the prison law library to better understand United Nations treaties, such as the **Geneva Conventions**,¹ the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide**, and the **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**. After a couple of years, private prison administrators, who contract with the state of Tennessee to *profit from forced confinement* – the classic definition of slavery – cracked down on our attempt to educate all prisoners on international human rights law. My visitation rights were abruptly revoked. Although I've created dramatic settings for these conversations, every scene in this play is based on true facts. The text is also culled from a wide array of archival materials, such as press reports, court transcripts, personal correspondence, and regular phone calls I received from the prisoners. I wrote *IronHawk* in 2007 with the conviction that the death penalty is not justice. In this play you clearly see the institutional racism upon which the existing capital justice system rests.²

¹ Words in **bold face type** are defined in the Glossary.

² This four-act play was stage-read by SFSU faculty and UCB students, and directed by M. Ferreira, at: 1) the 106th AAA Annual Meeting in Washington D.C., in November 2007, on the invited presidential panel "Anthropologists in the Global Arena: Dialogues for Change;" and 2) the 5th Annual SFSU Human Rights Summit, in May 2008.

Dedication: *IronHawk* is dedicated to Leonard Peltier, a citizen of the Anishinabe and Dakota/Lakota Nations, unjustly imprisoned since 1976.

Human rights issues conveyed in the play: the death penalty, religious freedom, freedom from racial discrimination and cruel and unusual punishment.

Synopsis of IronHawk:

IronHawk, an Apache warrior on death row for thirty-three years, embarks on a spiritual journey at the moment of his botched execution at a maximum-security prison in Tennessee in the summer of 2010. The play examines the continuing genocide of American Indians on death row in the USA, highlighting the Geneva Convention's ban on the execution of Prisoners of War, or POWs.

Cast of Characters:

- **IronHawk**, Apache death row inmate, 52. Spiritual, educated, and smart.
- **Hutch**, death row inmate, 48. Pragmatist, uneducated, and smart.
- **The Joker**, a narrator providing background information and raising consciousness. Speaks as unseen voice-over or addresses the audience from the side of the stage.
- **Ms. Manslaughter**, prison warden, 45. Sadistic, pig-headed.
- **Executioner**, 45.

Time and Place:

Inside *IronHawk*'s cell, in an outdoor exercise iron cage, and in an execution chamber at a contemporary maximum-security institution in Tennessee.

Illustrations: All illustrations are from a graphic novel by Stephen Wills based on *IronHawk on Death Row*.³

IRONHAWK ON DEATH ROW

ACT ONE

IronHawk and Hutch are playing poker in a steel "cage" in the prison yard of a maximum-security facility. IronHawk's left eye is covered by a black patch because of injuries sustained in a gladiator fight staged by prison guards and the warden.

IRONHAWK

Your turn.

³ The complete graphic novel for this play can be found at the end of this chapter.

HUTCH

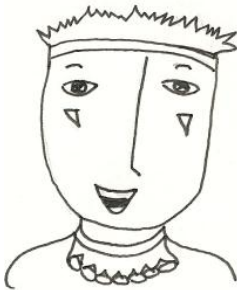
Fuck, I'm out of luck. Sucker, you took all my money!

IRONHAWK

I'm going blind and you curse the Devil? You gotta watch yourself here in Unit Six. Bros don't play cards with sissies like you. Straight Flush: five, six, seven, eight, nine.

HUTCH

Lucky mother fucker! You cheatin' me, Chief. Some ol'Injun trick? I hear you're full of magic – hypnotize guards, disappear from your cell – how come your magic ain't got you off death row? Always wanted to transfer here to watch you fight. Folks say you take three at a time, bare-handed. Pretty good for slashin' a white man's throat with a huntin' knife!



THE JOKER

The United Nations opposes the death penalty. The USA is in violation of UN regulations by having the death penalty.

IRONHAWK

I'm no Chief. I'm an Apache warrior – IronHawk is my name, and I am innocent. I'm a political prisoner of the United States government, a POW.



THE JOKER

The four UN Geneva Conventions are meant to protect the wounded, the sick, the shipwrecked at sea, prisoners of war, and civilians in time of armed conflict. The Third Geneva Convention, adopted in 1949 after the horrors of World War II, discusses in detail the rights of prisoners of war, or POWs.

HUTCH

P.O. what?

IRONHAWK

POW means Prisoner of War.

HUTCH

You gotta be kiddin'. The war in Iraq?



IRONHAWK

Indian wars, colonial wars. They've been waging war against my people for hundreds of years. Ever heard of Wounded Knee?

HUTCH

Yeah, I seen cowboy movies on TV, like *Dances with Wolves*. But that was way back then. Chief, we're in the twenty-first century!

IRONHAWK

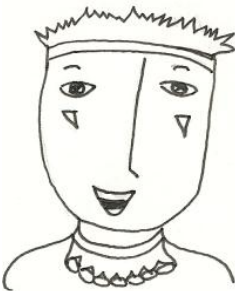
Geronimo, Crazy Horse... My heroes all killed cowboys. Did you ever wonder why?

HUTCH

'Cause you're savages!

IRONHAWK

Genocide!



THE JOKER

The 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide defines genocide as any act committed with the idea of destroying in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.

HUTCH

Genocide? Fuck. Too much readin' those damn books. Think the law gives a fuck about us? Now, gladiator fights are cool, man. You ain't givin' up on those, are you. What fun is there for an inmate like me if there ain't no fightin'? Listen up, Chief. You plannin' some big escape? 'Cause books ain't gonna get you out of this hole. And magic ain't neither.

IRONHAWK

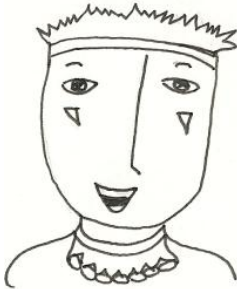
You know nothing about your rights on death row. More than a hundred inmates have been released on DNA evidence.

HUTCH

Rights for poor folks like us? Who gives a fuck? DNA is for O.J. Simpson dudes.

IRONHAWK

Indian people care. The Geneva Convention says you can't kill prisoners of war.



THE JOKER

Article 13 of the Third Geneva Convention says that "prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated." In addition, "prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity."

HUTCH

Geneva what?

IRONHAWK

I can show you law books in my cell. International laws protect victims of Genocide and prisoners of war.

HUTCH

Your lawyer teach ya this shit?

IRONHAWK

I got no counsel. I represent myself. Got all the paperwork ready for my last appeal in the Federal Supreme Court.

HUTCH

You takin' the needle or the chair?



THE JOKER

Think about this: the approximate number of death row inmates in the USA in 2012 was 3,146. States with the most death row inmates are California with 724, Florida with 411, and Texas with 304.⁴

IRONHAWK

My body is sacred. I'm an Apache warrior and I fight with my own weapons.

⁴ Death Penalty Information Center; see www.deathpenalty.org.

A weapon?
HUTCH

A peace pipe.
IRONHAWK

To crack someone's head?
HUTCH

I pray for peace in the world.
IRONHAWK

HUTCH
Pray as much as you want, Chief. But this pow-wow stuff is bullshit to me. Here come the guards. Behave or they'll stick them Taser guns in your balls again.

ACT TWO



MS. MANSLAUGHTER
(Talking to Hutch in his cell.) Speak up, what did you find out? Is Chief playing another Indian trick anytime soon?

HUTCH
Ma'am, the Injun's got some smarts. I saw books in his cell, lots of'em. That's what the ol'Injun does, study them law books.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER
How can an ignorant Indian learn from a book? I'll kill him one way or another; it's my revenge. The last fight is mine. Can't wait to see him drooling, his braids going up in smoke, his eyeballs popping. I should even get a promotion out of this!

HUTCH
He's not taking the chair, Ma'am, not the needle, neither. Guess what, he calls himself a POW. A Prisoner of War. I seen it in the books, too, some Geneva thing that protects him. The Injun's smart, Ma'am, he really is. Something to do with genocide.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER
Bullshit, there's never been no genocide in this country.



THE JOKER

Let's not forget that mass killings of Indigenous Peoples occurred in the United States. By conservative estimates, the US population prior to European contact was greater than 12 million. Four centuries later, the count was reduced by 95% to 237,000.



HUTCH

It's true, Ma'am, I saw it in the books. Here it is, he wrote it down for me. *(pause)* It's called Geneva Convention. That ol' Injun knows his stuff. He's read every fucking book in the library.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

What else?

HUTCH

He's got a weapon in his cell, some kind of pipe.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

The pipe's a weapon? I've made sure he won't burn sage in that thing ever again.

HUTCH

He says the pipe's sacred, some peace mission he's onto. Still calls it a weapon, he does. Ma'am, I think the pipe gives him special powers.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

The pipe's his weak spot. If he doesn't take our deal, we'll confiscate it right away. I'm saving that for last.

HUTCH

Ma'am, if he finds out I'm a snitch, he'll kill me!

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

You go back to Unit Two as soon as we're done. Good work, Hutch. Now, find out exactly when he's filing the federal appeal cause that's when he'll get the letter.

ACT THREE



MS. MANSLAUGHTER
(*approaching Ironhawk's cell*) Chief! Get your ass up here! I have a letter for you.

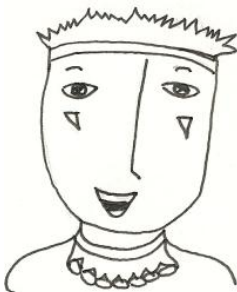
IRONHAWK
A letter?

MS. MANSLAUGHTER
Sign here, on the X.

IRONHAWK
Tennessee Department of Corrections? I'm waiting for the Supreme Court!

MS. MANSLAUGHTER
We got a great deal for you, lucky son-of-a-bitch! Free commissaries, intimate visits, and you get to keep the pipe. Give up your appeals and take the chair. Easy!

IRONHAWK
My pipe is not a privilege. It's my right, my religion.



THE JOKER
Article 12 of the UNDRIP says "Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains."

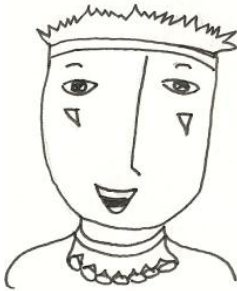
MS. MANSLAUGHTER
Religion here's only Jewish, Christian, or Muslim.

IRONHAWK
You want me to ... blow my head up in smoke? I'm a POW. You guys can't kill me!

MS. MANSLAUGHTER
In California, they'll gas you. In Washington, you'll hang. Here in Indian country, if you take the needle like a dog (fiercely), I'll make sure you're awake every step of the way.

IRONHAWK

I'm protected by the Geneva Convention! I am an Apache Warrior! The Convention says you can't kill me, the genocide of American Indians isn't over!



THE JOKER

The Third Geneva, Article 130, considers it a "grave breach" to kill, torture or treat inhumanely any Prisoners of War.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

The Convention means shit in Guantanamo or Iraq. You're gonna die anyway, so take the deal and keep the pipe.

IRONHAWK

You can't take my pipe, I've had it for thirty years. The third Geneva Convention says: "Articles having a personal or sentimental value may not be taken from POWs." Take the letter, I'm not signing.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

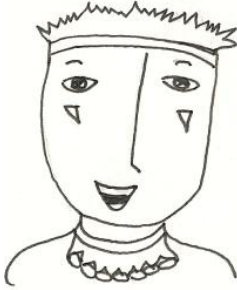
Think you know international law? Next thing, you're innocent. Murderer! You're giving up tons of pleasure *and* your pipe. So you'd rather go back to the hole and straight to the chair?

IRONHAWK

You can't kill a POW. I've got my rights.



(IronHawk takes a piece of paper from his pocket and reads aloud facing the audience.) "Prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated. The willful killing of protected persons – including sick and wounded, and captured or surrendering soldiers – is a grave breach of the Third Geneva Convention."



THE JOKER

“Prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated. Any unlawful act or omission by the Detaining Power causing death or seriously endangering the health of a prisoner of war in its custody is prohibited, and will be regarded as a serious breach of the present Convention. In particular, no prisoner of war may be subjected to physical mutilation or to medical or scientific experiments of any kind which are not justified by the medical, dental or hospital treatment of the prisoner concerned and carried out in his interest. Likewise, prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity. Measures of reprisal against prisoners of war are prohibited.” This is exactly what Article 130 of the Third Geneva Convention says.⁵

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Sign the letter, bastard!

IRONHAWK

I've got nothing for you, Manslaughter. Just a prayer to make you see the light.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

You got twenty-four hours. We'll even getcha spare ribs and some scotch! I'm tired of you, Chief. You're disgusting and fat. If you don't give up your appeals and take the chair, I'll make sure you're in terrible pain till your heart finally stops. I control the injection chamber. This last gladiator fight is mine. I wanna watch you die.

⁵ Article 13, Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, entered into force Oct. 21, 1950. UMN Human Rights Library; see www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreet/y3gctpw.htm

ACT FOUR



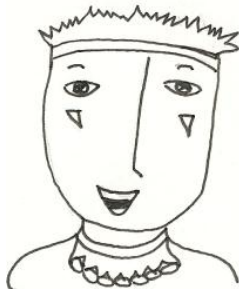
(The Death Chamber. A series of yellow, green, and red lights are visible near the “cocktail room.” The Executioner ties down IronHawk’s arms and legs to the gurney and shaves his right calf. He hooks up IronHawk’s arms to an IV. The curtains between the execution room and the witness stand are closed. Manslaughter comes out of the adjoining “cocktail room.”)

IRONHAWK

Grandfather! I’ll light a fire to your spirit.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

(speaking to IronHawk) Just too bad you didn’t take the deal. Apache magic isn’t that powerful, is it, Chief. Your pipe’s gone. Now it’s my turn. You can’t escape *my* magic. Got a good potion brewing. You’ll die like an animal!



THE JOKER

The methods of execution used worldwide are lethal injection, beheading, firing squad, hanging, stoning, and the electric chair.

IRONHAWK

Hear my voice, Grandfather! I prepare a feast for you!

EXECUTIONER

(attempting to insert the IV needle) His veins are good for nothin’. I’ll try the calf.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Poke harder. Aren’t you the best jabber?

IRONHAWK

Grandfather! I shall walk the beautiful trail.

EXECUTIONER

Found a trickle of blood. *(pause)* Ma’am, is the cocktail ready?



MS. MANSLAUGHTER

All three drugs ready to flow into (*sarcastically as she checks out the drug cocktail*)... your sacred ... temple, Chief? We'll see how sacred you are today.

IRONHAWK

My father, Sun. My mother, Dawn. I send forth my prayers.

(It's 11:55 pm. IronHawk is now flat on his back. Manslaughter opens the curtains.)

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

(facing audience) The governor...and the mayor! You folks don't ever miss an execution. Five more minutes until midnight ... Goodbye, Chief. Say "hi" to your grandpa. I'll take good care of your pipe.

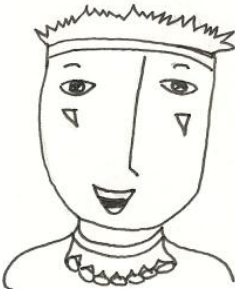
IRONHAWK

(facing audience) You can't take away my dignity.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Dignity? You'll be at the Body Farm tomorrow. We donated your body to science.

THE JOKER



*The Third Geneva Convention states that "Deceased prisoners of war shall be buried in individual graves unless unavoidable circumstances require the use of collective graves. Bodies may be cremated only for imperative reasons of hygiene, on account of the religion of the deceased or in accordance with his express wish to this effect. In case of cremation, the fact shall be stated and the reasons given in the death certificate of the deceased."*⁶

(Manslaughter steps into the witness room, opens the curtain, and takes a front seat. She speaks through a microphone as the execution progresses.)

IRONHAWK

(to the Executioner) Make sure my braids don't touch the floor.

EXECUTIONER

Anything else?

IRONHAWK

I am innocent!

⁶ Article 120, Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, entered into force Oct. 21, 1950. UMN Human Rights Library www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/y3gctpw.htm.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

It's midnight. Let the execution begin! Sodium Pentothal should induce a coma in two to three minutes.

(At midnight, a green light indicates the initial flow of shot number one. IronHawk is praying.)

IRONHAWK

I've made a footprint. I call for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide.

THE JOKER



International death penalty trends are unmistakably towards abolition. Use of the death penalty worldwide has continued to shrink, and use of the death penalty has also been increasingly curtailed in international law. Since 1990 an average of three countries each year have abolished the death penalty, and today over two-thirds of the world's nations have ended capital punishment in law or practice.⁷

(The Executioner checks the IV.)

EXECUTIONER

(facing audience) Ma'am, we missed the vein. It's goin' straight in the flesh. His arms are swellin' and he's still awake.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Shot number two will knock him out. (to the other witnesses) Tubocurarine, known as curare, shall freeze the muscles and paralyze everything but the heart.

(A yellow light starts flashing. IronHawk is still praying.)

IRONHAWK

I've made a footprint. My death is a violation of the right to life.

(At 12:20 the Executioner checks the IV again. IronHawk's feet and hands are still twitching. He opens his eyes.)

IRONHAWK

What's going on?

EXECUTIONER

Dead man talkin'!

⁷ See <http://www.amnestyusa.org/death-penalty>.



THE JOKER

There are many reasons why we should oppose the death penalty. The innocent may be wrongly executed. Since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, more than eighty inmates have been freed from death row. That's one death row inmate found to be wrongfully convicted for every seven executed.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Give him a double of curare! Hurry up, hurry up, this has already gone on for nearly thirty minutes.

(The Executioner presses the yellow switch twice.)

EXECUTIONER

Ma'am, his lips are movin'.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

Go ahead with number three.

EXECUTIONER

He's awake, tryin' to breathe!

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

(facing audience) Still trying to be tough! *(to the other witnesses)* Won't take much longer...enjoy! It's already half past midnight. The red light will indicate potassium chloride, the lethal drop that will stop his heart.

IRONHAWK

The preying bird of death is calling. *(gasping)* Creator, bless the fallen warriors!

(IronHawk's mouth is foaming. His head falls to the side. The Executioner picks up the braids, placing them across the Indian's chest.)

EXECUTIONER

God bless ya, Chief.

MS. MANSLAUGHTER

(facing audience) The inmate is finally dead at 12:45 am. You are cordially invited to Willie Softskin's electrocution in this same room next year. May God be with you, Amen.



THE END

LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR *IRONHAWK*

WARM UP ACTIVITIES (to be used before reading the play)

ACTIVITY 4.1: THE POWER OF EMOTIONS

Overview: Participants practice a range of positive and negative emotions without any specific reason for feeling this way.

Time: 15-20 minutes.

Materials: None.

1. **Getting Started:** Explain that during the entire activity they cannot use words, only numbers (e.g., 65, 130, 2), and that at no time may they touch anyone.
2. **Shifting Emotions:**
 - Ask participants to circulate expressing positive emotions toward each other.
 - As they continue to interact, ask them to begin to shift the quality and quantity of this positive emotion to less positive.
 - At intervals, cue participants to continue this negative emotional shift until they are expressing hatred or despair and threatening violence. Clarify that they must never touch anyone. Urge them to focus on expressing the emotion at this point, not on self-protection.
 - Then gradually cue participants to shift back to positive emotions, as if they were rediscovering the good qualities of others until they return to the original state of harmony.
3. **Debriefing the Activity:** Discuss the experience and relate it to attitudes that people hold about social issues like the death penalty, using questions like these:
 - *How did you feel during this activity?*
 - *Did you try to imagine some motivation for the positive or negative emotions you were expressing?*
 - *Do you sometimes experience strong emotions like these without knowing what has caused you to feel this way?*
 - *Are there some situations or subjects that cause some people to have such strong emotions?*
 - *How do these emotional responses on such topics affect social change?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 222-223.

ACTIVITY 4.2: NOTHING HUMAN IS ALIEN TO ME

Overview: Participants re-enact the execution scene, Act 4, taking a different role each time.

Time: 60 to 90 minutes.

Materials: Copies of Act 4 of *IronHawk on Death Row* for each participant.

1. Getting Started:

- Frame the topic: Explain that about 61% of the population in this country are in favor of executing convicted murderers, while only 35% are opposed to it (Gallup 2011) When offered a choice between sentencing a murderer to capital punishment or life in prison with no chance of parole, half of all Americans say they prefer a life sentence over the death penalty (CNN 2011).⁸ For the most part, people who support capital punishment do so quietly, unwilling or unable to justify why they would kill to stop others from killing.
- Explain the goal of the exercise: to explore our ability to feel, think, and be in this world in ways infinitely more various than we are aware of.
- Ask participants to form groups of four and explain that each person in the group will play each of the four roles in the execution scene, Act 4, in *IronHawk on Death Row*. Explain that at some point you may call a halt to the action.

To the Facilitator: If one group does not have four participants, add these “extras” to another group, which will then have a silent observer in each shift of roles.

2. Exploring the Roles:

- Ask each group to find a space and begin acting out the scene.
- After enough time has elapsed for the actors to begin to develop the character, call a halt to the action and instruct each actor to pass his or her script to the actor on the right, who will then take over that role.

To the Facilitator: Depending on the time available, you may want to re-enact the whole scene four times or call a halt four times in a single reading.

3. Debriefing the Activity:

When all groups have completed their scenes, discuss the experience, asking questions like these:

- *What was it like for you to shift roles?*
- *How did each actor feel in each of the different roles?*
- *Were there some roles that you enjoyed playing? Even “negative” ones?*
- *Why were certain actors’ performances more convincing?*
- *What emotions did the actors draw on or feel emerge in themselves during the performances?*

⁸ For the Gallup poll, see <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1606/death-penalty.aspx>. For CNN, see <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2011/10/12/cnn-poll-number-who-prefer-death-penalty-on-decline/>

Observe that actors are given the opportunity to explore *how they would feel* about supporting the death penalty, because everyone is capable of wrongdoing. Virtuous behavior is the result of free and conscious choice and not the fruit of an incapacity for wrongdoing. This exercise consists of stimulating those latent parts of each of us to better understand everything that is inherent in human beings. The actor is not asked to alter her personality, only to sound out her possibilities and, by the same token, those of the characters she is going to play.

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 224-225.

EXPLORATORY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 4.3: STYLE OR SUBSTANCE?

Overview: Participants act out a scene from *IronHawk on Death Row* in a different genre or style.
Time: 30 minutes.
Materials: Scripts of *IronHawk on Death Row*.

1. **Getting started:** Ask participants to brainstorm other dramatic genres that can be used to tell any story (e.g., circus, melodrama, farce, opera, sitcom). Divide them into several small groups and ask each group to choose a scene from *IronHawk on Death Row* to present in a different genre.

To the Facilitator: For example, IronHawk's botched execution could take on the characteristics of a circus. As a farce *IronHawk on Death Row* would require broad satire and improbable situations (e.g., What if Ms. Manslaughter fell in love with IronHawk?) In a melodrama IronHawk's actions would be more salient than his characterization as a spiritual Apache. A situation comedy focusing on the humorous side of real-life situations and is usually character-driven.

2. **Shifting genres:** Ask each group to perform its version of any scene from the play. After each presentation, ask the audience for any further ideas about transforming the play into this genre.
3. **Debriefing the Activity:** After all the presentations, discuss the experience asking questions like these:
 - *What was it like to see a scene in different genre? Was anything gained? Lost?*
 - *Which alternative genre seemed most successful? Least? Why?*
 - *Did shifting genres provide any insights into the play?*
 - *Why do you think the author chose to use the original genre?*

To the Facilitator: This exercise is likely to generate new material or other possibilities for action against the death penalty. It may also generate ideas for a new, participant-created play.

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 229.

ACTIVITY 4.4: SPEAKING THE INNER VOICE

Overview: Participants stop in mid-scene and speak their character's thoughts aloud.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Scripts of *IronHawk on Death Row*.

1. **Getting started:** Explain that participants will take parts and act out a scene from *IronHawk on Death Row*. At some points, the Joker will shout, "Stop! Think!" and all the actors will begin speaking aloud what is in their character's mind at that moment in the action. They will continue speaking at the same time until the Joker shouts, "Go on!" at which point the actors will pick up the scene just where they left off.

To the Facilitator: This exercise allows actors to reveal their thoughts, which may be quite contrary to the arguments made in the play or else be alienated from the storyline altogether. To do so, participants need to be already familiar with the play. Actors communicate on the conscious level by their words and movements, but also at the "undercurrent" level by means of the thoughts they "emit." When an actor's thoughts clash with his or her actions, the audience receives "static," two contradictory messages that are impossible to reconcile.

2. **Acting a scene:** Assign a scene or scenes from *IronHawk on Death Row* to be acted out. Have the Joker stop the action several times. You might have more than one set of actors repeat the same scene. After each scene ask the participants for comments and observations.

To the Facilitator: Some suggested passages:

- Scene One: When IronHawk says he is a Prisoner of War and Hutch questions whether genocide has ever occurred in the United States and has ever heard of "Wounded Knee."
 - Scene Two: When IronHawk and Ms. Manslaughter talk about American Indian religion and the peace pipe, citing the Geneva Convention.
 - Scene Three: The anti-death penalty argument.
3. **Debriefing the Activity:** When all scenes are completed, discuss the experience asking questions like these:
 - *What was it like to hear both the scripted voice and the inner voice of the characters?*
 - *What clashes did you observe between a character's actions, words, and thoughts?*
 - *Did hearing the inner voice help you to understand the character? To act the role better?*
 - *If a scene was acted more than once, what significant differences did you hear in the inner voices?*
 - *What happens in real life when a person's real thoughts clash with his or her words and actions?*
 - *Are there situations in real life when hearing the inner voice would be helpful? Unhelpful?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 227.

ACTIVITY 4.5: MIXED EMOTIONS

Overview: Characters' mixed emotions are acted separately and then consolidated.

Time: At least 60 minutes.

Materials: Copies of *IronHawk on Death Row*.

1. **Getting Started:** Explain that this activity explores the complexity of many emotions, rehearsing separately the elements of a character's motivation and finally consolidating them into a single expression that combines all elements.
 - Ask for volunteer actors, three to play IronHawk and four to play Ms Manslaughter.
 - Ask the remaining participants to serve as "coaches" for the actors, suggesting how they might express these complex and conflicting emotions.

Alternative: For simplicity and brevity, use only two actors who act all the different emotions.

2. **Analyzing and Rehearsing Mixed Emotions:** Explain the roles to each group of "coaches" who will direct the actors. Clarify that actors do not have to stick to the script but can add any words or actions that convey the different emotions.
 - For IronHawk, show these elements:
 - His will to live;
 - His counter will to die;
 - Both motivations in his dominant will to live, i.e., he wants to live but also sees his death as liberation.
 - For Ms. Manslaughter, show these elements:
 - Her strong urge to kill, especially as expressed in Scene Two, i.e., her proposal to exchange the pipe for the electric chair, her control of the execution chamber;
 - Her counter will to appear as a good prison warden who treats all inmates fairly, despite their race or religion;
 - Some doubts in the face of IronHawk's citing the Geneva Convention;
 - Her dominant will to kill (the Execution Scene, Act 4).
3. **Conveying Mixed Emotions:** After rehearsing, ask the actors to present their roles to the rest of the group.
4. **Debriefing:** Discuss the activity asking questions like these:
 - *What did you learn from this activity?*
 - *Was it difficult to separate the conflicting emotions? To consolidate them?*
 - *What does this activity suggest about prejudice? About the complexity of conflict? About social justice?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 228-229.

ACTIVITY 4.6: METAMORPHOSES

Metamorphosis 1: Swapping Masks

Overview: Characters and their “followers” gradually exchange roles.

Time: At least 15 minutes.

Materials: Copies of *IronHawk*.

1. **Getting Started:** Explain that this exercise explores the dynamics of transformation.
 - Ask for two volunteers to act the roles of IronHawk and Ms. Manslaughter. They will start by reading from a specific passage of the play but then can begin to improvise from that situation.
 - Divide the rest of the participants into two groups and assign each group to be the “followers” of one of the characters. Explain that without using words they must imitate or reflect the emotions and mannerisms of their respective character.
 - Explain that, at a signal from the Facilitator/Joker, the two characters will begin to exchange roles so that gradually IronHawk becomes Ms. Manslaughter and vice versa.
2. **Metamorphosing:** When the characters and their “followers” have developed their initial roles, signal that they must now gradually exchange roles. Bring the action to a close when the characters have fully exchanged roles.
3. **Debriefing:** Ask the participants to discuss the experience of changing from one character to another, asking questions like these:
 - *What was this experience like for you? Was it difficult to change roles?*
 - *Did you learn anything by playing the role of both characters?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 149.

Metamorphosis 2: Shifting Masks

Overview: Actors follow a changing leader and shifting emotions.

Time: At least 30 minutes.

Materials: Copies of *IronHawk*.

1. **Getting Started:** Explain that this activity also explores transformation of emotions through following the lead of a key actor.
 - Ask one participant to play the role of IronHawk and 4 or 5 others to play the role of “followers.” Explain that the “followers” will try to match IronHawk’s words and emotions so that the group is more or less speaking in unison.
 - Explain that the Facilitator/Joker may interrupt the action several times and designate someone else in the group to become IronHawk. The new leader must express an emotional state as opposite to the original as possible. The rest must now follow this new leader.

- Assign a scene where IronHawk speaks alone (e.g., his status as Prisoner of War, his prayers for peace in the world). Explain that the actor playing IronHawk may begin with the text of the play but can also use his own words to convey his feelings.

Alternative: To involve more participants, the Facilitator/Joker may remove, add, or substitute another participant for one of the followers.

2. **Passing the Lead:** Allow enough time for the role of IronHawk and his emotions to change several times.

Alternative: Have two or more groups of leaders and followers acting at the same time.

3. **Debriefing:** Discuss the activity using questions like these:
 - *What was it like to shift leaders? To shift emotions?*
 - *What was it like to observe others making these shifts?*
 - *Did the activity give you new insights into the character of IronHawk? Into acting skills?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 150-151.

Metamorphosis 3: Adding Masks

Overview: Participants suggest additional characteristics to the role of the Executioner.

Time: At least 20 minutes.

Materials: Copies of *IronHawk on Death Row*.

1. **Getting Started:** Explain that in this activity, new qualities are added to the role of a character, in this case the Executioner.
 - Ask for a volunteer to play the Executioner.
 - Discuss with the group what would happen if, without losing any of his characteristics, other qualities were added to his mask. For example, how would the Executioner act if, on top of everything he already is, he possessed the sadistic and violent personality of Ms. Manslaughter or IronHawk's spirituality and peacefulness? The possibilities are infinite.
 - Explain that once the Executioner begins to play his assigned role, any participant may suggest an additional quality.
2. **Adding Roles:** Ask the Executioner to start acting an assigned scene from *IronHawk on Death Row*. He may start with the written script and add his own words. Once he has begun, invite participants to suggest an additional quality for his role and let the actor respond. Do this several times.

Alternative: Repeat this action several times with different participants playing the Executioner.

3. **Debriefing:** Discuss the activity using questions like these:
- *If you were the Executioner, how was it to add new qualities to your role?*
 - *What additional qualities seemed to “fit” the Executioner? Which did not?*
 - *Is the character easier to understand with these additional qualities?*
 - *Do we understand a character or situation better when new qualities are added?*

Adapted from Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, 150.