

THE STORY OF LOVEWELL INSTITUTE  
FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS:  
VISION, THEORY, METHOD

Project Demonstrating Excellence/ Dissertation

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Submitted by  
David Sheridan Spangler  
Learner # 6166

Committee

Sherry Penn, Ph.D., Core Professor  
Laurence J. Ryan, Ph.D., Second Core Professor  
Robert Richard Pevitts, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor  
Norman J. Fedder, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor  
Gary Diomandes, Ph.D., Peer  
Brenda Harris, M.S., ED., Peer

## Abstract

This Project Demonstrating Excellence (PDE)/Dissertation blends autoethnography, historiography, and other forms of qualitative research as it examines the evolution and development of Lovewell Institute for the Creative Arts' philosophy, pedagogy, human resources, creative process, business, social action, spiritual implications, and educational applications of its process and methodology. This study also focuses on the emergence of Interdisciplinary Arts as a compelling new field of study; the imbalance between creative arts and interpretive arts; the "creative process" as an effective methodology for intellectual, psychological, and spiritual inquiry; the synergistic relationship between artistic achievement, educational advancement, and social transformation; and the Lovewell Method as a viable educational methodology for teaching and learning a variety of arts-based and non-arts-based skills. This research project was designed around three distinct but complementary components. Each component comprises a section of this document and is framed by a primary research question. Part 1 addresses the question, "What is Lovewell?" The first eleven chapters of this PDE/dissertation endeavor to answer that question through a blend of historiography, autoethnography, and descriptions of fundamental aspects and constructs of the Lovewell Method and theory. Part 2 asks, "How does Lovewell affect its constituents?" This section examines the effects that Lovewell Institute has had on students; staff; parents; teachers; community; the domains of music, theatre, dance, design, and interdisciplinary arts; and the field of creative process and new works. The design of Part 2 includes a qualitative analysis and interpretation of a Likert survey administered to 29 research participants, an assessment of evaluation data collected over the past 20 years by various other researchers, and the examination of a case study (Yoon, 2000) on Lovewell Institute constituents. Part 3 addresses the final

research question, “What is Lovewell’s potential for future growth, and what new relevant theories can be derived from this research?” This section rejoins the discoveries and findings gained from this study with the relevant scholarly conversation.

## Dedication

To the Lovewell staff artists, instructors, and administrators who are daily clearing the path, lighting the way, and giving voice to a new generation.

To the Lovewell Board who devote untold resources and guidance in keeping the flame of creativity burning.

To the Lovewell parents who know that it takes a village because they *are* the village.

To the Lovewell students who illuminate us with boundless energy, refuse to let us grow old, and constantly remind us why we do what we do.

To my family: my wife, Martha, and my children, Marjorie, Catherine, Isadora, and Sheridan, who have shared the dream, endured the hardships, and truly expanded the vision and research.

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