

EDITOR'S MANUSCRIPT EVALUATION

When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre: Three Tragedies and Six Essays

By Edwin Wong

Summary:

The first half of *When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre* contains three winning plays in the author's international "Risk Theatre Modern Tragedy Playwriting Competition," now in its fourth year (risktheatre.com). Risk is the author's new theory of tragedy where risk is the dramatic fulcrum of the action. The second half of the book contains six risk theatre interpretations of classic and well-known plays and novels. The theme is risk. The argument is that, by dramatizing risk on the stage of theatre, we learn about how we are impacted by low-probability, high-consequence chance events in life.

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Performing Arts, Theater PER011000

Literary Collections, American LCO002000

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The following are some key thematic phrases based on the content of your book to get you started on reviewing and selecting your marketing keywords. We recommend you perform a Google search to understand what kind of results these phrases bring up. This will enable you to adjust or refine your keywords accordingly. If you would like additional support, please contact your publishing specialist.

- Modern Tragedy
- Playwriting Competition
- Theory of Tragedy
- Probability Consequence
- Chance Life Events
- Dramatizing Risk
- Risk Theatre

Opening Comments:

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to FriesenPress for editorial review. Welcome back, Mr. Wong. *When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre* was a pleasure to read. What follows is my editorial evaluation of the manuscript, detailing some of the manuscript's strengths and potential areas of improvement, as well as my editorial recommendation for next steps.

Strengths:

As a former teacher who, whenever possible, integrated drama into a variety of subjects knowing the value and wisdom to be gained goes far beyond the immediate subject matter, I was thrilled to read your manuscript. It is imperative that this work finds its way to libraries, in particular those that teachers will make use of for inspiration. Imagine the next generation exposed to and even steeped in the understandings that contemplations on risk can bring.

P10 Watching risk theatre is like going into game seven of the NBA finals—when *everything* is on the line, *anything* can happen.

Page after page of *When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre* is filled with skilled writings affirming the value of theatrical studies on risk and contains encouragement for those on a path seeking deeper contemplations on life and the risks therein.

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Your own authorial voice in the preface is welcoming, and engaging. It is obvious you have meditated on these ideas for quite some time. There is such an honesty and calmness to your writing and yet there also exists a passion and an urgency to let your readers know your urgency to communicate “a moral imperative to understand risk” (p7). Readers will not be disappointed by what they find within these pages. You should be very proud of what you have accomplished in this manuscript.

Your honesty and transparency from the get go are disarming and welcome even the general public—even those not versed in theatre, let alone risk theatre—in to learn, to experience...

P9 Instead of lecturing in classrooms and auditoriums, I could more often be found plumbing their restrooms and installing their heating systems.

And then there is your humour. Marvellous.

P9 I would create my own network by founding and funding an international playwriting competition, one based on my risk theatre theory of tragedy. It was a longshot, but one befitting one who writes on risk. By founding the competition, I bet all-in on risk theatre. Having talked the talk, I would walk the walk.

This comment by Mr. Dean on page 19 is as profound as it gets, “I truly hope that it will become an irrelevant play in the future.” Wouldn't it be lovely if one day his play would indeed become irrelevant? For now, it belongs in this collection and the collection is stronger for it.

These pages are filled with lines and ideas that linger on the brain and the tongue, lingering to be pondered and repeated in whispers in the brains and by the tongues of the plethora of future readers. These are but a handful of the many I could have mentioned:

P27 MUNIR [*revealing his face dramatically*]. “Let us sit on ground and tell the sad stories of the death of kings.” Shakespeare. *Richard Two*.

NAWEED. *Beradaar* Munir, you not tell me you speak English.

MUNIR. I have many surprise. English profitable, yes? Language of Shakespeare and Wall Street.

P40 HAFIZ. You stop so soon? The dance is a quest to unfold yourself. Not like prayer—when we fold the body.

You have a fine way of putting to words the reality of a thing and at the same time steep it in emotion that will together connect with readers, reminding them of their own experiences. Note the excerpt below.

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P7 We live in an increasingly complex world where unintended consequences abound. More than ever, we have a moral imperative to understand risk.

Note, again how your strong authorial voice is deep and welcoming, authentic and honest. You have a very good way with words and your storytelling ability, even as evidenced in the preface, is mature and developed. There is a disarming quality to how you write.

The addition of the quotes of praise for your manuscript is excellent. Each supports what you are endeavoring to accomplish with this manuscript, and each helps to draw the reader in.

Even the Table of Contents is an enjoyable read.

P5 A Handkerchief, Spotted with Strawberries

The essays are no less fascinating than the plays. The whole compilation together in one volume speaks loudly and clearly and will, as a result, be heard and heeded by your audience.

A few quotes I found particularly meaningful were:

P33 AARON. <> Because...because stories are what makes life worth living...what make us human. You see, I believe in the power of empathy, Doctor Jones. Investing so fully in the state of being of your fellow man that you come to better understand his plight, his joys and fears. And we do that by hearing other people's stories. And if no one tells those stories, no one risks something to get those stories, then what? If empathy disappears, what's left for us then? I don't want to live in that world.

P196 If economics is the dismal science, then tragedy is the dismal art. Tragedy, like economics, sees a world of privation where, to gain x , one gives up y .

And likewise,

P201 Tragedy, like economics, is a dismal art. Tragedy is an economics of the final resort that examines the opportunity cost of being alive.

P213 Patriotism gives patriots something that the logicians and rationalists never could: something greater than life to live and die for. Patriotism takes the raw biological basis of human nature, hidden from plain view by the mediating apparatus of consciousness, and codifies it in its strictures. It takes the primordial murmurings of tribalism and the irrational emotions of gentle altruism and hateful aggression and unites them under a common banner. It then harnesses the myriad impulses that draw the sapiens into ever higher levels of social organization—from

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nomadic life to life in hamlets, cities, and megalopolises—to give the patriot something to believe in. [Fascinating.]

P223 Risk speaks differently to Cassius. It presents him with an opportunity to reclaim his dignity.

P226 Having thrown himself into the hands of nature, he feels a rising tailwind. Chance has his back.

Please note that there were a great many thought-provoking quotes I could have chosen. All of which I longed to read and reread for the pure pleasure of hearing the writing and ideas, mulling them in my mind.

The organization and assortment of the works included in this collection, the ideas and insights as well, are marvellously chosen and beautifully executed. This book has the potential to impact many people and I have no doubt many lives will be changed and others directly effected as a result of your work here. You should be very proud of this accomplishment.

Potential Areas of Improvement:

What follows are suggestions of items to be addressed before publication of your manuscript. These are a completely normal part of the editing process and are in no way a statement on your writing abilities. Some items can be looked into by you, and others will be taken care of in the editorial stage by your editor.

Copy

On a technical level your manuscript is very clean with regards to copy errors; there are very few elements of spelling and punctuation, etc., that need to be addressed before publication. Your editor has done a wonderful job. A **Proofread** will address those typos that still linger. This has no reflection on your content, or your opinions and is in no way unusual for this stage and is just a regular part of the process.

Some examples of typical typos and errors found in yours, *and in many manuscripts at this stage of publishing by the way*, are outlined below. All of these naturally (and inevitably) occur throughout the writing process, and it can be hard to catch them after you've been working so closely with your manuscript. The **Proofread** will correct issues that could distract readers from a full emersion in and enjoyment of your ideas.

Here are a few quick examples of the types of errors I found in your manuscript:

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P5 *Je est un autre* or "I is Another"

Commented [E1]: Did you intentionally select this phrasing over the grammatically correct Je suis?

There has been a lot of reformatting. Occasionally, a spacing issue slips past as in this one from page 29. The entry of BOY [*sings Lullaby*] should be on a separate line I believe. This is difficult to see until the changes are accepted or the document is viewed in simple view without the edits showing:

SALIM. It's my ball now. What are you gonna do to get it back?

BOY. I don't know. I can sing for it?

SALIM. OK, then, sing. [*SALIM begins to walk away with the ball...*] BOY [*sings Lullaby*].

Our big red rooster crows night and noon,

The big red rooster is so confused.

Commented [E2]: This should begin on the next line.

Also on page 29 is the Persian expression MUNIR. *Ba salamatee!* [Cheers!]

Commented [E3]: Please verify the spelling. Should it not be Bé salamati! ?

P34 Whenever I focus on a subject, there's inevitably **a point of view**, which left unchecked can become manipulative and destructive.

Commented [E4]: Was 'a' intentionally left out here?

The formatting between chapters must be changed. For example, on page 203, there should be a hard break after the final entry on that page. The returns there must all be deleted so that the following chapter begins at the correct placement on the page. Then, in another example on page 231, there are no spaces between the end notes of chapter 8 (where a hard break should be) and the commencement of chapter 9.

Editorial Service Recommendation:

The entries themselves in *When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre* are told with an obvious passion and are well organized, and the writing has strong authorial voices but, as with any manuscript at this stage of the publication process, it still requires a tidy up before publication. A **Proofread** is recommended and is adequate to fulfill this task. It will polish your manuscript for the enjoyment of your many readers.

Conclusion:

When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre presents powerful dramatizations of risk in clear and engaging ways and deserves to be read by as large a readership as possible. *Risk captivates, holding audiences in thrall.* (p10) This manuscript did exactly that for me. I am

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grateful to have been given the opportunity to read this fascinating and captivating collection of works. A **Proofread** will tidy up the pesky typos and formatting issues that linger and I would be glad to assist you through this editorial process. I look forward to the possibility of working with you.

Risk theatre is to literary theory what natural selection was to evolution. (p8) Again, marvellous. Thank you for the opportunity to consider these ideas.

Sincerely,
Your FriesenPress Editor