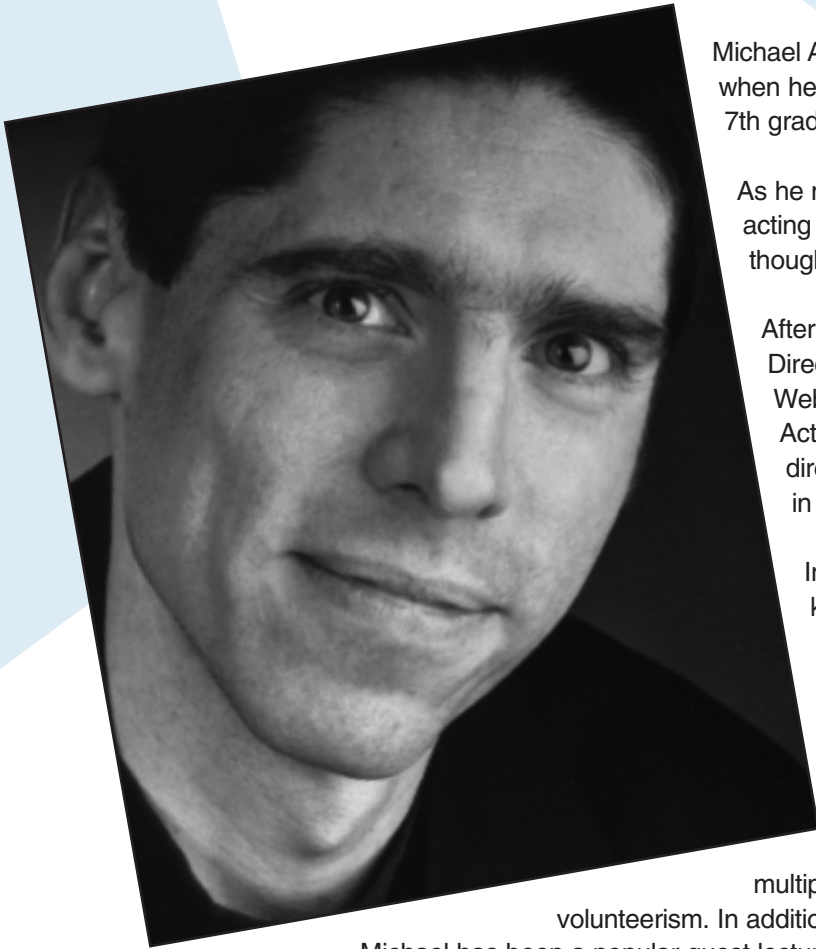


# Michael Agnew: Actively Engaging Groups



Michael Agnew was bitten by the acting bug at age four when he performed in his first play. By the time he reached 7th grade, he knew he wanted to make acting his career.

As he moved into adulthood, Michael knew he wanted his acting to do more than entertain. He wanted to provoke thought, discussion and dialogue.

After receiving his bachelor's degree with honors in Directing from the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University in St. Louis, he led the St. Louis Actors Ensemble as managing director and artistic director. He has directed and acted in dozens of plays in Chicago, IL, Minneapolis, MN and St. Louis, MO.

In 1995, he founded Gestic Theatre Company, now known as GTC Dramatic Dialogues. Since then, Michael has been the director as well as performer and moderator for GTC Dramatic Dialogues. This theatre troupe tackles the tough issues of diversity, sexual assault and substance abuse on college campuses.

Michael has taken his love of the theatre in multiple directions including teaching, writing and volunteerism. In addition to his work with GTC Dramatic Dialogues,

Michael has been a popular guest lecturer and instructor at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and Columbia College in Chicago. He has also led multiple workshops and classes at elementary schools, art centers, and theatre companies in several states. Students and participants of all ages are captivated by Michael's ability to teach them in a manner that is thought-provoking yet fun. His work is well-respected in the industry and he has had several articles published. One of Michael's greatest joys is the theatre-in-corrections work he has done in Missouri, Illinois and Minnesota. Working with juvenile and adult inmates and ex-offenders, Michael uses theatre as a tool for problem solving and self-examination.

Michael is an Arts-in-Education Roster Artist for the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Illinois Arts Council. As such, he has received grants to conduct theatre residencies in schools and other institutions. He has received NAP (Neighborhood Arts Program) grants from the

MORE ABOUT MICHAEL AGNEW ►



Department of Cultural Affairs in Chicago, IL and CAP (Community Arts Program) grants from COMPAS in St. Paul, MN. He received a fellowship to attend the Institute for Community Cultural Development, a three-month training opportunity for leaders in Arts-Based Community Development, sponsored by Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis, MN.

Over the years, Michael has continued to build his skills. He has participated in over 100 hours of training in the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed with Augusto Boal, the leading practitioner of interactive and issue-based theatre. With this extensive knowledge and background, Michael has been able to develop his own IssueActive Workshops.

Through these IssueActive Workshops, Michael takes the process of intervention theatre beyond what is possible in a 90-minute program. What's so unique about IssueActive workshops is that the participants determine the content. Michael steps back and assumes the facilitator role. He leads participants through a series of fun, theatre-based games and exercises which are aimed at creating trust. As the workshops unfold, the participants are able to identify issues that are important to them and share their own experiences. Through role-playing, the groups collectively analyze their experiences and actively test new approaches to solving the problems revealed in the process. The end result is a deeper understanding of the issues they are facing and an appreciation of their own role in creating the solutions.

## **Michael can design and direct Custom IssueActive programs or facilitate on one or more of the following topics:**

- ★ Power, Rank and Privilege
- ★ Experiencing Diversity
- ★ Hostile Environment: Sexual Harassment on Campus
- ★ Campus Orientation Skits
- ★ Dynamic Dramatic Team Building
- ★ Campus Safety

## **Here's what people are saying about Michael Agnew:**

*"Michael's skills were just what we were looking for. He provided information with an innovative and creative style while addressing issues of diversity. Michael's theatre background proved invaluable because those techniques and his experience produced a free-flowing atmosphere where the unexpected occurred."*

- Lewis and Clark Community College, Godfrey, IL

*"Michael was just an absolute joy to have on campus and our orientation leaders truly benefited from his unique skit training methods. His dynamic and down-to-earth personality captured the audience and generated very real talk-back sessions."*

- Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

**For information about Michael Agnew or GTC Dramatic Dialogues, visit our websites at [www.hit4you.net](http://www.hit4you.net) or [www.gtc drama.com](http://www.gtc drama.com). Or contact High Impact Training at 320.259.8222 or [info@hit4you.net](mailto:info@hit4you.net).**