

***Innovations in College Counseling Centers – ACPA 2009***  
***The Tricky Part***  
***The University at Buffalo***  
***Sharon Mitchell (smitch@buffalo.edu)***

As a part of our Garrett Lee Smith campus suicide prevention grant programs, for Suicide Prevention Week in fall 2008, we invited Martin Moran to present his Obie-award winning play, ***the Tricky Part*** on campus. It is an autobiographical play that talks about his experience of being sexually abused as a child and the life-altering impact that this had on his emotional, spiritual, and relational development including two suicide attempts. More importantly, it is a story of surviving and transcending what could have been a life-crippling experience. Over 300 people from the campus and local community attended the play. Martin also engaged in a question and answer session after the play where he spoke about how therapy aided in his recovery. Other survivors in the audience shared their experience and recovery stories as well.

Here is how we specifically collaborated on this project.

***Theater and Dance Dept***

Mr. Moran did a workshop for dramaturgy students where they 1) got to interact with a working Broadway actor and playwright and 2) were able to ask questions about how he emotionally took care of himself when the role was autobiographical and how he copes when he is other plays with heavy emotional content. Theatre professors also encouraged students to attend the play.

***School of Social Work***

Several professors required their students to attend

***Counseling, School, and, Educational Psychology***

Information was sent to the departmental listserv and students were encouraged to attend

***Crisis Services of Erie***

The staff from the local Rape Crisis program were at the play to provide support as needed. This allowed the UB Counseling Services staff to enjoy the play not work it.

***LGBT Pride Center***

Local community organizations were informed of this event and invited to attend.

***Other collaborators***

- Health Services and Wellness Education Services assisted with developing and implementing the program because they are a part of our suicide prevention team.
- Students in the Fundamentals of Wellness class and wellness peer mentors were required to attend
- Barnes and Noble sold copies of the book.

**Accomplishments of the program**

- Involved many stakeholders in the creation and implementation of a mental health-focused program
- Provided stimuli and a forum that encouraged students to give voice to mental concerns and protective factors
- Integrated discussions of emotional wellness into the academic curriculum
- Helped faculty and staff view the student as a “whole” person who has a life history and life outside of the classroom that impacts their academic experience
- Increased the visibility and perceived accessibility of the Student Wellness Team (Counseling, Health, and Wellness Education Services)



A boy's story of sexual trespass,  
a man's journey to forgiveness...

Winner of the 2004 Obie Award.  
Two Drama Desk Award Nominations,  
including Outstanding Play.

# The Tricky Part

Written and Performed by Martin Moran  
Directed by Seth Barrish

**SPECIAL EVENT** [www.thetrickyartbook.com](http://www.thetrickyartbook.com) • [wellness.buffalo.edu/ubwell](http://wellness.buffalo.edu/ubwell)

Free Event! Arrive Early! Seating is Limited!

Wednesday, September 10th, 2008  
UB Center for the Arts Drama Theatre  
**6:30 pm doors open**  
**7:30 pm performance**

Post Performance Q & A and book signing.  
Books will be available for purchase.

ONE NIGHT ONLY!

"Powerful!"  
New York Post

"A translucent memoir of a play...shattering. A quiet victory."  
New York Times

"Deeply personal and exceedingly honest. It steadily builds  
from its unassuming beginning to an emotionally charged ending.  
A powerful, truthful account."  
Broadway.com

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