Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22

Kelly Freebody · Michael Balfour
Michael Finneran · Michael Anderson
Editors

Applied Theatre: Understanding Change

Springer

Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education

Volume 22

Scope

This series aims to provide conceptual and empirical research in arts education, (including music, visual arts, drama, dance, media, and poetry), in a variety of areas related to the post-modern paradigm shift. The changing cultural, historical, and political contexts of arts education are recognized to be central to learning, experience, and knowledge. The books in this series present theories and methodological approaches used in arts education research as well as related disciplines – including philosophy, sociology, anthropology and psychology of arts education.

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/6199

Kelly Freebody • Michael Balfour
Michael Finneran • Michael Anderson
Editors

Applied Theatre: Understanding Change

Springer

Editors
Kelly Freebody
The University of Sydney
Sydney, Australia

Michael Balfour
Griffith University
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Michael Finneran
Mary Immaculate College
University of Limerick
Limerick, Ireland

Michael Anderson
The University of Sydney
Sydney, Australia

ISSN 1573-4528 ISSN 2214-0069 (electronic)
Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education
ISBN 978-3-319-78177-8 ISBN 978-3-319-78178-5 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018943303

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Contents

List of Contributors

Syed Jamil Ahmed Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Michael Anderson The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Michael Balfour Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

Helen Cahill Director Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

Michael Finneran Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland

Kelly Freebody The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Susan Goodwin The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Celina McEwen School of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Briar O'Connor Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Peter O'Connor Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Tim Prentki Department of Performing Arts, University of Winchester, Winchester, UK

Dani Snyder-Young Department of Theatre, Northeastern University, Boston, MA, USA

What Is Applied Theatre Good for? Exploring the Notions of Success, Intent and Impact

Kelly Freebody, Michael Finneran, Michael Balfour, and Michael Anderson

This book aims to be critical and provocative for scholars and practitioners who align themselves with the applied theatre field. It considers issues that have concerned the field since its inception, such as the extent to which applied theatre *makes* change, the relationship between change and intent, the values espoused or assumed in the field, and the extent to which our work aligns with social change agenda in ways that are inspiring, problematic, or neither.

In her seminal paper exploring the 'relatively new' umbrella field of applied theatre, Judith Ackroyd attempts to define, understand, and problematize the term. She concludes with the warning "We forget at our peril the question of what applied theatre is for" (2000, p. 5). It is here that this book begins. It attempts to explore the question of what applied theatre is for. We say explore, rather than ask or answer because we acknowledge that:

1. Applied theatre is not one thing. There is little agreement in the field regarding the specifics of what is or is not applied theatre. The term "is imperfect. It is a term cast in different places, and therefore it will catch different practices according to the theatre histories of the places from which it is thrown" (Thompson 2012, p. xiv). It is therefore used at different times by different people to refer to a specific set of practices, a general set of practices, a collection of different

K. Freebody (✉) · M. Anderson
The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: kelly.freebody@sydney.edu.au; michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

M. Finneran
Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
e-mail: michael.finneran@mic.ul.ie

M. Balfour
Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: m.balfour@griffith.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_1

practices, practices from a shared history, and/or an epistemological or ontological perspective of drama work.
2. Even if we could pinpoint one kind of applied theatre, the field is vast, and not particularly well organised at recording its scope. There are applied theatre projects happening with small groups of children in Uganda (e.g., Fleming 2011), with prisoners in the UK (e.g., Harkins et al. 2009), with dementia patients in Australia (e.g., Balfour et al. 2015) and school children in Hong Kong (e.g., Chan 2013). Much applied theatre work happens without fanfare or advertisement and so it is not possible to make claims about the work as if we have a comprehensive picture of it.
3. Applied theatre practice, like much work in the fields of the arts, learning, social justice and community development, is relational. As a result, different participants will have differing ideas about what the work is, why it is happening, whether it is good, how and why it can or should be measured and how it is or isn't helpful.

Having acknowledged these three caveats, we do wish to explore the field, as best we can, to understand more deeply what constitutes applied theatre practice, why it occurs, and how the field conceptualises the notoriously slippery notion of success to make claims about its transformative qualities.

This chapter aims to set the scene for the book; to give a sense of where applied theatre is located with regard to definitions, contexts and social change. It will also outline the purpose, methodological approach and informing principles of the research from which the first half of this book has emerged. While we do hope to celebrate powerful work here, a key goal of this book is to provide a critical perspective on our field; to raise concerns, problematize representations, question conceptualisations of theory and practice, and to try to begin a detailed discussion about the effect of different perspectives and practices in the field. To this end, we begin with an attempt to harness a working definition moving forward.

1 Applied Theatre: Vocabulary or Practice?

The term applied theatre seems to have moved from being a new term to relatively commonplace both inside and outside the academy in a few short years (Ackroyd 2007). Now, in 2018 as we write this, there are a plethora of university courses, textbooks, funding opportunities, and research projects focused on applied theatre. The term itself and what it refers to, has been defined, re-defined, argued over, celebrated and disagreed upon in that time. The purpose of this introduction is not to establish a rigid definition. In this book we will be working with, and referring to, projects and theories that would blur the lines and problematize any one definition. Additionally, there are some excellent considerations of this topic already published (see Nicholson 2005; Thompson 2012; O'Connor and Anderson 2015). Instead, we

wish to engage in a critical discussion about the term and its history, drawing on some of the key definitions and problematisations presented by key scholars.

One key question surrounding applied theatre is whether it refers to a term or a set of practices. Both Nicholson and Ackroyd have suggested that when it was first adopted in the field it was seen as an umbrella term, referring to a range of philosophies and practices. The oft-quoted definitions consider the intentionality and participatory nature of the work. In a critical genealogy of the history of applied drama Nicholson (2010) discussed a shift of terminology, suggesting the term 'applied drama', for her, originally "referred to discursive and scholarly practices, that it suggested a way of *theorising* drama that aspired to be publicly and socially beneficial" (Nicholson 2010, p. 151, italics added). The terminology, though, has shifted and, according to Nicholson, has been adopted by scholars, practitioner, policy makers and funding bodies, to refer predominately to a set of *practices* undertaken by those that work in the field. This shift is problematic for some working in the field. Ackroyd has critiqued the rhetoric around applied theatre. Seven years after the publication of her article welcoming and defining the term (2000), Ackroyd (2007) suggested that the field had stopped using applied theatre as a term, and instead employed it to refer to a form of practice. She notes that her 2000 paper made claims that appeared modest in comparison to the rhetoric used now. Rather, now applied theatre "masquerades as something neutral and democratic" (p. 3) whilst engaging in a discourse that is reductive and exclusionary – refusing to acknowledge practices that fulfil the defining features of applied theatre, if they are *perceived to be* "ideologically unsuitable" (p. 7).

This critique from Ackroyd not only brought into question the productiveness of having a term that referred to a narrow set of practices in the field, but also the focus on 'publically and socially beneficial' drama work (Nicholson 2005, p. x); A practice of theatre "wedded to vital issues and one that values debate" (Thompson 2012, p. xv-i). The extent to which the form or practice of applied theatre can be separated from the perceived philosophy of applied theatre can be uncomfortable for many in the field. Ackroyd raises the issue "Many in our field may have shared drama practice with those in business. Fair enough, but how far should we go? Should arts be used to improve staff self-presentation skills? Should drama be used to promote sales? What about tobacco companies?" (2000, p. xx). Balfour takes this question out of the rhetorical realm to discuss the practices of Geese Theatre Company in the UK. This company began in the 1980s as 'radical practitioners working with the marginalised' (2009, p. 349), but is now a specialist theatre company working with offenders to focus them on taking responsibility for their behaviour. These shifts in the work of applied drama practitioners continue to be influenced by various economic, political and social movements, but one by-product appears to be a lack of clarity around how, when, and where applied drama is being utilised, for whom, by whom, and with what level of success. So, like most fields, there is a plethora of understanding about what the term actually refers to. But beyond that, there are differences of opinion about whether or not applied theatre should be; whether the term serves the field at all.

This problematisation of the term (rather than the theory or practices it's seen to represent) has received notice in the two decades or so since it started enjoying common use. Ackroyd worried that 'applied', contrasted with 'pure' makes the work seem less than, impure, less genuine. This is contrasted with Thompson's view that 'applied' disciplines condemn their related fields through the implication that they are disconnected from the 'real world' and therefore not useful to real people and communities (Thompson 2012). Usefulness, however is also problematized in applied theatre (despite the obvious focus on the use of theatre to promote change). Scholars have wondered whether the term 'applied' traps the work "through a primary focus on usefulness" (Freebody 2015). Whilst these scholars are not suggesting that applied drama should not be useful, in neoliberal times, 'usefulness' is not necessarily a value free or ideologically suitable focus.

Here we hit a big potential contradiction in the field of applied theatre. Many in the field have claimed the work is concerned with social good and the health and wellbeing of communities (Neelands 2009; Nicholson 2005). However, others have wondered whether it acts as a marketing term rather than a way of understanding theory or practices in theatre (Ackroyd 2007). If this is true, then it begs the question, despite a perceived radical tradition, is applied theatre actually a neoliberal tool?

If, as Nicholson (2010) suggested, the terminology has shifted from a way of scholars theorising about kinds of theatre work, to a way of practitioners discussing their practices, then the term applied theatre can be used by those working in fields such as drama education, Theatre for Development, Community Theatre and so on, to describe their work for the purposes for advertising and funding. Applied theatre programs are not funded for their "agenda-less creative work" (Balfour 2009, p. 350); rather, arts interventions are usually seen as acceptable to the extent that they provide participants with particular social competencies, the appropriateness of which is determined by funders and/or practitioners. As a result, "social intentionality underwrites most applied practice, specifically in relation to participation and transformation" (Balfour 2009, p. 350). The connection between the intention behind the work, the funding of the work, and the 'proof' of transformation worries some in the field – "the promise of change" (Ackroyd 2007, p. 5) leads to an outcomes orientation that does not necessarily align comfortably with the philosophy of applied theatre work. These issues are explored further by authors in part 2 of this volume, who describe, problematize and analyse specific projects to explore the relationship between applied theatre and a change agenda.

Beyond the concerns about which specific practices and theories are allowed under the umbrella, we wonder whether these arguments over definition and practice are in fact what has created the field, and made the term so ubiquitous so quickly. There is a tendency in fields of academic study for naming and defining to create momentum. The question of efficacy starts to become less important than the sustenance and prominence of the field itself. While some umbrella terms, such as Cultural Studies, have been successful in creating momentum and establishing an accepted and acceptable field, the practical and philosophical history of applied theatre makes this more difficult. Approximately two decades into its life, we

wonder if the term is starting to become destabilised again. Performers appear to be turning to social acts and growing politicisation in response to increasing inequality, and significant shifts in global insecurity. Artists are becoming parts of larger democratic/advocacy movements, such as the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong (see Chan 2016). Perhaps the irony here is that it seems applied theatre's distinctive avoidance of overt politics is becoming increasingly questionable and distasteful. If this observation is correct, then it seems the practice has come full circle; retuning to its activist roots; a rediscovery of unvarnished advocacy and cultural revolt.

2 Applied Theatre: Context as Governing

Under this umbrella term, allocations of theory and/or practices of applied theatre are paradoxically easier and more difficult to understand. Easier because it allows one to collect theories, ideas, and practices from a variety of established and emerging fields and connect them through their alignment with one term. More difficult because different contexts (institutional or philosophical) have diverse intentions for and perspectives on the work. While some have worried that applied theatre, as a field, has a tendency towards insularity, we argue, rather than insular, we are sectorial. When we do come together under our umbrella we celebrate and highlight what we have in common, rather than what separates us. This does not mean, however, that there are not powerful considerations that separate us. Context is governing; theatre in prisons, for example, needs to attend to the institutional and philosophical context if it is to be successful. Similarly with theatre in schools, communities, healthcare facilities and so on. Rather than consider this problematic, we agree with scholars such as Nicholson (2005) and Cohen-Cruz (2010) that this is a strength. It would be concerning 'if the convenience of this collective noun reduced a rich diversity of theories and artistic practices to a single, homogeneous discourse" (Nicholson 2005, p. 5). Thompson takes this further to suggest that the hidden referents in the term are what *allow* discussions between various practices possible "The person, group or community doing the applying is invisible and this allows theatre *by* elderly people to come into dialogue with theatre *for* youth" (Thompson 2012, p. xv).

The context of applied theatre work influences the practices, philosophies and institutional considerations, but also orients to specific agenda and funding sources. The relationship between participants, practitioners, institutions and funding bodies can make a complex web of expectations, intentions and, as a result, evaluations of work in applied theatre. As Balfour suggests, "The commissioning of transformation by these donors infects the ways in which applied theatre defines and talks about itself" (2009, p. 347). So the context drives both rhetoric and practice in the sectorial federation of applied theatre. It also defines the notions and articulations of change, depending on agenda. This is particularly relevant to our discussion in this volume. Applied theatre is inexorably connected to transformation. Not just in its marketing, although this is a common element of the rhetoric in the field (Balfour

2009), but by its very 'applied' nature. Applying theatre *to* something indicates that this application can change at least one element of that thing.

3 Applied Theatre: Understanding Change

Change may be the catalyst for applied theatre work; yet notions of change are different in different contexts. It is therefore worth investigating how the field of applied theatre – nuanced and sectorial as it is – conceptualises itself around change. This is a large task. In order to introduce our foundational perspectives entering into it, we will ask and explore four questions.

1. *Why does there always need to be a problem?*

As the neo-liberal global education reform movement (GERM, for short) is making its way across the globe, drama educators are resisting through a new interest in the place of beauty (Winston 2013) and play (O'Toole 2007) in drama education practice. Applied theatre practice, however, does not seem to engage so readily in these discourses. One possible reason for this, we argue, is the focus on the problem. This is potentially due not necessarily to the practice itself, rather to the fact that the economic capability of applied theatre is undermined by some of the structures it works within. In education, for example, applied theatre practitioners are reduced to being the 'social elastoplasts', coming into schools whenever there is not an exam or test. We discuss this further later. For theatre to become applied theatre, there must be a 'problem' in need of 'fixing'. Moreover, that problem is specific, and tied to *these* participants. Without such guidelines, it becomes impossible to conceptualise the purpose of the work, and whether or not it's been successful. From a policy perspective (and one could argue that applied theatre is an aesthetic branch of social governance), "policy cannot get to work without first problematizing its territory" (Osborne 1997, p. 174). This goes back, however, to the concern that the problem, whatever it may be, becomes *the* key player in the work. A main protagonist, centre stage and in charge of guiding the main storyline.

This leads us to question: If we see the world through its problems worth fixing, are we approaching the theatre work and the participants, from a deficit perspective? If so, why has this come about? And does it matter if we are? We argue that it does. A deficit perspective of participants, related specifically to their 'problem' (of youth, offending, culture, gender and so on) has two key factors at play: the understanding of an individual's personal circumstances based on their problem (i.e., a person *is* this race/gender/context); and a perceived failure and/or lack of ability of that group of persons to be empowered or productive in their current circumstances.

2. *Do we socially construct problems through the way we pose solutions?*

New research methods in social policy are using Foucault-informed poststructuralist perspectives (Bacchi 2009) to understand the role of policy in creating and maintaining policy 'problems' through their proposal of particular solutions. This is

a powerful idea – governments, through their creation of polices related to, for instance, safe sex, create public, often value-laden understandings of what 'unsafe sex' is. This leads us to consider whether practice and writing around applied theatre programs (such as evaluation, promotion materials, funding applications) do not simply address problems that exist, but produce 'problems' as particular sorts of problems. Further, the manner in which these 'problems' are constituted shapes lives and worlds, influencing public and personal perceptions of certain groups (Freebody and Goodwin 2017). This positions applied theatre practitioners as complicit in the agendas of others through their gaining of funding and with that, influence over participants. This methodological perspective for understanding applied theatre documents is a central aspect of the research presented in this volume, explores the ways the 'solutions' presented in through applied theatre work, actively 'talks into being' social problems.

3. *What can or should we claim in the transformation agenda?*

With the critical perspectives on the discourse of applied theatre discussed above beginning to emerge in the field, so too has critical commentary about how we make claims about change. Tony Jackson argues that if drama starts to make unreal expectations about *direct* transference to the everyday world then "it is likely to have slipped from its anchoring within an aesthetic framework and veered toward didacticism, propaganda, or wishful thinking" (Jackson 2007, p. 270). Belifore and Bennett note that ideology in applied arts – the belief in their power to transform – is "something close to orthodoxy" amongst those that advocate for applied arts programs (2008, p. 4). Certainly, grand claims about applied arts as a "form of cultural democracy" (ASC! 2016, p. 1) or "a valuable resource … it is an act of distributive social justice" (Stone Hanley 2013, p. 4) are still a prominent, broad stroke, perspective in the field. It is, however, becoming more cautious. Practitioners seem to be moving away from general advocacy to a deeper interrogation of specific practices that allow create spaces for change (e.g., Cahill 2016), while at the same time offering critical commentary on those practices. As Cohen-Cruz reminds the field "theatre reproduces the same hierarchies that plague the world at large, the same assumptions of who can speak, who must listen, and who is not even invited into the conversation" (2010, p. 5).

4. *And what of the 'miracles' debate?*

In 2004 Jonathon Neelands's article 'Miracles are happening' was published in *Research in Drama Education*. 12 years later it remains one of the journal's most cited articles. The article neatly and eloquently sums up some of the issues introduced in the paragraph above – expressing concern about the mythologising of drama and the stories of miracles acting as "proof of drama's efficacy in resolving a range of problems" (2004, p. 48). Neelands's expressed his growing concern that folk wisdoms about practice have contributed to the proliferation of 'hero narratives' and 'localised miracles', specific, motivationally-oriented instances that have generated little programmatic work among either researchers or practitioners. This

mythologizing of drama practices led to a distanced view of drama and the world – not recognising context or individual agency.

> Drama cannot, of course, of itself teach in any kind of way, nor can it, of itself, be powerful. It is what we do, through our own human agency, with drama that determines the specific pedagogy and specific powers that these examples of rhetorical elision ascribe to the idea of drama itself (Neelands 2004, p. 48).

We argue here that Neelands's commentary on the inside vs distanced perspectives on drama and theatre practice is still relevant to current understandings of how applied theatre transforms. A motivation for this research was to develop these deeper, inside understandings of current applied theatre practice using documents from the field to move past this generalised mythologising - the orthodoxy discussed by Belifore and Bennet (2008) – to understand how a focus on change works in practice.

In practice, the focus on change requires applied theatre practitioners to take on multiple roles. Some of these roles are (relatively) unambiguous and obvious – facilitator of drama work for example – roles for which the practitioner has been, or can be, trained. Some are straightforward in practice, but potentially problematic in the discourses surrounding them – evaluator and fundraiser, for example – roles for which the practitioner may have been trained, but most likely has learned through experience in the industry. Others are more vague – community worker, diagnostician, advocate – roles that are almost completely context-specific and difficult to prepare for. Despite having differing relationships with the overarching change-making process of applied theatre, all these roles are directly related to it. At their core, they are about establishing what needs to be changed, gathering funding for it, implementing a program to make such change, supporting the participants through it, and then evaluating the extent to which the change occurred.

As this is an introduction to a book about understanding change in applied theatre, definitions of applied theatre and how the field conceptualises notions of change are obvious places to begin. For the remainder of this chapter we will attempt to identify, present and explore key issues in, or elements of, applied theatre for transformation in an attempt to position these ideas prior to attending to the research project underpinning the first half of this book. No doubt each practitioner and scholar in applied theatre orients to different influential concepts. For us, the following interrelated key ideas will be explored:

- Participants in applied theatre.
- The economics of applied theatre as social action
- Efficacy and benefits of applied theatre
- Evaluation in applied theatre

This chapter concludes with a preview of the research project that informs the first half of this volume, and a discussion of how the disparate voices in the second half of this book come together to provide us with a nuanced understanding of change in applied theatre practice, theory and research.

3.1 Participants

> Dramatic practices that are applied to community and educational settings have always striven for inclusivity and equality and, to maintain this commitment to egalitarianism, there is a need to be constantly vigilant about what or who is included, and who may be marginalised, silenced or dispossessed (Nicholson 2010, p. 151).

The idea of taking part in a participatory theatrical encounter suggests that a large degree of empowerment and agency is imparted, gifted or awarded to the participant. Taken further, it implies that freedom can be sought, granted or acquired through the process of engaging with the applied theatre work. This volume seeks to unsettle this idea. Central to this unsettling is a conversation about who the people are who take part in this work, and on what basis, and under what expectations they are present.

Foucault claims that power and language are inseparable. Their importance for this work lies in their influence on the discursive formations of a field (Foucault 1969). Recognising these discursive formations allows for the acknowledgment and identification of objects of discourse, which can assist a field in the suspension of fixed beliefs in natural and universal entities. The objects of discourse "exist(s) under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations" (1969, p. 49). These positive conditions are established, 'between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization' (1969, p. 49), but their importance is that they are not present in the discursive object, nor a factor in the deployment of the object or its analysis, but are merely what enables it to appear, or as Foucault prefers, 'to be placed in a field of exteriority' (1972, p. 50). The implications of this for the field of applied theatre is that the relationship between knowledge and power are never fixed, stable or natural in the work of the field, and can only be understood in the context of the 'positive conditions' within which the work takes place. As we have previously argued, everything is contextual. Every applied theatre project, and its intent and success, requires that the power structures which govern the involvement of participants is considered anew, through the discourse of the work, and is problematize. The language used to describe participants is immediately indicative of the discursive structures in place. Discourses position participants in different ways – as clients, as patients, as marginalised, as victims, as requiring saviours, as children, as vulnerable, as recovering, as at risk.

Unpacking the discourse of participation becomes critical when we consider that in many instances, applied theatre represents the subversion of cultural 'norms' around the production and reception of drama and theatre. For many participants, particularly in the first world, theatre is still governed by the contract whereby participants purchase a ticket voluntarily with money, in the expectation that they will sit quietly, and outwardly passive in a darkened room, whereupon performers will use a variety of theatrical conventions to manipulate time, space and identity, with a view to entertaining and perhaps challenging the audience.

For practitioners in applied theatre the problem is exactly opposite. The work of Augusto Boal remains the default archetype for the relationship between the facilitator, players and participants in such work – the ideas of the spect-actor and joker have become spiritual norms in the field, and explored further by Prentki in "Bottom's Dream Applied Theatre: Anything Goes but what Stays?" in this volume. It is evident from research, however, that the diversity of practice is much broader and greater than that. The challenge for critical work such as this is not just one of discussing the range and types of extant practices but of framing critical models and modes of participation. It is also the challenge of bridging cultural norms and expectations around participation in applied work to understand the extent participants come to the work knowing their rights and their role in the work, regardless of whether their presence is voluntary or not. This includes understanding that the work may seek to change their views on the world, something they may accept or reject; and allow them to choose active or passive engagement and spectatorship, in keeping with the democratic principles of empowerment which all applied theatre that we are aware of seeks to embody.

In a nutshell, we argue that applied theatre doesn't always do a great job at understanding what it demands of its participants, and doesn't always know how it sees their role. Participants in applied theatre often don't have a choice about being present or not. The framing of participation, and the role of participants in applied theatre is key to developing an understanding of notions of success, intent, value and change, and will be explored further in Chapters "Values, Intentions, Success and Impact in Applied Theatre Documents" and "Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre for Social Change: Defamilarising Key Words in the Field".

3.2 The Economics of Applied Theatre as a Social Action

We mentioned earlier in this chapter the problematizing of the potential relationship between applied theatre and business that has taken place in the literature. The extent to which it's 'ok' to be an applied theatre practitioner working with private business for commercial purposes seems to be a grey area for the field. Certainly there has been a blurring in the lines around business, industry, theatre and social action. Much of this blurring stems from the development of applied theatre as an industry. One that serves, not only 'clients' (and here we come to a tricky place – funders or participants?), but also the practitioners themselves.

The relationship between participants and practitioners, already complex, becomes messy and multifaceted when external and/or additional relationships are put in the mix; relationships with funders, institutions, places, money, just to name a few. Snyder-Young (2013) argues that dialogue about change in applied theatre which focuses on what the experience gives the participants and not on what the practitioner gains from the exercise (tenure, employment, money, prestige) is deeply problematic. Critical perspectives on welfare have discussed 'the poverty industry'

and questioned the extent to which governments and charities sustain poverty through the provision of service professions:

> What became the professionalization of being human took off, bloating under government contracts. For every poverty problem, a self-perpetuating profession proposed to ameliorate the situation without altering the poverty... Furthermore, to keep the "service" engine stoked, every manner of failure has been ascribed to the families themselves. Laziness. Cheating. Dependency. (Funiciello 1990, p. 38).

This is a provocative idea – at odds with the radical, personal, and indeed compassionate way many in the applied theatre field would position their relationship with participants. It is however, the case that many in the field (along with many in other social service fields) receive their income as part of this service industry. Therefore, it is our belief, that a discussion of the relationship between applied theatre and change needs to engage in a critically aware analysis of the industry of applied theatre.

If the poverty industry is a problematic space for communities and governments, then it is appropriate for us to adopt a critical lens when discussing broad notions of change, intention, success and value in applied theatre work. On one hand, it can be argued that practitioners 'use' the circumstances of the precariat to gain and keep employment, turning problems into currency (Standing 2011). On the other hand, applied theatre has emerged from a radical tradition, one concerned almost absolutely with understanding and fighting oppression. So where do we stand? How dark or light is our shade of grey? This is obviously not a question for an umbrella field, but rather each individual project within it. It is useful, however, for us to acknowledge that the space we inhabit, not matter how much we attempt fill it with democracy, fun, purpose, and care is not unproblematic. The relationship practitioners have with participants, funders, institutions and communities is governed by context, intention and individual or shared understandings of how participants need to change.

3.3 How Does it Work? How Do We Know?

So far, many of our provocations around change have questioned its rights as a focus for applied theatre work. This is not necessarily to say that we as applied theatre scholars, practitioners, teachers and authors believe that change should not be at the centre of what we do. What we are attempting to achieve is a critical perspective on the place of change – its relationship to participants and funders, and its governing effect on the development and implementation of programs. We align with Foucault's (1996) notion of critique – as an opportunity to question underlying assumptions and accepted practices, to understand our work more deeply. It is difficult and complex, but worthwhile as it allows us to move beyond rhetoric and platitudes, to develop genuine and informed ideas about the possibilities and opportunities working with theatre gives practitioners, participants and funders. Now, however, we

move away from making critical and provocative statements about change to explore what we consider some of the concepts that work within or alongside the transformative agenda in applied theatre – benefits, efficacy and evaluation.

Significant attention has been paid to the particular aspects of applied theatre and drama education that provide opportunities for engagement, change, and expression. Snyder-Young (2013) outlines three specific elements that she believes makes theatre different from other forms of community organizing:

1. It is live and public
2. It is not real
3. It is collaborative problem solving (Snyder-Young 2013, pp. 11–12).

Number 2 and 3 on this list have been spotlighted in drama education literature as key spaces for engagement and learning (e.g., Heathcote 1984; Neelands 2009). The seminal educator, Dorothy Heathcote emphasised the importance of living through drama – of accepting the fiction and finding safe spaces to explore personal issues through the adoption of fictional roles (Heathcote 1984). Bundy and colleagues (2016) have explored this further by developing nuanced understandings of the role of emotion and engagement in participatory drama and theatre work. Jonothan Neelands has produced a body of work exploring and advocating for the ensemble nature of drama work and its potential to develop pro-social skills in those participate in it (Neelands 2009). These three areas provide a focus for exploring the benefits of working with the dramatic form to educate, activate and 'transform' participants. At the heart of all of these ideas however, is one key principle – participation.

Participation is arguably the most common element of applied theatre practice. It is often taken to be what separates applied theatre from other more traditional activist or educative tools. The active involvement of participants in making, directing and reflecting on theatre as seen by Boal as one solution to the potential issues explored above – the problematic power relationship evident between an artist who wants to transform and the participants to be transformed. Prentki too sees participation as a solution to Theatre for Development's "history as a propaganda tool and neoliberal force" (Snyder-Young 2013, p. 35). By participating, those making theatre can ensure their perspectives are, at least attended to, if not embraced. Participation in applied theatre also interacts with our embodied histories, while simultaneously creating new potential ways of being.

> (T)heater, in being an explicit play with and around 'action matter', deals with the basic processes of how we learn to perform our lives. Actions undertaken or witnessed in theatre will leave emotional memories, behaviour fragments, characteristics, lines, gesture and images of self that will fit or conflict with an existing shape (Thompson 2012, p. 50).

Participation is, by all accounts in the field, a central tenet of practice. It is the participatory spaces provided in applied theatre work, merging with existing understandings of self in the world, that is seen to house so much potential for learning and change.

3.4 Evaluation

Despite the perceived opportunities considered to be inherent in the practices of theatre, "the arts occupy a particularly fragile position in public policy, on account of the fact that the claims made for them, especially those relating to their transformative power, are extremely hard to substantiate" (Belfiore and Bennett 2008, p. 5). Belifore and Bennett (2008) suggest that recent, neoliberal, outcome-driven trends in social policy development have marginalized the place of arts interventions.

Evaluation of applied theatre is an issue that has received prominence in the scholarly literature for the past decade. The 2006 special edition of Research in Drama Education *Drama of Change? Prove it! Impact and assessment in applied theatre* indicated and explored a concern within the field that evaluation practices were sketchy and under-defined. The editors of that special edition claimed that the field of applied theatre carries as part of its 'disciplinary inheritance' a suspicion of pedagogies and forms of evaluation that are imported from other disciplines. Simultaneously it is characterised by a general reluctance to developing and systematising its own forms of evaluation (Etherton and Prentki 2006, p. 144). Since then, scholars have started calling for research to bring insight to "how and what claims are made" (Balfour 2009, p. 353) and a better understanding of intentions and experiences of participants as well as what constitutes success of these programs (Etherton and Prentki 2006).

McDonald (2005) has suggested that applied drama practitioners should develop a culture of 'genuine dialogue' (Balfour 2009, p. 355) about political values and ethics of practice. Others further suggest that the field consider what is subjectively 'good', as well as objectively of 'quality' if it is to seriously address concepts of evaluation and impact. Matarasso (2013, pp. 4–5) observed that applied drama "cannot be judged as good (or bad) unless the concept of 'good' is defined" and that, if improving practice is the goal of evaluation, "unchecked subjectivity is of limited use in guiding human action". Considering transformative principles such as social change and personal growth are terms that have acquired such a range of referents, it makes it difficult to use them productively to assess the impact of the work of applied theatre programs (Hughes and Wilson 2004; Matarasso 2013).

4 Outline of the Book

This volume is in two parts, but attempts to tell a holistic story about the concept of change and how it informs and operates within applied theatre theory and practice. Part 1 reports on a research project aimed at exploring and interrogating perspectives on transformation in applied theatre for social change. To achieve this, the study focused on documents written about applied theatre – including websites, evaluation reports, scholarly journal articles and book chapters, and university course descriptions. These documents were then analysed in three key ways:

1. Placed through concordance software to provide a 'broad brush' understanding of what vocabulary was common, and commonly linked in the different documents – accounting for type of document, type of theatre practice, and geographical location.
2. Thematic coding, assisted by NViVO software sought to unpack the ways 'value', 'intention', 'success' and 'impact' were referenced, presented, (potentially) problematized, or understood in the documents.
3. Poststructual analysis, informed by the critical policy analysis method: What's the problem represented to be? (Bacchi 2009) on the key words and themes emerging from the thematic coding provided a critical perspective on the research findings.

The first half of this volume explores these findings, first setting the scene with a historical discussion of the change and value agenda in applied theatre and the arts more broadly (Chapter "Theories of Change: Cultural Value and Applied Theatre"), followed by the presentation of findings from the concordance (Chapter "Language and the concept of change: Overview of Leximancer Analysis") and thematic coding (Chapter "Values, Intentions, Success and Impact in Applied Theatre Documents"), and finally a critical, de-familiarizing exercise, informed by the poststructual analysis of the data (Chapter "Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre for Social Change: Defamilarising Key Words in the Field").

This is not a field speaking with 'one voice' about how we understand and evaluate change in our work. In order to 'Understand Change' as our title has suggested we would try to do, we need to explore the multiple perspectives on what it is, in theatre, in applied theatre, in communities; and who is responsible for it. To this end, the second half of this volume brings together essays and reflections from applied theatre practitioners and scholars on how the field can (can't), does (doesn't), and should (shouldn't) conceptualise change. These discussions are at times angry, considered, playful, imploring, and critical. Together they provide us with a disparate view of a single theme. Some of the chapters explicitly address the relationship between theories of change and the evaluation practices of applied theatre work (See Cahill, Chapter, "Evaluation and the Theory of Change" and Snyder-Young, Chapter "No "Bullshit": Rigor and Evaluation of Applied Theatre Projects"). Others draw on discussions of specific applied theatre programs to draw broader conclusions about the nature of applied theatre and the opportunities and challenges associated with it's mandate to 'make change' (see McEwan, Chapter "Change and continuity in applied theatre: Lessons learnt from 'The Longest Night'", and Ahmed, Chapter "In the Interstice of Intension and Intention of Transformation: Where Applied Theatre Fosters Neoliberal Entrepreneurship"). Some chapters draw the reader deeply into theatre, script, play, and performance to engage with, and question, transformation discourses in the field more broadly (see Prentki, Chapter "Bottom's Dream *Applied Theatre: Anything Goes but what Stays?*", and O'Connor & O'Connor, Chapter "Hearing Children's Voices: Is Anyone Listening?").

In this volume we draw on Richardson's (2000) notion of Crystallization as a way of engaging more with a topic beyond rigid, straight lined, triangulation, but rather in a way that:

> combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi dimensionalities, and angles of approach....Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic" (p. 934)

Crystallization therefore encourages us to see the refracted reflections of light coming from the concept of 'change' (our crystal) beaming in a variety of directions and landing on many surfaces. While the first half of this volume draws out themes from a specific research project, the second half of this volume aims to extend, expand, and redirect those ideas to provide each reader with a nuanced look at how change is conceptualised, enacted, problematized, and celebrated in applied theatre.

References

Ackroyd, J. (2000). Applied theatre: Problems and possibilities. In *Applied theatre researcher*. https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/81796/Ackroyd.pdf. Accessed 10 Nov 2016.

Ackroyd, J. (2007). Applied theatre: An exclusionary discourse? In *Applied Theatre Researcher*. https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/52889/01-ackroyd-final.pdf. Accessed 19 June 2017.

ASC! (2016). *State of the art: A report on art for social change in Canada*. https://art4socialchangeproject.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/stateoftheart_en5.pdf. Accessed 21 Mar 2017.

Bacchi, C. (2009). *Analysing policy: What's the problem represented to be?* Frenchs Forest: Pearson Education.

Balfour, M. (2009). The politics of intention: Looking for a theatre of little changes. *Research In Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(3), 347–359.

Balfour, M., Martin, K. Dunn, J., Moyle, W., & Cooke, M. (2015). Playful care: what lies beyond the red nose, *Australian Journal of Dementia Care*. (August–September). http://journalofdementiacare.com/playful-care-what-lies-beyond-the-red-nose/. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Belifore, E., & Bennett, O. (2008). *The social impact of the arts: An intellectual history*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bundy, P., Dunn, J., & Stinson, M. (2016). Exploring emotion in participatory drama about social justice: A case of Creon's decree. In K. Freebody & M. Finneran (Eds.), *Drama and social justice: Theory, research and practice in international contexts* (pp. 40–53). London: Routledge.

Cahill, H. (2016). Playing at being another we: Using drama as a pedagogical tool within gender rights and sexuality education program. In K. Freebody & M. Finneran (Eds.), *Drama and social justice: Theory, research and practice in international contexts* (pp. 155–168). London: Routledge.

Chan, Y. P. (2013). Drama and global citizenship education: Planting seeds of social conscience and change. In M. Anderson & J. Dunn (Eds.), *How Drama activates learning contemporary research and practice* (pp. 78–93). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Chan, Y. P. (2016). Fluorescent raincoat into yellow umbrella: Social responsibility as embodied experience. In K. Freebody & M. Finneran (Eds.), *Drama and social justice: Theory, research and practice in international contexts* (pp. 168–181). London: Routledge.

Cohen-Cruz, J. (2010). *Engaging performance: Theatre as call and response*. New York: Routledge.

Etherton, M., & Prentki, T. (2006). Drama for change? Prove it! Impact assessment in applied theatre. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 139–155.

Fleming, F. (2011). Acting against worms evaluation report. Evaluation report prepared by Fiona M Fleming, Schistosomiasis control initiative (SCI) on behalf of the acting against worm partners at SCI, Theatrescience and the.Ministry of Health, Uganda. http://www.theatrescience.org.uk/ee/files/reports/Acting_Against_Worms_088077MA_Evaluation_Report.pdf. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Foucault, M. (1969/1989). *The archeology of knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1996). What is Critique? In J. Schmidt (Ed.), *What is enlightenment? Eighteenth century answers and twentieth century questions* (pp. 382–398). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Freebody, K. (2015). Navigating (the terminology of) success and intent in Drama for social justice. In S. Schonmann (Ed.), *International yearbook for research in arts education 3/2015* (pp. 252–256). Münster: Waxmann.

Freebody, K., & Goodwin, S. (2017). Applied theatre evaluations as technologies government: A critical exploration of key logics in the field. *Applied Theatre Research, 5*(1), 23–35. https://doi.org/10.1386/atr.5.1.23_1. (DO YOU WANT THIS?).

Funiciello, T. (1990). The poverty of industry. *Ms.* (November/December), 32–40.

Harkins, L., Haskayne, D., Watson, A., Beech A.R., & Sweeney C. (2009)..Evaluation of Geese theatre's inside talk program. http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/geese-inside-talk-evaluation-dec-2009.pdf. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Heathcote, D. (1984). Drama as challenge. In L. Johnson & C. O'Neill (Eds.), *Dorothy Heathcote: Collected writings*. London: Hutchinson.

Hughes, J., & Wilson, K. (2004). Playing a part: The impact of youth theatre on young people's personal and social development. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 9*(1), 57–72.

Jackson, T. (2007). *Theatre, education and the making of meanings*. Manchester: University of Manchester Press.

Matarasso, F. (2013). Creative progression: Reflections on quality in participatory arts. *UNESCO Observatory Multi-Disciplinary Journal in the Arts, 3*(3), 1–15.

McDonald, B. (2005). Towards a theatre of 'little changes' - a dialogue about a dialogue. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 10*(1), 67–73.

Neelands, J. (2004). Miracles are happening: Beyond the rhetoric of transformation in the western traditions of drama education. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 9*(1), 47–56.

Neelands, J. (2009). Acting together: Ensemble as a democratic process in art and life. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(2), 173–189.

Nicholson, H. (2005). *Applied Drama: The gift of theatre*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Nicholson, H. (2010). The promises of history: Pedagogic principles and processes of change. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 15*(2), 147–154.

O'Connor, P., & Anderson, M. (2015). *Applied theatre: Research*. London: Methuen.

O'Toole, J. (2007). Ace in the hole with Alice: Arts and play in twenty-first century education. *Journal of Artistic and Creative Education, 2*(1), 5–40.

Osbourne, T. (1997). On health and statecraft. In A. Petersen & R. Bunton (Eds.), *Foucault, health and medicine* (pp. 173–188). London: Routledge.

Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 923–948). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Snyder-Young, D. (2013). *Theatre of good intentions: Challenges and hopes for theatre and social change*. Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Standing, G. (2011). *The Precariat the dangerous new class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Stone Hanley, M. (2013). Introduction: Culturally relevant arts education for social justice. In M. Stone Hanley, G. Sheppard, G. Noblit, & T. Barone (Eds.), *Culturally relevant arts education for social justice: A way out of no way* (pp. 1–12). London: Routledge.
Thompson, J. (2012). *Applied theatre: Bewilderment and beyond*. Oxford: Peter Lang.
Winston, J. (2013). *Beauty and education*. Oxford: Routledge.

Theories of Change: Cultural Value and Applied Theatre

Michael Balfour and Kelly Freebody

Chapter one set the scene for the discussions in this volume. In this chapter, we want to provide a sense of context and history to the relationships between applied theatre practice, scholarship, evaluation and theories of change. To this end, we aim to attend to the long intellectual legacy of the concept that the arts have an impact socially on communities and audiences. Despite the breadth and growth of applied theatre practice in the last two decades, Kershaw notes that "applied theatre, community performance and related forms apparently have attracted few historians" (Kershaw 2016, p. 16). This chapter will draw on work that established historical considerations of the role of applied theatre, and the arts more generally in society, its relationship to theories of change, social policy, and the sovereignty of doing good.

Artists orientate heavily to their understanding of invention in their work as authentic to the context, the moment, and the relationship between audience and work. Belifore and Bennett, however, make the important point that contemporary social and cultural policy knowingly or unknowingly intersect with a very long philosophical debate about the social function and impact of the arts that dates back to Plato and Aristotle (Belfiore and Bennett 2008). Arts practices in fact "rely on a synthesis of memory and invention" (Nicholson 2010, p. 147). The memory of the work, however, is less prevalent in the discursive practices of the field. This chapter attempts to remember the history of the writing about and practices of art for social change with the idea that it is important that artists and researchers develop conscious understanding of where they fit within the discourse of social impact and theories of change. In this way, a more precise and coherent rationale can be articu-

M. Balfour (✉)
Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: m.balfour@griffith.edu.au

K. Freebody
The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: kelly.freebody@sydney.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_2

lated about the nature of their work. There is much to learn from the long history and legacy of social impact discourse as it is filled with intellectual dead ends as well as well-formed arguments that push through contemporary debates and provide a context for layered and mature discussion of the field.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a critical and historical overview of the common-sense relationship between applied theatre and social change, and to explore the emergence of specific discursive practices related to cultural value, the arts, and social change. The second half of this chapter will draw on this commentary to spotlight how these ideas have emerged in one context: prison theatre. This part of the chapter will focus on recent research that developed a framework for practitioners and criminal justice professionals to understand and better articulate a framework for understanding social change using a logic model approach. In doing this, we acknowledge we undertake the role of 'history-maker', with

> …an ethical responsibility to be reflexive about the ways in which theories and practices are evidenced, documented and represented, and to be alert to the ways in which the past is used to create new social imaginaries (Nicholson 2010, p. 148).

Indeed, attention to how practices are documented and represented is a core tenet of the research project from which this volume emerged. Engaging in critical perspectives that attempt to uncover how discursive practices in the field have developed, and then gone on to become true, mundane, and unquestioned, is the broader purpose of this book.

The criticism that is so often leveled at applied theatre – and the arts in general – is that there is a naivety associated with the faith-based debates that the arts are good for you, and that the arts can transform and change marginalized communities and empower them to – well what is not always clear. As Ahmed asks in this book: what exactly is the nature of that change – to transform agrarian communities into neo liberal consumers? The rush to do good – to make change, to inspire and transform – is such a strong motivating quality in applied theatre work. And yet so often practitioners do not seem to consider the complex moral and social implications of what they do, the nature of change, or the overall models of change that fuel the missionary zeal. As Cahill argues, in her chapter in this book, applied theatre research needs to explore how transdisciplinary approaches to theories of change can help to make transparent the links between theory, praxis and evaluation. And certainly, applied theatre has as a field, attempted to avoid its own marginalization, through a growing (if sometimes inconsistent) effort to map its pedagogical contribution to social and personal change.

The arts occupy a particularly vulnerable position in relation to social theory and policy, as a practice that routinely works with and for 'socially and politically disadvantaged groups and communities', community arts or applied theatre projects operate within a range of 'macro-histories' – institutional (prisons, schools, systems), political (nations, communities), and so on (Kershaw 2016, p. 16). Micro-accounts of specific applied theatre projects, therefore are affected by, and affecting of, these broader histories. As Kershaw states, the 'spatial and temporal dimensions' of applied theatre projects in war zones, for instance, "are critical to how macro-histories may impinge on, and be evoked by, locally focused projects" (Kershaw

2016, p. 19). As a result, these local, or what he terms micro-accounts, often borrow sub-sets of theory to justify the claims for social change and transformation. In this way, how the artistic practice is given value is influenced by the existing discourses and social norms of the particular context it's trying to affect (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016). For example, prison theatre makers rationalize their work in relation to criminology and criminal justice policy both to explain themselves but also to pull the practice closer to the context. The danger here is that the complex theories of a particular context overwhelm and instrumentalize the theatre work in such a way as to reduce the very qualities of the work that brought them into the context in the first place. There are instances of work in prisons, schools and other institutions that has been adapted to a series of role-play exercises that anyone can do with a manual and a little training. The theatre, in other words, can become colonized by the contexts it seeks to change. The flip side of this is that applied theatre practitioners go in with a revolutionary zeal that is anti-establishment and romanticizes offenders as oppressed and disadvantaged. We are exaggerating the extremes here, but both of these impulses exist, and the difficulty comes in that the claims for change and transformation are extremely hard to substantiate. A series of role-plays are unlikely to transform individuals into model citizens, just as a theatre workshop is unlikely to incite a radical Marxist revolution.

Applied theatre practitioners have become increasingly adroit and aware of the need to create projects that align to specific learning aims and goals within an evaluation framework. It goes alongside the torturous push for funding, acceptance and access into institutions and contexts. While project aims and objectives are standard practice, the models of change that sit behind these imperatives are often muted assumptions that go unchecked by funders, institutions and practitioners themselves. The enormous (and often resented) process of evaluating and (less often) researching the impact of applied theatre projects becomes entangled in the latest suite of evidence-based measures. In attempting to understand change, that which can be measured matters. This is particularly problematic for the arts in general and applied theatre specifically. The concept of change and transformation (whether micro-change or revolutionary change) is so complex a process, it is impossible to capture in a series of measured attributes. Typically, pre-post questionnaires are used to track attitudinal, behavioral or emotional change. There might be post project interviews, statistical information about a group's engagement and participation, but are these elements really going to say much about change? These pseudo-scientific processes also do not record how other factors in an individual's life might be influencing them. Family, economics, peer groups, and so on, make it virtually impossible for any conclusions to be drawn about whether the theatre has been the root cause of any change. Similarly, a focus on behavioural or attitudinal change might miss the unintended consequences of an arts experience. Heritage captures this well when after a four-day AIDS/HIV workshop in a Brazilian prison he interviewed one of the participants about the impact of the workshop on future behavior who said:

> I have just taken part in a workshop where I have cried, hugged, laughed, played in ways that I have never done in the past. I have changed totally. Perhaps next week I will have unsafe sex. I don't know. Why are you so obsessed with the future? What has happened now is most important (Heritage 2004, p. 190)

So, the notion of evidence is significant but fraught. What practitioners often see and talk about is the temporary transition of participants from low functioning to high functioning in the space of a (good) workshop. A group can be one thing when they enter the room, and seem transformed when they exit. Does this mean the change is substantial or transitory? The aesthetic impact of an applied theatre project rests in the individual subjective experience, and while we can talk about micro moments of change and new perspective-taking, there are very real limitations to the extent to which broader and concrete outcomes can be generalized and claimed.

This to a considerable degree explains why there has been an increase in literature reviews and impact studies attached to, in particular, publically funded arts projects. By and large these studies are positioned as advocacy for a specific organization and/or funding agency to make a better case for the arts. Indeed, a mini industry of arts consultancies has been established. They provide thick documents and seemingly thorough data analyses that push a policy message of increased funding, arguing that the benefits of the projects are supported by evidence-based claims. To a large extent this is how most policy advocacy groups work, regardless of their fields of interest. Sometimes it is precipitated by warnings of impending crises and urgent action required. How else to grab the attention from other policy priorities in defense, health, border security, education, criminal justice? The reality is that the arts in whatever geographical territory you look at are often marginal, and certainly way down the pecking order of public and social policy. Therefore, it is no surprise that arts and cultural policy have often re-invented their social value in an effort to align with the latest governmental priorities and buzz words. And so, the arts, rather nefariously, have been proposed as a creative industry, a major exporter, a vital tourist attraction, a significant ingredient in economic renewal for areas of disadvantage, and closer to applied theatre, active contributors to reducing crime, enhancing health and well-being, and building capacity in social cohesion and resilience.

Therefore, rather than being concerned with "questioning whether or not the arts actually do have the economic and social impacts claimed for them, researchers have directed their efforts to coming up with evidence that they do" (Belfiore and Bennett 2008, p. 7). The question here is not so much the politics of advocacy, or even the veracity of the data and the evidence. This goes with the territory. What gets missed however is the actual nature of the aesthetic experience. Would the arts matter even if they didn't have social impact, are they valuable in and of themselves? It is an important question, because it positions value as something other than simply instrumental or economic. We'll explore the thematic of value later in the book, drawing out the data from our coding of the literature. But it's important to remain vigilant to the history and politics of value – the ways in which in different periods and across different applied theatre domains, usefulness is interpreted and re-interpreted in different ways as a response to broader social and governmental policies.

The concept of cultural value is key to navigating debates around the instrumental and intrinsic nature of the arts. There have been recent attempts to pin down the value of the arts – some attempts attending to extending theoretical perspectives, and others oriented to developing tools for practitioners and evaluators. Holden's *Capturing Cultural Value* attempted to provide 'a new language for culture' drawn

from a combination of economics, anthropology, environmentalism and public value (Holden 2004, p. 10). More recently Crossick and Kaszynska's *Cultural Value Project* (2016) has attempted to:

> …break down the divide between the intrinsic and the instrumental camps, to transcend the debate about things to be valued 'for their own sake,' or else understood only in terms of the narrow economic or other material benefits that they provide. The project has sought to put the experience of individuals back at the heart of ideas about cultural value, arguing that it is only once we have started with individual experience that we can then work outwards, and understand the kinds of benefit that culture may have for society, for communities, for democracy, for public health and wellbeing, for urban life and regional growth. By working outwards from the individual in this way, we quickly realise that we need a wider and subtler repertoire of methodologies if we are to talk about the concept of cultural value, and evaluate it meaningfully (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016, p. 5).

In relation to understanding change, the move here is to identify the significance of how the arts create (or do not create) meaning-making as part of the individual subjective experience. There is still a limitation here, as both Holden's work and the *Cultural Value Project* are positioned within social and cultural policy. The methodological road still leads to impact and funding. And as long as value is linked to funding there will always be the play for advocacy (especially in an era of austerity), even if there is greater clarity and balance between identifying arts 'true' worth. Nevertheless, the *Cultural Value Project* was an ambitious attempt to capture the elusive qualities of cultural value, and at least to propose ways of understanding and developing methodologies that might constitute complex notions of evidence. As it was funded by the *Arts and Humanities Research Council* rather than an advocacy body or arts funder, there is a refreshing disavowal and conscious critique of the tension between research and advocacy. "If we're to have the grown-up conversations about why arts and culture matter that the report calls for, then we have to accept when arguments are weak, methodologies are unsatisfactory, or evidence is insubstantial" (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016, p. 7).

The recent literature on cultural value and social change has emphasized the need to contextualize the intellectual history of the inherent tensions between instrumentalism and arts for art's sake (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016). This history maps out the pre-Enlightenment methods of production in which there was no separate category of the arts but an embedded relationship with religion, ritual, and craftsmanship (Habermas 1981; Chairman-Bernstein 1992). In this conceptualization there was no false dichotomy between use or ornament, but rather an acceptance of the purpose of craft and aesthetics in daily life. The terms of instrumentalism have therefore shifted and changed, and it is this intellectual genealogy that is critical to contemporary debates about theatre and social change.

> 'Instrumentalism' is, as a matter of fact, 2500 years old. The arts have been used as a tool to enforce and express power in social relations for as long as the arts themselves have been around. We would argue, in fact, that the first lucid, cogent and systematic theorisation of instrumental cultural policy can be found in Plato's Republic (Belfiore and Bennett 2008, p. 140).

The reference to Plato sets up the debate about the corrupting nature of the arts, on one hand, its potential for destabilising, iconoclasm, and undermining society

because it is escapist and a distraction from important societal concerns, and on the other, Aristotelian traditions in which the potential of the arts is conceived of as improving and educating citizens. It is not within the capacity of this chapter to explore in depth the complex heredity of this intellectual history, but suffice to say, Aristotelian arguments have developed, fractured, and deepened through a variety of traditions, for example from positivist thinkers such from Voltaire, through Schiller and Shelley to de Tocqueville and Dewey.

The intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy has dominated the intellectual discussion of the role and function of the arts in society. A move to more nuanced approaches that sidestep the either-or debate, might re-frame arguments in relation to what might be asked of the arts, as opposed to whether it is appropriate to expect a 'useful' dividend. The research that explores values attempts to re-set a long (and perhaps fruitless) debate concentrating on the nature of the phenomena instead and accepting that this nature is subject to contemporaneous norms:

> Valuation is an action and an intervention, and is about attributing cultural value to objects and events in the context of prevailing social norms and customs. The dichotomies that shape much debate are thus themselves constructed through such discourses, nowhere more so perhaps than when we consider cultural policy (Belfiore and Bennett 2008, p. 140).

The significance of this re-phrasing of social impact and change is that the values discourse re-positions arts within a broader intellectual history and debate, and importantly broadens it away from the reductionism of the measurement and public management approach that has dominated Western arts policy since the early 1980s.

Applied theatre history traces the contours of social and political policy from the 1980s through to contemporary times. The shift from community arts and its outright left wing agenda fell from grace with the hard line and pernicious de-funding of companies by Thatcher's government in the UK (and Howard in Australia). Private sector funding was introduced to sponsor the arts. It was the era of small government and the privileging of entrepreneurism ('loads of money'). Concepts of social change so widely promulgated by community theatre/arts movement were replaced with buzzwords such as 'targets', 'monitoring outputs' and 'auditing' performances (O'Brien 2013). The rhetoric of the 1980s and beyond consigned the nebulous ideas of educational liberation and egalitarianism to the scrap heap. The lofty ideas of the arts as nurturing cultural sensibility, the human spirit and moral reasoning' were given short shrift (Ellis 2013). Arguably applied theatre practice emerged as a pragmatic response to the radical shifts in social and political policy, and in doing so renounced the political aspirations of social change embedded in much of the 1970s community arts and theatre in education movements. The politics did not disappear, but became subterranean, and covert. Hence, it might be argued, the field has been somewhat stunted in its ability to talk about radical change because it has been so concerned with acceptance and the business of survival that examining – and really examining – the complexities and theories of change that inform its silent assumptions have become stilted and rather unsophisticated. In short the faith-based dogma of change and transformation have remained unquestioned and unexamined.

Applied theatre was created as a resistance against these moves, but also as a desperate way to survive and adapt the momentous shift into an era of accountability in the most simplistic of terms. Value was defined purely in relation to its instrumental utility. Applied theatre researchers and practitioners responded by building in and absorbing these measurement cultures, vainly attempting to construct evaluations that would be accepted by the specific agencies they were working with. There are two important things to highlight here. First is how quickly and effectively the shift to measurement and new instrumentalism became the dominant paradigm (thanks to Thatcher's, Howard's, and to some extent Reagan's reforming agenda) and has continued to be one of the main frameworks for the last 40 years. Second, it's important to recognize that within these frameworks there has also been a desire to make meaning from data and evidence. Those that argue for a lack of accountability, perhaps romanticize the position of the arts too much. Resources are limited and funding finite. Applied theatre, ironically, has rather thrived in certain sectors as a result of valuing the arts in relation to social policy. Both the conservative and (in the UK) New Labour arts policies intrinsically challenged artists to link their work to broad societal policy (with lashings of measurements). For example, in prison theatre domains, several companies were established and grew close partnerships with criminal justice agencies and latterly with arts council funding.

Within the broader ambitions of the book we will be exploring how concepts of value, intent and success have emerged as discursive practices across a range of documents associated with applied theatre practice. In the next section, it is useful to explore the politics and history of change in relation to one area of practice – prison theatre – which has grown up in the era of managerialism and measurement, and to track the scope and diversity of how the field articulates concepts of change in this specific context.

1 Change in Applied Theatre: Prison Theatre

There have been a number of key applied theatre areas that have had to reflect and respond to context-specific interpretations of change. Theatre for Development practice often demands social and economic forms of change driven as much by NGO imperatives as the grounded needs of communities. Those working in theatre and health often understand efficacy in terms of medical forms of measurement. And prison theatre work, caught up in the correctional technologies and rationales for punishment and rehabilitation, defines and responds to criminological paradigms of social policy. If change is to be understood in broader terms, then it can only be achieved with an approach which is both *epic* and *intimate* – the micro and the macro – and linked to the specificities of a context. To a degree the affect/effect of applied theatre resides in the commitment to aesthetic imperatives and a confidence in negotiating and engaging with transdisciplinary approaches. The three-way partnership model of applied theatre – the artist, the participant and the institutional/agency – do construct tensions and contradictions, but can also be a

powerful and dynamic framework through which positive outcomes and transparent modes of understanding can emerge.

Prison theatre provides a particularly rich example of the inherent paradoxes of applying theatre work, because the criminological goal is so tightly focused on individual change. Theatre-based practice needs to be able to demonstrate how it relates to criminological criteria such as articulated models of change, empirical validation, or how a programme addresses identified criminogenic needs of a target group. In a context where correctional budgets are under pressure, the case for the arts needs to be made with ever greater sophistication, or at the very least an understanding and ability to be in dialogue with institutional priorities within the criminal justice system. The notion of change in prison-based work is pre-determined and benchmarked against rehabilitation criteria. This directly informs the ways in which theatre companies are invited and permitted to be in a prison, and this fragile 'offer' is constantly under scrutiny, and perpetually a victim of shifts in policy. It is testimony to theatre practitioners' resilience and their ability to build productive working partnerships with criminal justice staff that have enabled theatre work to exist, grow and develop in multiple ways. But it is always with a conscious understanding that agility and responsiveness to changes in the criminal justice ecology are a basic survival instinct.

Therefore, the notions of change – in behaviour and criminological attitudes – are complex linguistic, policy and political territories. The restrictive criminal justice environment calls for clarity and a strong evidence base, but also a degree of courage and confidence to articulate value and understanding in ways that are both acceptable to the context their rigor, and that can fully capture what theatre might be able to achieve that other 'interventions' might not.

The two main approaches to prison work have been either to explore the alignment between the arts and criminological theories in order to pursue key criminal justice objectives (e.g. victim empathy, social skills development, cognitive behavioural skills to address offending behaviour) or to take an aesthetic stance, and argue that the soft skills of being engaged in arts practice have a multitude of benefits (usually in relation to self-esteem, confidence, new perspectives on identity). This intentionality and positioning is important because it frames the kind of work that is delivered. Exploration of change need to be focussed on clarifying the language of artists *and* criminal justice agencies. It's a murky area on both sides. There are artists that have clear ideas of not wanting anything to do with the change business. They are art makers. They make art. And yet when asked to identify the benefits of their work, they talk in terms of individual transformation. The same inconsistencies exist in criminal justice agencies, in which models of change are presented in neat logical diagrams of 'input' this training or cognitive behavioural programme to deliver this 'output' (change in attitude/behaviour/criminological tendency). The 'science' of prison is certainly more sophisticated and nuanced than in previous decades, but the statistics in relation to rehabilitation or reducing reoffending remain stubbornly high across all international jurisdictions.

As the contemporary prison theatre field developed in the 1980s and 1990s, so too did the need for evaluation, research and evidence to support the claims and

rationales for the work. In the 1990s the *Unit for Arts and Offenders* advocated for evaluation methodologies to be incorporated into the work of practitioners, and in more recent years this call has been heeded, at least in the UK (Peaker 1998; Balfour and Poole 1998). In 2011, The Arts Alliance (UK) (a development from the *Unit for Arts and Offenders*), commissioned *The Evidence Library*, a catalogue of research evidence on the effectiveness of arts organisations in the criminal justice sector and an assessment of the viability of providing an online catalogue of research (Arts Alliance Evidence Library n.d.). Whilst there are a small number of studies documented in that work which are published in academic journals, the majority of the work cited is grey literature either unpublished evaluations available by request through an arts organisation, or in the form of a document published on an organisation's website.

The *Evidence Library* builds on a previous literature review, *Doing the Arts Justice* (Hughes 2005) which provided a significant overview with a clear account of the current evidence and theory base for the arts in the criminal justice sector. Hughes presents a number of major thematic strands in arts practice in the criminal justice sector which can be summarised as follows (Hughes 2005, p. 53):

1. Arts to enrich the prison curriculum (where arts based programmes enhance basic skills training in areas such as parenting and family relationships)
2. Arts education (classes to develop skills in specific art forms such as music education or painting classes)
3. Arts as therapeutic interventions (arts-based therapy or as a tool in a broader intervention program)
4. Arts as adjunctive therapy (arts practice with broad personal and social development aims that develop readiness for future interventions or as an adjunct to intervention programmes)
5. Arts for participation and citizenship (arts practice that prepares offenders to play a positive role in the community or arts programmes based on restorative justice models or generative activities/contribution to community)
6. Arts as a cultural right (arts for social inclusion, based on the idea that everyone has a right of access to high quality arts opportunities and cultural experience).

Hughes' evolving taxonomy documents a range of different rationalisations for change and is a helpful guide for theatre makers to understand and position their projects in relation to different change agendas. Subsequent to Hughes' review, two other reports have been developed. *Unlocking Value: the economic benefit of the arts in criminal justice* evaluates the economic benefits of arts interventions (Johnson, Keen and Pritchard 2011). This document assesses the effectiveness in terms of economic value of three arts programmes with ex-offenders in the UK. Reference is made to the progress made since the Hughes report and notes: "Six years on, the number and quality of evaluations has increased...yet the sector continues to face significant challenges in demonstrating its effectiveness" (Johnson, Keen and Pritchard 2011, p. 10).

2 Framing a Language of Change

Understanding the narratives and theories of change that theatre practitioners use to talk about prison work, was the key feature of a recent Australian Research Council Linkage project, *Captive Audiences: performing arts in Australian prisons*. The research explored five case studies of arts companies working in Australia, to find a basis for effective dialogue between arts and correctional organisations. Whilst the intentions of arts facilitators and correctional managers were very similar, it seems that a common language enabling arts organisations to effectively communicate with corrections was often oblique. The research developed a framework that helped to assist in the development and management of prison arts projects: for arts facilitators it offered a vehicle for reflecting upon the intentions of the project and a language and structure for developing proposals; for correctional staff it offered a framework for understanding the potential contribution of proposed arts projects to the prison, and a language for developing policy, engagement and evaluation with arts organisations.

Prison theatre projects are by their very nature heterogeneous: no two projects are the same, and therefore their contribution to the correctional enterprise is varied, and often multifaceted. The research documented and critiqued arts practice within Australian prisons and saw a range of projects that contributed across a number of domains: cultural access, education, health and wellbeing, prison environment, changing offending behaviour and reintegration.

Captive Audiences identified a need for developing a framework that could offer a common language of change, intention and rationale – mapped across both creative practice and institutional priorities. The research drew on the use of a logic model approach for project development, management and evaluation. This kind of tool is used extensively within both correctional and arts management to develop projects and build common understanding amongst stakeholders. Working through a logic model process also helps to ensure that any evaluations yield relevant, useful information based on the intentions and assumptions of the project.

A prison arts logic model should include:

1. Situational Analysis: What are the perceived needs? Why are we doing this project? *(e.g. lack of engaging rehabilitation services for a distinct prisoner group; need for development of the educational curriculum in ways that are relevant to a prisoner population; low motivation among prisoners for engagement in prison activities and programs.)*
2. Goals: How is this project meeting this perceived need? Phrase your goal in terms of the change you want to achieve over the life of your project, rather than a summary of the services you are going to provide. *(e.g. developing links with community and culture for Aboriginal prisoners in this prison; motivating prisoners to engage with literacy through poetry and performance.)*
3. Assumptions: What assumptions are we making? (*e.g. arts projects can assist in the rehabilitation of prisoners; cultural expression is a basic human need.*)

4. Intentions of the project in terms of correctional service delivery: How does this project fit in with the service delivery of the prison? *(refer here to the positioning of the project in terms of the framework in Diagram 1)*

5. Project Inputs: What resources are necessary for completing the activities? (i.e. human, financial, organisational, community or systems resources in any combination). How will these assets/resources be gained? *(e.g. physical facilities, costumes, sets, art supplies, musical instruments, funding of the project, facilitator skills, approvals, sufficient prison access, staff support, willing participants)*

6. Project Activities: What are the specific actions that make up the project? (Describe the activities involved in the project *(e.g. theatre games; song writing; group reflection; rehearsing a play)* as per the project's aims and goals, appropriate for the participants, the facility, the technology, the resources of the facilitators, the intended artistic outcome, and the intended instrumental outcome. Include detailed descriptions including the duration and intensity of the project activities.

7. Project Outputs: What are the creative outputs *(e.g. theatre performance; film; published material; songs; dances)*? Describe these in detail (including audience type and anticipated number; numbers of prisoners involved and in what roles; what happens to any creative product or data generated by the project).

8. Short-term Outcomes: What are the projected immediate and tangible benefits of the project? Ensure that projected outcomes are linked with stated resources and activities.

9. Intermediate-term Outcomes: What are the next projected results or impacts that occur because of the project activities? Document expected changes in program participants, the organisation, the prison, and/or the community as a result of the program. Include specific changes in awareness, knowledge, skills and behaviours. Include any previous evaluation data here. These link your short-term outcomes with long-term outcomes as a logical progression and must remain within the scope of the program's control or sphere of reasonable influence and be generally accepted as valid by various stakeholders of the project.

10. Long-term outcomes: What change do you *hope* will occur over time? Long-term outcomes are those that result from the achievement of your short- and intermediate-term outcomes. They are also generally outcomes over which your program has a less direct influence. Often long-term outcomes will occur beyond the timeframe you identified for your logic model.

While some of the language might seem rather instrumental and technical, the process of using it has been invaluable for providing a translation tool between prison/arts practitioners reflecting on their own intentionality as well as mapping the priorities of criminal justice agencies in understanding how the arts might best be positioned within the institution/sector.

The following diagram demonstrates how this logic model was applied to the priorities of the Australian Correctional priorities, but hopefully the illustration

Diagram 1 Logic Model for Australian Correctional priorities

shows how it might be possible to map this onto different applied theatre contexts, at least as a starting point.

As with Cahill's chapter (later in this book) which offers a slightly different approach, the use of tools such as a logic model process aim to surface often invisible curriculums and rationales bound up in work that seeks to address personal and/or social change. These kinds of approaches to understanding change also demand that an assessment of social impact cannot be left to the end of a project or be done in isolation of the context, participants and agencies involved. Attempting to under-

stand notions of success, intent and impact requires a precision of language, a willingness to engage in and be accountable to transdisciplinary knowledges, and an appreciation for the long historical legacy of building cultural value that can transcend faith-based rhetoric and provide authentic and meaning-making change.

References

Arts Alliance Evidence Library. (n.d.). *Arts Alliance*. http://www.artsevidence.org.uk. Accessed 1 May 2017.

Balfour, M., & Poole, L. (1998). Evaluating theatre in prisons and probation. In J. Thompson (Ed.), *Prison theatre: Perspectives and practices* (pp. 217–230). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Belfiore, E., & Bennett, O. (2008). *The social impact of the arts; an intellectual history*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chairman-Bernstein, M. (1992). Hypermedia production (abstract): Hand-craft or witchcraft. In *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Hypertext*, ACM, 282–283.

Crossick, G., & Kaszynska, P. (2016). *Understanding the value of arts & culture.* The AHRC cultural value project. Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Ellis, R. M. (2013). *Middle way philosophy 3: The integration of meaning volume 3*. North Carolina: Lulu.com.

Habermas, J. (1981). New social movements. *Telos, 1981*(49), 33–37.

Heritage, P. (2004). Real social ties?: The ins and outs of making theatre in Brazilian prisons. In M. Balfour (Ed.), *Theatre in prison: Theory and practice*. Chicago: Intellect Books.

Holden, J. (2004). *Creating cultural value: How culture has become a tool of government policy*. London: Demos.

Hughes, J. (2005). In A. Miles & A. McLewin (Eds.), *Doing the arts justice: A review of research literature, practice and theory*. London: Unit for the Arts and Offenders. http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/assets/ckeditor/attachments/1062/doing_the_arts_justice_by_hughes.pdf?1412194272. Accessed 20 June 2017.

Johnson, H., Keen, S., & Pritchard, J. (2011). Unlocking value: The economic benefit of the arts in criminal justice. New Philanthropy Capital. https://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Unlocking-Value-NPC-Alliance-Report-October-2011-FINAL.pdf. Accessed 20 June 2017.

Kershaw, B. (2016). Toward a historiography of the absent. In J. Hughes & H. Nicholson (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on applied theatre* (pp. 16–39). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nicholson, H. (2010). The promises of history: Pedagogic principles and processes of change. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 15*(2), 147–154.

O'Brien, D. (2013). *Cultural policy: Management, value and modernity in the creative industries*. London: Routledge.

Peaker, A. (1998). Nuff respect: The creative and rehabilitative needs of black offenders. Unit for the Arts and Offenders.

Language and the Concept of Change: Overview of Leximancer Analysis

Michael Finneran

Language is important.

This volume, from the outset, foregrounds this proposition and proposes that we take the language of drama seriously, and scrutinise it critically in order to gain insight into our understandings of drama for social change.

The manner in which language is used in applied theatre has received relatively little attention, although indirectly it has been a cause for concern (e.g. Thompson 2011; Schonmann 2005; Schonmann 2011; Weltsek and Ociepka 2011). The lack of critical awareness around language can potentially lead to the emergence of a rhetorical discourse. In a field driven by activity (Nicholson 2005, p. 38), this is a problem if it remains critically unchallenged. Rhetorically-driven practices and projects can result in work which embodies a type of 'super-hero' or 'save the world' ideal in terms of how it seeks to exemplify and work towards achieving change.

Rhetoric has may forms. It is understood in lay terms as emotive or heightened language, used directly and perhaps forcefully to win over an audience. Classically, rhetoric was an elegant branch of oratory, with the intent of winning hearts and minds through artful persuasion. It is suggested here that one can regard it critically as purposeful language, which has a clear intent within a discursive community:

> Rhetoric … can be understood as a form of heightened language and therefore discourse; but also as a meta-language, i.e. a language used to make statements about other languages. This dual dimension to its nature, suggests that rhetoric itself is imbibed with political and ideological meaning, and created for reasons of cultural capital and therefore position-taking and status within a field. (Finneran 2009, p. 145)

Language, therefore, must be understood in the context of it not just having impact within a discursive process, but also of having significant meaning. Foucault's theory regarding discursive formations (Foucault 1972) offers some insight here.

M. Finneran (✉)
Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
e-mail: michael.finneran@mic.ul.ie

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_3

The rules governing the emergence of discourse through the mapping of *surfaces of emergence*, the identifying of *surfaces of delimitation*, and the classification offered through *grids of specification*, offer some insight into his assertion that the emergence of objects of discourse "exists under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations" (1972, p. 49). Such an object is never born without meaning, but is created within the conditions that are in existence 'between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization' (*ibid.*). This allows us to situate an object of discourse within a 'field of exteriority' (1972, p. 50), and begin to look from the objects of discourse back to the positive conditions and describe the importance they hold in better understanding the relationship between language, knowledge and power in the discourse of a field such as applied drama.

The premise of this volume is a relatively straightforward one. We hold that critically unchecked language can lead to critically unaware (albeit positively intended) work. This chapter aims to begin a detailed exploration of public documents in the field of applied theatre, specifically those associated with some kind of social change. We believe that by looking at the language used within a field and by treating them as objects of discourse, as constituent parts of a greater community rather than merely as individual words, we can better understand the prevailing conditions which govern and shape the field.

1 Methodology

To better understand the language of applied theatre for social change, a broad analysis of the current literature was carried out. This enquiry consisted of a qualitative mapping of the field based on the following steps: identifying the scope of the enquiry; identifying and locating the relevant documents; selecting the documents; analysing documents; and collating, summarising and reporting results.

The boundaries of applied theatre for social change are often ill defined. One way of better understanding this set of practices was to identify the meaning given to social change by focusing on the stated intent of such practices, the definition of success and the value placed on the kind of change or transformation claimed to be a result of participating in such projects. While this chapter explores the specific language emerging from an analysis by concordance software, Chapter "Values, Intentions, Success and Impact in Applied Theatre Documents" employs a thematic analysis, drawing on the notions of intention and success and Chapter "Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre for Social Change: Defamilarising Key Words in the Field" employs a critical analysis of the emerging themes. Taken together, these three chapters provide a broad, yet critical perspective on discursive practices and understandings of change in applied theatre.

The enquiry was, thus, based on locating documents available online which discuss, present or analyse applied theatre programmes or projects from around the world published within this decade and with a specific and identifiable social change

agenda. The pivotal final search criterion was defined through the identification of observable claims of tangible and intangible intentions and successes in the work being described.

The type of documents included in this analysis were funding programme guidelines, university and further education course outlines and outcomes, companies and associations' annual reports and mission statements, community-led project and programme evaluation or impact reports, and scholarly papers published in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. Relevant scholarly documents were identified and located in the first instance using Google Scholar while other documents were located using other search engines, such as ecosia.net to locate funding guidelines, course outlines and annual reports; and ecosia.net, google.com and comminit.com and some meta-search engines (dopgile.com, ixquick.com, webcrawler.com, savvysearching.com) to locate evaluation reports.

The search criteria used to locate relevant documents was: published 2005—2015 AND change AND success AND (applied theatre OR applied drama OR drama in education OR theatre in education OR forum theatre OR prison theatre OR drama therapy OR community theatre OR theatre for development). This search yielded 223 documents. Initially all documents appeared to be relevant to this study, however a closer look at the year(s) of publication and/or implementation of the project, the programme or project's intention or purpose and the definition of success or effectiveness highlighted the need to cull certain documents from the final analysis because they fell outside the dates or because they did not include much (or any) discussion of applied theatre practice. This culling exercise reduced the number of relevant documents to 139.

Documents from the final data set were also reviewed and summarised based on the collation of information about the type of document, the name of project, the company or practitioner(s) involved, the year(s) of implementation of the project, the location of the project (continent and country), the context within which the project took place (e.g. school, prison, community), the type of practice used (e.g. forum theatre, psychodrama), the intention of the project, the purpose of the document, indicators and definition of success and project or programme outcomes and, when appropriate, the evaluation or research methods used, and key theoretical ideas.

This review was further used to identify sub-sets to be run through *Leximancer*, a piece of concordance software. The *Leximancer* software scans the inputted text and creates lists and maps of the sets of 'concepts' it discerns. It produces results in two different ways. Firstly, *Leximancer* produces a ranked list of concepts. Based on a frequency count of words central to the text being studied, it auto-generates lists of frequently occurring concepts. It also allows for concepts to be paired, which highlights the frequency of co-occurrence of two concepts across all texts. Secondly, *Leximancer* has the ability to generate reports and maps. It this case, these were generated for the top ten themes (which is an umbrella term highlighting a cluster of concepts) which were present across document sets. This process allows for the visual mapping of 'meaning' to take place, as *Leximancer* graphically draws how the concepts are linked, and maps the proximity spacing between the concepts, thus

Table 1 Number of documents per category for the evaluation reports and scholarly papers data set

Categories	Numbers
Context of practice	School and universities (n = 29), community (n = 23), prison (n = 9), clinical (n = 2) and across several contexts (n = 2).
Geographic location	Europe (n = 23), Americas (n = 15), (Africa (n = 9), Oceania (n = 8), International (n = 6) and Asia (n = 4)
Material type	Scholarly papers (n = 41), organisations programmes (n = 38), university course outlines (n = 25), evaluation reports (n = 24) and funding guidelines (n = 11)
Sector	Social (n = 35), health (n = 16), education (n = 13) and not applicable (n = 1)
Type of practice	Forum theatre (n = 18), Mixed approach (n = 15), Community-devised theatre (n = 12), Theatre in education (n = 6), Applied theatre (n = 3) Community theatre (n = 3), Drama therapy (n = 2), Theatre for development (n = 2), Other (n = 4)

allowing the relationship between concepts to be visually read. Conceptual relationships which are linked are identified through linear pathways, and those which are closest are physically closest on the map. The analysis of the final set of documents was conducted in this fashion. Reports were generated for the complete set of documents as well as subsets of documents, as outlined below. These reports highlighted the vocabulary and conceptual relationships associated with 'change'.

2 *Leximancer* Results

Leximancer reports were generated for the complete set of the documents (n = 139) as well as for sub-sets of documents (evaluation reports and scholarly papers, n = 65) according to different categories, as outlined in Table 1.

The same exercise was then also applied to each sub-set was as outlined in Table 2 and Table 3.

3 Initial Analysis and Concept Ranking

The *Leximancer* analysis reveals a number of interesting, though perhaps unsurprising, aspects of the data through an analysis of the concepts and themes generated in lists of frequencies and maps.

Leximancer was used to scan the texts to identify frequently used terms (concepts), excluding weak and nonlexical semantic information, thus revealing frequently used terms around which other ideas cluster. Analysis of the preliminary concept ranking reveals that none of the documents examined showed an engagement with the all the concepts central to this study, namely change intent, success and evaluation. ***Change*** is the most common relevant concept, ranking 23rd of the

Table 2 Number of documents per category for the evaluation reports data set

Categories	Number of documents
Countries and regions	Africa (n = 3, Lebanon, Malawi, South Africa), North America (n = 3, Canada, US), Europe (n = 6, UK), Oceania (n = 4, Australia, PNG and other Pacific Islands)
Project duration	The projects and programmes evaluated lasted between a few weeks up to 4 years (2010–2013). The evaluation reports include 5 mutliyear projects/ programmes and 10 that lasted less than 1 year. Projects and programmes evaluated occurred between 2002 and 2014.
Contexts	Schools (n = 7, public, primary, secondary, specialised, etc.), Community (n = 6, e.g. youth, sex workers), prisons (n = 2), mixed (n = 1, schools and hospitals)
Type of practice	Forum theatre (n = 4), community-devised theatre (n = 3), combination of applied drama techniques (n = 3), TIE (n = 2); drama therapy (n = 1), amateur theatre (n = 1)
Evaluation tools	Ranged from interviews or single questionnaire to a combination of document analysis, observation, interviews, focus groups, surveys and/or psychometric tests.

Table 3 Number of documents per category for the scholarly papers data set

Categories	Number of documents
Countries and regions	Europe (n = 12, Finland, Norway, Turkey, UK), North America (n = 11, Canada and US), Africa (n = 4 Kenya and South Africa), international (n = 7), Asia (n = 2, Bangladesh, South Korea), Oceania (n = 2, NZ)
Project duration	Projects researched mostly took part in the 2000s, though one took part in the early 1990s. Of those that provided a date about half (n = 11) were less than a year-long project and the other half (n = 10) were projects that took place over 2 to 4 years.
Contexts	Educational institution (n = 21, Schools, University students, School and university students), Community (n = 9, after-school programme, children, disabled people), Prisons (n = 5), clinical (n = 1), across contexts (n = 1)
Type of practice	Forum theatre (n = 10), mixed approach (n = 10), Community-devised theatre (n = 6), Theatre in Education (n = 3), Drama therapy (n = 2), Professional development in drama devised (n = 2), TFD (n = 2), inclusive theatre (n = 1), Sociodrama (n = 1)
Research methods	Most research projects used a qualitative approach (n = 34) as opposed to a quantitative approach (n = 2, with pre and post-test against control group). Qualitative approaches often used a range of tools, including: Informal interviews, focus groups

concepts overall with an occurrence rate of 46% (n = 1174) across the sample. This percentage refers to the frequency of text segments which are coded with a particular concept, relative to the frequency of the most frequent concept in the list, which will always be 100%. It does not suggest that this percentage of data sources contain that concept, but it is an indicator of the relative strength of a concept's frequency of occurrence. ***Evaluation*** follows in 38th place occurring 887 times (33%). To place these in some context, there are 101 significant concepts (significance≥11%

occurrence (n ≥ 282)). Some of the other relevant conceptual rankings are ***learning*** (#21), ***social*** (#24), ***research*** (#30) and ***impact*** (#57).

The concept map (Fig. 1) produced from the analysis of the complete set of documents provides visual representation and summary of the concepts, and identified spatially within the top ten themes discerned. Themes in *Leximancer* are formed by the programme ranking the concepts by connectedness, starting by forming a theme ground based around the top concept discerned through the analysis, and then proceeding to the next ranked concept and so on. The top ten themes are represented here and included in this analysis. They are

project with 100% connectivity, use (98%), theatre (94%), work (72%), change (46%), applied (19%), report (18%), Theatre (6%), family (5%) and application (2%).

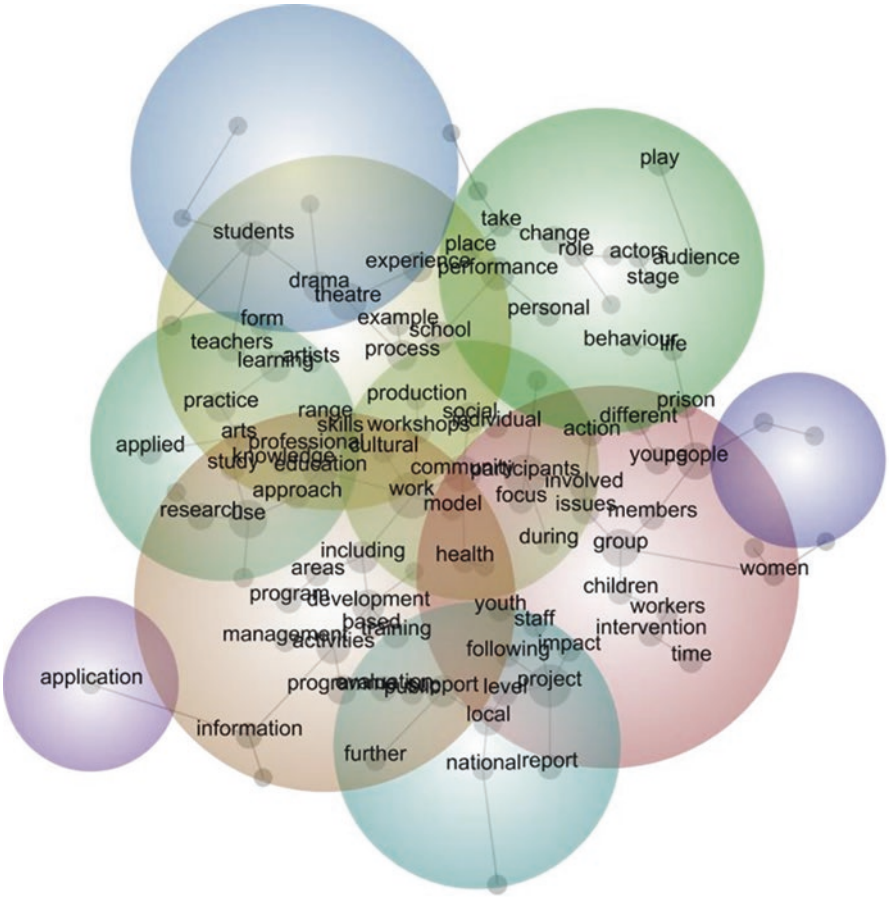

Fig. 1 Concepts Map for the complete set of documents based on ten Themes

Project is the right-hand side circle of the larger of the two dominant circles with use on the left. The replication of the concept of theatre in the list of themes can be explained in terms of their differing discursive relationships, with the top two spheres on the left-hand side of the map representing both the larger and smaller of the theatre themes, with clearly different emphases, the smaller (uppermost) theme having ***students*** as its dominant concept. The fourth-ranked theme, work, is central in the map, with the concept of ***community*** perhaps unsurprisingly, being at the very heart, intersecting with the themes of both project and use also.

The theme of change is located at the top right-hand corner of the map. ***Change*** as a concept is spatially somewhat peripheral, and linked most closely with ***role***. There are two separate and distinct areas of discursive interest discernible in this thematic sphere. One set of relationships pertains to the idea of change within the dramatic form, with concepts such as ***audience***, ***stage***, ***actors*** and ***play*** all in close proximity, thus indicating that these concepts are frequently used in conjunction with ***change***. More interestingly, ***change*** is also closely associated with ***behaviour***, ***personal*** and ***life***, which is more indicative of what we typically understand in terms of change in terms of the nature of applied theatre. Most noteworthy in the context of this study is the absence of any significant discourse regarding intent or success in achieving change; the data simply has the concepts ***take***, ***place***, ***experience*** and ***performance*** close by, indicating a discursive relationship.

At the opposite side of the map (Fig. 1) in a particularly crowded area of thematic intersection (between use and report), sits the theme of ***evaluation***. The intersecting area is a spatially crowded thematic crossover, indicating high levels of conceptual relationship. ***Evaluation*** overlaps significantly with ***programme***, ***public*** and ***support*** indicating a high level of discursive relationship between the language of evaluation and the functional generation of reports and also as being central to language around the use of applied drama and theatre work.

4 Paired Concepts

In the next phase of relational analysis, *Leximancer* was used to look to the co-occurrence of paired concepts within a user-defined section of text. The two highest-ranked relevant concepts, as noted above, are ***change*** and ***evaluation***. Their paired concepts are indicative of the highest number of instances of significant discursive usage within the complete dataset. ***Change*** is most closely paired with ***social*** (n = 172), ***people*** (n = 150) and ***theatre*** (n = 149), with ***behaviour***, ***participant***, ***process***, ***project*** and ***community*** making up the rest of the top 8 paired concepts. This indicates an expected trend around the sort of change discussed in the formal documents of our field. It can be safely inferred from the paired concepts that the sort of change which is most often discussed in these data is social in nature, and more specifically, behavioural. Such change, therefore, tends to involve communities of people, many of whom, we can safely assume, are project participants.

Evaluation, as a concept, by far mostly frequently occurs alongside ***project*** (n = 285), thus indicating an arguably utilitarian discursive outlook towards evaluation, though one which is firmly in keeping with one of the premises of this book. Indeed, all the top-ranking co-occurring concepts display a pragmatic approach towards the concept: ***participant*** (n = 182); ***use*** (n = 163); ***time*** (n = 141); and ***process*** and ***group*** (both n = 127).

5 Analysis of 'Change'

It is worth looking more closely at both the theme and concept of ***change***. By refining the search parameters within *Leximancer*, it is possible to drill into the theme in order to gain a clearer insight into the discursive usage of the concept. The most related words (different to concepts) to ***change*** runs to a number of pages, however through searching to find those words suitable to this research, another level of analysis is possible. The most interesting words were 'behaviour' (n = 145), 'impact' (n = 98), 'intervention' (n = 90), 'audience' (n = 79) and 'personal' (n = 61). Searching for these words in situations of multiple occurrence reveals that, for example, the combination of 'personal' + 'intervention' within the concept of ***change*** results in 24 hits within the complete sample, across 14 of the documents analysed. Further examination of this result allows us to isolate these specific usages in order to examine the discourse context of their usage in more detail, for example:

> … the arts are more at home with narratives than with numbers, many researchers are finding ways of combining personal stories and 'number crunching' to find out more about the effects of an intervention. The KAPB model has become one of the most widely accepted theoretical models of behaviour change to the point where it is now the 'common sense' approach to designing and evaluating social change projects. (Dalrymple 2006, p. 208)

> Arts work in a community context is often predicated on notions of intervention and transformation. A central question underpinning the project concerned the nature of transformation through theatre on a personal level, within the institution and through debates with audience members who came to see the piece. (McKean 2006, p. 314)

A search for the word 'behaviour' within the ***change*** concept throws up 145 hits, and reveals a broad range of sought-after or reported behavioural changes in the research. These range from the changing of sexual habits, to participants better understanding thier own feelings, to reduction of recidivism amongst ex-prisoners, to children understandings character's behavioural changes in drama.

As with previous analyses, the purpose of this search is not to question the validity or otherwise of the completed research or projects, but to attempt to garner a better insight into the manner in which language is employed in discussion the outcomes and impact of applied drama work. What can be noted from this brief section, is that those studies which utilise the concept of ***change***, particularly those

which qualify their usage with additional descriptors, tend to posit concrete understandings of what is meant by change. That said, these instances clearly form a minority of the conceptual references to ***change***.

6 Analysis of Document Types

As reported in Tables 1–3, the complete set of documents run through the *Leximancer* analysis was categorised in a range of ways for the purposes of further analysis, by; context, geographical location, material type, sector and contexts of practice. Project duration, decade of publication and partnership type were also used as modes of classification, but returned no relevant results. Some documents clearly fell outside this level of categorisation, or were included in single or potentially multiple categories. Reading the data through these lens throws up the possibility of extensive levels of geographical and sectoral discursive analysis. Of most interest to us was the manner in which types of applied practices impacts upon the nature of the discourse.

Lexminancer reports were also generated for a set of 65 documents clustered around the different types of applied drama practices listed as follows:

- Forum theatre (n = 18, including a type labelled interactive and legislative)
- Mixed approach (n = 15, including combinations such as site-specific and community-devised theatre and Playback with community-devised theatre / Community theatre and drama therapy / community theatre, community-devised theatre / community-devised theatre and documentary theatre / community-devised theatre and role play / Drama education & training / Forum theatre and Applied theatre / Forum theatre and Theatre in Education (TIE) / TIE, Devised theatre, Forum theatre / TIE, forum)
- Community-devised theatre (n = 12, including professional development in drama devised)
- Theatre in education (n = 6)
- Applied theatre (n = 3)
- Community theatre (n = 3, including amateur theatre)
- Drama therapy (n = 2)
- Theatre for development (n = 2)
- Other (n = 4, including sociodrama, Inclusive theatre, Psychodrama, Sensory theatre)

Whilst this is an interesting breakdown, in terms of offering a snapshot of the approaches used in the field, a direct comparison between the themes and the concepts gleaned from within each sub-category offers little insight. This is attributable to the fact that themes such as participants and people dominate across most of the categories. Direct comparison is also rendered redundant by the small sample size in some of the sub-categories.

7 Conclusion

In probing the language of applied drama, it is held here that a number of things can be achieved. Firstly, a step back and overview is enabled. The nature of a field such as ours is that work is dominated by small-scale, individually-driven, project-work, often existing without the benefit of any great resources. This can result in a silo-ing of researchers and practitioners, and a lack of mezzo or meta level research work which offers an overview of the field (O'Toole 2010; Omasta and Snyder-Young 2014). Working in a view such as that presented here enables mapping of our collective endeavour.

It also serves as a communal member-check which reminds us as a community of researchers that language is powerful and that we have a responsibility to engage with it judiciously, in order to avoid rhetorical and heightened claims, which may have emotional purchase, but which ultimately result in indefensible claims for the work of the field.

Finally, a discourse analysis such as this allows for the uncovering of discursive formations: an excavation of the underlying beliefs and philosophies which drive our professional language and the manner in which we employ it.

With that in mind, there are a number of things which can be safely stated and inferred from this *Leximancer* analysis. Considering the scale of the field, the sample examined is a strong one, numerically, geographically and thematically. It is representative of the discourse of our community. The insights offered from this brief analysis suggest that work of this nature offers a viable way of working for our field. The insights harnessed in this study should offer guidance as to the parameters of future studies. What is clear, however, is that the more honed the conceptual search, the greater the outcomes of any *Leximancer* analysis will be.

In terms of this research in particular, there are three things which can be discerned. The significance of missing concepts and themes from the core research foci cannot be underestimated. The concepts of success and intent are absent from the data, which raises valid questions around the extent to which they are considered when the evaluatory mechanisms for the projects are being conceptualised and put in place.

Secondly, change and evaluation are the most significant concepts (to this project) which are determinable across the dataset. There is no generalisable way in which they appear or are utilised in discourse, however they are both significantly present in the data, and are mapped not quite centrally, but neither at the periphery of the ideas driving the research projects examined.

Finally, though not discussed here to any significant degree, the vast majority of the complete sample (n = 139) in this analysis included some elements of the following in terms of how their research was reported: descriptions of intention and purpose for the project; indicators of how value might be discerned in the work, especially with reference to key theoretical ideas; and definitions of positive outcomes and how they might be identified. The next chapter outlines the analysis of the same data, drawing on these themes to develop a more holistic understanding of

the way certain terms, themes, and practices are conceptualised in documents realting to applied theatre for social change.

References

Dalrymple, L. (2006). Has it made a difference? Understanding and measuring the impact of applied theatre with young people in the south African context. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 201–218.

Finneran, M. (2009). *Critical myths in drama as education*. Coventry: University of Warwick.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. London: Routledge.

McKean, A. (2006). Playing for time in 'the dolls' house'. Issues of community and collaboration in the devising of theatre in a women's prison. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(3), 313–327.

Nicholson, H. (2005). *Applied drama: The gift of theatre*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

O'Toole, J. (2010). A preflective keynote: IDIERI 2009. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 15*(2), 271–292.

Omasta, M., & Snyder-Young, D. (2014). Gaps, silences and comfort zones: Dominant paradigms in educational drama and applied theatre discourse. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 19*(1), 7–22.

Schonmann, S. (2005). "master" versus "servant": Contradictions in drama and theatre education. *Journal of Aesthetic Education, 39*(4), 31–39.

Schonmann, S. (Ed.). (2011). *Key concepts in theatre/drama education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Thompson, J. (2011). *Performance affects: Applied theatre and the end of effect*. London: Palgrave McMillan.

Weltsek, G. J., & Ociepka, A. (2011). Reading the maps of meaning within Drama: Visible discourse(s), multimodal semiotics, and analogous reflection in applied theatre inquiry. *Youth Theatre Journal, 25*(2), 120–133.

Values, Intentions, Success and Impact in Applied Theatre Documents

Kelly Freebody

Our aim in this chapter is to develop a sense of how the data for this study assembled and recruited change as an understandable, usable or knowable concept related applied theatre. To achieve this, we explore how the documents collected for this project draw on, and represent a variety of themes that seem to be informed by, or to inform the idea of change in applied theatre. The analyses presented here are based on more purposive thematic coding of the data than those provided in the previous section. Specifically, here we describe the results of coding that employed the software program NVIVO, which we used to collect and inter-relate references to 'transformation' and 'change'. The themes of value, intent, success and impact had emerged from discussions in the literature, and so we used them as filters for exploring the content in the 139 documents.

The chapter aims to present a clear and robust, but relatively common-sense, 'everyday' view of the data, drawing together what was discovered when the documents were explored with the specific themes above in mind. In this sense, this chapter presents data from the research to establish the bases for subsequent discussions of the findings, including the critical perspectives that emerged.

The themes we focus on here revolve around the idea that to understand whether or not an applied theatre program has been successful, we must understand what change has, or has not, occurred, and the relationship such change might have for the intentions of the program. The intention of the funders and facilitators cannot be detached from the details of the practices or thus from the impact of the work (Etherton and Prentki 2006). The values held by the funders, facilitators, participants, and evaluators (if they were different from those listed) were also considered central to understanding what changes were given prominence, and what 'success' had or had not been achieved.

K. Freebody (✉)
The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: kelly.freebody@sydney.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_4

We filtered the documents through the specific themes listed above for two reasons: First, we aimed to develop insights into to "how and what claims are made" (Balfour 2009, p. 353) and better understand the possible relationships between intentions of programs and what constitutes success (Etherton and Prentki 2006; McDonald 2005). We hoped these insights would lead to a shared and detailed understanding of the evaluation, success, and reporting of applied drama programs. Second, we aimed to establish the foundations for the critical discussion that follows in the next chapter. We took it that applied theatre programs are not funded for their 'agenda-less creative work' (Balfour 2009, p. 350), but rather, are usually seen as acceptable to the extent that they provide participants with particular social competencies, the appropriateness of which is determined by funders and/or practitioners: "social intentionality underwrites most applied practice, specifically in relation to participation and transformation" (Balfour 2009, p. 350). In this light, we expected many applied drama programs to orient their marketing to a core 'transformative principle' (Balfour 2009; Kramer et al. 2006). This chapter aims to locate, document, map, and theorise this transformative principle, to critique its status, use, and usefulness in Chapter "Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre for Social Change: Defamilarising Key Words in the Field".

The data set for this chapter was the same as used in the previous chapter, a series of 139 documents relating to applied theatre, including

- websites promoting companies or specific processes (such as playback theatre),
- details of university programs in applied theatre,
- academic publications about applied theatre, and
- evaluation documents reporting on applied theatre programs.

Initially, some documents were coded by the researchers by hand to establish issues concerning the reliable coding of the themes: whether they were relevant to the data, whether there were significant overlaps, whether they were specific enough and not too vague, and to ensure we were interpreting them in similar ways.

Once this checking process was complete, the definitions of the themes were used to code for them via the NVIVO software. Sub-themes emerged through this coding process that shed light on the different ways the themes were realised, the different relationships among themes and sub themes across programs, and across document type. The findings arising from this process are presented here by theme, providing a picture of how the authors of the documents orient to values, intentions, perspectives on change, and understandings of success to establish a clearer picture of the transformation agenda.

1 Findings

Within the themes a series of subthemes were evident through the NVIVO coding of the documents. These subthemes were at times overlapping and interrelated; but allowed us to engage in a more nuanced discussion of the themes more broadly.

Therefore, the documentation of specific subthemes below can be understood as an attempt to 'manage' the discussion, rather than to separate the themes conceptually. General understandings of each of the themes emerged in the following ways:

The *values* of a program, company, or theatre piece tended to be generalised -- a philosophy about why the work is important, what it is for in broad terms, and how it should be done – rather than specified as explicit, detailed intentions or planned outcomes. Orientations to values, as opposed to specific intentions or outcomes, were more obvious in documents with broad reach, such as applied theatre websites and university courses, but they were also evident in evaluations and scholarly articles. Often values were named in the overall reasons for the why the work was undertaken in the first place. Few of documents explicitly made a claim for the general value of the arts and theatre in society – theatre as worthwhile for its 'own sake', the unique aesthetic affordances of theatre for individuals and communities, and so on. Overwhelmingly the documents oriented to participant-driven values; reasons for doing the work relating to improving and enhancing individuals and communities.

The *intentions* of the programs, companies or projects in the documents drew clearly on the need for, or power of, change in the given context. Given the contexts that most applied theatre programs and practitioners work in, this is perhaps unsurprising. Indeed, as we discussed in earlier chapters, effecting change is what earns most theatre programs the 'applied' title. In the documents analysed in this research, there were three key orientations to change: systems, individuals, and communities.

Discussions of *success,* unlike the values and intention, paid particular attention to how the documents conceptualised what their projects or applied theatre work more generally actually achieved, what outcomes were reached, what actions or effects were understood as achievement. Some of the documents did not address the specific elements or activities that indicated success. Those that did tended to orient to four themes: individual change, learning, audience engagement, and systemic change.

Impact indicates the extent to which participants or systems were changed by the applied theatre programs. Similar to, but distinguishable from the 'success' coding above, the data allocated to this node did not necessarily specify the particular activities or indications of success, but rather more generally oriented to how the applied theatre work had an effect on those involved, and any broader impact such effect might have on systems or communities. Few programs had longitudinal experiences or data, so few projects were able to provide longitudinal perspectives on the work. Those that did could offer more overt, concrete understandings of what and how change happened. These were usually programs that had run a long time in one institution, often a prison. Most other documents used a mix of data, discussion and tacit understanding of the relationships between value, intention and success in order to explicate potential impact. The most complicated of all nodes, the documents oriented to:

- impact on individuals
- impact through education
- increased agency

- impact on communities
- political impact

Together, these themes provide a finely nuanced set of understandings relating to how ideas merge in the documents to build a picture of change through applied theatre work.

The following discussion explores the common subthemes in more detail. Many documents contained more than one subtheme, and many subthemes were shared across the themes more broadly. Community building, for example may be both a value and intention of a program. The descriptive analysis below explores the most common subthemes and how they emerged in the data. Where relevant, we also attempt to give consideration to how the results emerging from the data align with the current theoretical and empirical literature relating to each theme.

Social Justice was the most frequent and most complex category coded in the values theme and less evident in other themes. Coming under the coding umbrella of 'social justice' were a variety of concepts, including 'rights', 'discrimination', and the like. These were grouped early in the coding process because individually they did not afford a sufficiently general picture of the role of the concept in the documents. Combined, however, they formed a significant component of the discussion concerning the values and purposes of the work in the documents we explored. Therefore, this large, complex, more general category was created. The tenets of social justice within applied theatre documents predominantly reflected the long history of orienting to social justice in the applied theatre field, rights and access, enabling and advocating. These are briefly discussed below.

Historical: The notion that social justice was a value of applied theatre because it had historically always been so, was evident in documents, recognised sometimes without comment, and sometimes critically. The ideas and works of Freire and, most often, Boal were cited as key sources informing current work in applied theatre. By association therefore, those current practices were espoused with 'an ethical commitment to social justice' (Booton and Dwyer 2006): "Today, activists practice Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques globally" (Mitchell and Freitag 2011, p. 994). Such references to Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre, the origins of applied theatre practices, were relatively common across the documents, and positioned applied theatre as historically both political and radical in its sources, primarily concerned with the empowerment of participants.

Rights and Access: Projects and companies explicitly outlined social justice as a commitment or perspective. For instance:

> the piece was designed from a human rights perspective to give a voice to those who are often silenced because of their low social or economic status. (Dalrymple 2006, pp. 211–212)

This statement outlines both a value and an intention that orients to justice and rights as an informing perspective of why and how this work happened. Similarly

projects and companies expressed a commitment to building access (to services, or education), again, as principle that informs a set of more specific intentions. This was most often expressed as the provision of information and/or experiences that educate often marginalised people to understand, advocate for, or access services that assist in ensuring their rights and/or their health and wellbeing. This commitment was at times directly related to the values of the program or company, while at other times it was related to the values of the funding organisation or the institution in which the project had taken place (for example, a Legal Aid company committed to assisting young people to be educated about, and assertive about their rights).

Enabling and Advocating: These notions were often combined with both the rights orientation and discussions of empowerment. Documents that tended to express a commitment to rights and access also pointed to an enabling quality in their expression of values –the project or company did applied theatre work that enabled people to advocate for their rights, or advocate for the rights of others. This related to placing emphasis on the power of the individual, either as the potential to be informed about, and/or exercise their own or others' rights. Some documents redirected what might be considered 'usual' empowerment through an expressed commitment to empower the already 'powerful' to mobilise them to advocate for others, and to engage in their own responsible behaviours. The most common examples of this included men questioning the structures of patriarchy, or men's behaviour as central to ending domestic violence.

Very rarely were these values expressed in terms that implicate the institutions in which the applied theatre program took place by espousing a value oriented to de-institutionalization. The two instances of this problematized the prison in prison programs; there has been work in the area of drama education, however, that has similarly questioned the role of education systems in, at best, restricting, or, at worst, undermining students' creative expression (e.g., O'Connor 2016). This problematizing discourse was expressed as a value of theatre, naming the need to engage often marginalized people in discussions about social, ethical, and political issues.

There were strong connections between a coding for social justice and the subthemes of agency and community building. This was primarily via a shared concern with empowerment – expressed often as a recognition of: (1) storytelling, (2) directing one's own learning, (3) the importance of grass-roots approaches to problem solving, and (4) having one's voice heard. This was particularly common in playback theatre companies or projects that had community-building, specifically related to social justice as a core intention.

Systemic Change is considered here separate from, but strongly related to, social justice. When systemic or political change was stated as part of the programs' intentions there were, almost by definition, aspirational. Sometimes its aspiration was overt, such as 'providing a new vision for how society operates' (Wooster 2009, p. 83). More specific, but no less aspirational systemic change goals included to "harnesses the transformative power of original artistic expression to produce a range of social, cultural and environmental outcomes" (ACNI 2007, p. 8). While

some exemplary quotes are included here as illustrations, the notion that arts programs can be transformative for a community or individual was common in most of the documents. There were instances where, although the focal 'change agent' was the individual, the overall purpose of the change was systemic, such as transformation of knowledge or behaviour to do with the rights of the participants. Sex workers having the right to live in safety is an example (Middleton-Lee 2013). Although many of the documents were overtly concerned with social change, much of the discursive practice around such change drew on generalised 'common sense' expressions of the need for change and the power of theatre to effect change. There were, however, instances when systemic change intentions included adjectives about *how* the theatre work would contribute to the desired change. These adjectives tended to be associated with radical ideas such as mobilising the public, encouraging action, and building awareness. This contrasts with the adjectives used when more individualised or community-based changes were the intentions of the project.

Systemic change as a marker of success was less common in the documents than the aspirational intentions discussed above. One reason for this might be that it is difficult to measure systemic change outcomes – in ways analogous to measuring individual learning at least – over the relatively short periods of time that applied theatre programs usually run. When it was coded, systemic change as a marker of success referred to specific outcomes listed in the documents that are change-related (i.e., something tangible that did or could have changed). Systemic change was evident in the documents in three main ways:

1. A general 'system', 'staff' or 'policy' change, beyond the individual, or not identified at an individual level: Here change was conceptualised 'on the whole' without attention to specific actions within that whole. For example – "police reducing their harassment and violence against sex workers" (Middleton-Lee 2013, p. 6).
2. Specific, tangible changes as markers of success of a program that employed applied theatre without detailing how the theatre itself led to such 'successes': For example, "732 Roma children and their family members obtained personal documents and with it, entitlement to public services and benefits" (PBILD 2013, p. 5). In this case, the assumption is that it was not solely participation in forum theatre activities that led to this change, but perhaps that the activities contributed to a series of individual and systemic changes in attitudes, awareness or policies that enabled this specific outcome to be measured as a marker of success for the program. Another instance of this is to provide access to skills needed to navigate the system, to groups that are typically marginalised by such as system, for example: "... project is capable of reducing some of the language and cultural barriers to accessing legal information and services which are faced by migrants and refugees." (Booton and Dwyer 2006, p. v)
3. Specific change, or activities enabling change, directly connected to an aspect of the program. For example: "the migration and asylum phenomena was highlighted through a number of ground-breaking films... watched by high level

government" (PBILD 2013, p. 5). In this instance exposure of high level government to the issues of asylum seekers was a specific activity associated with the intervention that, in and of itself, was considered a success of the program because of its potential to create systemic change.

Specifically political change in the documents drew on the central premise of active, civic, engagement; the idea that participating in an event that is political (in this case an applied theatre program) changes someone. The actual extent and style of such change was more diverse in its expression in the documents. Ensemble was a key theme in many of these discussions. Drawing on the idea that genuine ensemble work cannot be coerced, therefore, if a theatre piece emerges successfully then people have changed or learned how to work together. They must have negotiated with each other, found common understandings in order to produce creative work socially. Ensemble was also considered important to political change because working together can be a political act, particularly in some institutions or communities that have social or cultural diversity. Ensemble allows for shifting power structures in these institutions and therefore, by proxy or analogy, in life. This idea leads to another key theme in these discussions – control as a political force. Documents describing applied theatre programs with people with disabilities discussed the impact of participants taking control of the art that they perform, and the way they perform it. Similarly, documents discussing marginalised or vulnerable people having control over their stories and the ways they're told indicated a change from their current situation can be considered political.

Community Building relates to rationales for the work that relate to community -applied theatre that is in, of, and about community. One company referred to this as 'community driven'. These ideas are drawn from a rich tradition of concern in applied theatre literature about the value of ensemble (e.g, Neelands 2009), the potential for theatre and drama to value facilitate community building (e.g., Gallagher 2007) "in a world in which community is increasingly difficult to find and maintain" (Nelson 2011, p. 163).

Community variously referred to a place, a group, or a community of practice, but was almost always connected to an explicit goal of community engagement. Some of these studies drew specifically on the value/philosophy of community capacity building, while others aligned themselves more generally to community engagement as a notable goal. Documents drew on ideas such as community development, community engagement, community building, community driven, and grass-roots, to describe work that was explicitly aligned with the value of bringing people together to work on a common project and, it was hoped, form a community. This was evident in the programs that focused on the importance of community-devised work and ensemble work and many of the projects explicitly outlined the importance of community to their work, for example, "community-driven, meaning they are developed with members of a community to address interests and needs they have identified, and are conducted relying on community core values" (Atalay 2010, p. 420). Likewise, some projects explicitly drew on theories of community

engagement or community building, such as Lave and Wenger's (1991) communities of practice.

The other aspect that often connected with the focus on community in the documents was valuing community voice and celebrating community stories. This was particularly evident in playback theatre projects, but was also coded in forum theatre projects and playmaking work, to, for example, "make the community feel heard, honoured, and fairly represented" (Nagel 2007, p. 154). Many of these documents referred to programs that drew on stories from a community to make theatre for or with that community. As a value of applied theatre, this oriented to the potential for theatre to make local stories powerful. There were a few instances in the documents where valuing community was deliberately placed at odds with work targeted at individuals. In these instances, the politics of collective action, along with an explicit focus on individualism as a problem, were drawn on as key values of the work, thereby informing the intentions and implementation strategies of those programs.

Community-based change, as an intention of the programs or practitioners in the documents, differed from systemic change in that it was focused inward toward the group rather than outward toward broader political or systemic structures. The community-based intentions of programs tended to fall into three headings:

1. *theatre is good for communities*: Therefore, applied theatre programs can "give our community the treasure of the dramatic art form" (Sextou 2013, p. 3). The intention of these projects, therefore, is to give the 'gift' of theatre to communities because engaging in theatre is a good thing for communities to do.
2. *theatre can help communities change*: This included similar terms to systemic change– mobilising, participating for change – but also included a focus on theatre as simply a tool through which communities can be 'empowered'. Clear orientations to 'grass-roots approaches' and the idea that change from within a community is more likely to be sustainable underlined this notion.
3. *theatre can teach/provide/encourage specific skills and practices to help communities*: This third perspective looked both inside and outside a community, with the intention of creating change. Inside a community, were orientations to the intention of building community skills (such as learning to work together, or learning to be healthy), or access to services. Outsiders were also a target in this focus with the intention of building awareness of community issues. These programs often that included performances for 'others' or 'the public', such as in prisons or in housing estates.

The discussions in these documents positioned participants as agents for change through collectivity – the building of a community that understood and had the skills to work towards common goals. These documents, however recruited diverse understandings of how such community-building events were impacting communities and/or creating change. These understandings involved the following processes:

- By alluding to the fact that these projects did impact the community in positive ways, or cited data that claims that the issues explored were perceived to be important to the community.
- By citing data that the groups working during the programs continued to connect after the project finished, or that participants felt they met or worked with people they wouldn't usually (e.g., other grades, other cultures).
- By providing evidence that there had been an effect on the issue that the program was intending to change (such as less HIV infections or an increase in accessing legal services) that were of direct benefit to a community, and therefore program = community change.
- By drawing explicitly or implicitly on the idea that increased social capital leads to change. Therefore if the program leads to increased, positive opportunities for social capital within a community, this in turn leads to increased, positive individual change.
- By referring to change as brought about by an increased understanding of community responsibility – educating about 'others' in the community and individuals' need to be responsible for them (e.g., bullying programs that focus on the bystander, projects about refugees, calling out gender violence).

In addition to these indicators of impact, community capacity building in artistic practices was also listed as an indicator of positive change, with the community knowing how to do something collectively after the project that they did not know how to do beforehand. Usually this was to write, perform, stage, or devise theatre. Not only was this seen to develop knowledge and skills, but also to showcase and share community stories, and provide experiences that collectives can be proud of.

Individuals and individual achievement were a focus of many of the documents. Individual impact was coded in all themes, and the most coded node in the 'success' and 'impact' themes. Even studies or projects that referred to more community-oriented intentions tended to describe or orient to change elements that focussed on individual actions, demonstrations, or perceptions. The individual nodes included a belief in the importance of individuals as powerful in their own lives, the value of self-growth and self-care, and the idea that empowering individuals will lead to the achievement other, more social or community oriented goals. Common words associated with this were *demonstrate* (as in, what did the participants demonstrate they could do) and *enable* (what did the program enable the participants to do/demonstrate).

The focus on individuals as a value or 'valuing individuals', rather than communities, oriented to an underlying belief that individuals matter, and that they should be "directors of their own lives" (AREPP 2005). Words often used to describe individuals as a values focus were *participation*, *participatory*, *empowerment*, *self-expression, creative expression*, and *self esteem*. The particular language used varied according to type of institution in which the project ran. Programs in prisons and schools, for instance, were likely to use language that focused on individual participants as motivating the intentions of the work; they were usually concerned with

individual outcomes (reducing re-offending behaviours, skill building, education and so on). In these cases the expressed values of the projects oriented to self-improvement and the idea that individuals, particularly marginalised individuals, cannot be powerful or responsible in their lives without specific skills and knowledge. An exception to this were documents relating to drama therapy programs which, although also concerned with individuals, engaged in health discourses to describe the positioning of the project and what the work valued.

Often coded in this this node were programs or publications that expressed a belief that theatre was transforming for individuals. Some statements of values were more paternalistic and interventionist than others in their understanding of their role, such as projects to "help people create meaning from their social world, to express their voices and to form identity" (McCreary Centre Society 2013, p. 8) particularly when the participants were acknowledged as marginalised, such as those taken to need rehabilitation. Others employed a more empowering discourse, stating the aim of enabling the belief people can help themselves and recognize "they are the expert in their lives" (Middleton-Lee 2013, p. 7).

It is unsurprising that individual change was a focus of so many documents considering the participatory nature of applied theatre work – all change, at least initially, is taken to come from the participants. For some documents the change sought stopped there, while others extended the aspiration to a broader change agenda such as participants' changing their communities. This recruits the idea that drama and theatre, as a practice, allows participants to be proactive in their behaviour and therefore can lead to behaviour change. Active participation was a commonly cited enabler of these kinds of program intentions, where

> there is an intention to achieve change by creating the circumstances in which people experience optimum conditions in which shifts of personal knowledge, values and attitudes can occur. (Sommers 2008, p. 84)

A common feature of the documents coded in this section was an intention to influence the future behaviour of individuals. One example would be the intention to develop sensitivity in the participants, signalling that the behaviour is already learned, but not necessarily employed. This is more a perspective or an attitude change that influences behaviour. Increasing 'problem awareness' (Day et al. 2007) or allowing people to explore their understanding of an issue was another example of this.

Instances of learning, as distinct from individual change more generally, were coded when there was a specific, often measurable, target that participants needed to learn to do in order to change in line with the intentions of the program. This included the development of skills, such as language, social, collaborative, or acquisition of knowledge, such as about alcohol use, the law, or school syllabus content. In terms of the type of change intended, we observed that skills seemed to be more frequently specified and measured in the documents, whereas knowledge and awareness were more generalised. Skills and practices outlined as intentions of many of the documents aligned with theories and practices in theatre, such as outlined in Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Further, there was a strong focus in many

of the documents on participants' gaining the skills to intervene on behalf of themselves or others – including obtaining conflict management skills. These documents also often contained discussions of drama as a pedagogical tool, to be used by teachers and facilitators to improve the lives of participants or culture of a classroom, school or community. Despite this, there were also some instances in the documents where intended knowledge development took a more traditional, less active form (e.g., theatre to educate about a historical event, or to deliver health-related messages such as understand symptoms of psychosis, or early signs of stroke).

As an indicator of 'success', the individual change of participants was conceptualised in different ways in the documents, but one similarity was that the change was generally considered to be observable or interpretable via the testimonials of the insiders, both participants and facilitators, rather than measurement or observation from external stakeholders. Examples of individual change based on program participation were varied, but often referred to increases in:

- Self efficacy, including observed behaviours, and self-reported changes to perceptions of self;
- Changed attitudes, often revolving around an increased acceptance and tolerance of marginalised peoples (such as people living with HIV, refugees, sex workers, and so on), although sometimes involving a decreased acceptance of 'morally unacceptable' behaviours such as bullying, violence, and homophobia;
- Changed behaviour, usually self-reported (such as 'in the future will you speak out if you witness bullying?') or observed by facilitators and teachers and compared to 'knowable' previous behaviour (such as students engaging when they wouldn't normally).
- The pro-social elements of the work, indicating that participants improved social bonds as part of their participation in theatre work.

Often numbers and measurements were used, but they usually referred to the extent to which participants, facilitators or stakeholders perceived individual change to have taken place.

One notable exception to this was when individual change was understood, or assumed, through specific measurable change. For example, a reduction in the rates of HIV was understood as participants changing their attitudes as a result of participation in the theatre program, or "the Project has enabled: 1,017 sex workers and sexually exploited children to have knowledge of their gender and sexual rights; and 217 of them report a reduced level of GBV by the police" (Middleton-Lee 2013, p. 6). Here is a specific, measurable outcome, attributed to a change in individuals' behaviour. There is, in these instances, an assumed, rather than explicated, connection between increased knowledge or changed behaviour and the measurable outcome.

Discussions about impact on individuals often outlined indicators of impact, without follow up discussion on how such indicators are understood as directly related to the applied theatre program, or, why these indicators are considered to be 'good'. Examples of this include participants in schools increasing communication skills, or taking more risks in the classroom. Documents that claimed more in-depth

cause-and-effect connections focused on how perceived changes in participants linked with the intentions of the program and activities throughout the program. For example, youth who engaged in the project were reported as having lower levels of suicide ideation. Or participants were provided with access to services such as education. Many causal attributions drew on qualitative responses from participants, for example:

Another aspect of the project was that it enabled better communication by creating opportunities for interaction since 'you very rarely get to speak to anybody (Anderson et al. 2011, p. 50). In this example, once offenders learned to express themselves better the document claimed that participants could express a wider range of emotions and 'let myself go a bit' (Anderson et al. 2011, p. 50). Here impact on participants (expressing themselves better) is causally linked to the opportunities provided by the applied theatre program.

While many documents concerned themselves with understandings of change not directly related to individual change, few were explicitly 'anti-individual' in their stance. Of all the documents, one project draw on a radical philosophy of conscientisation and resistance, explicitly distancing itself from a recidivism / rehabilitatory agenda. All other documents either unproblematically located responsibility with the individual as a agentive participant in the change process, or were silent on the issue and addressed communities or systems more generally.

Education, like individuals, was coded more commonly as an intention or marker of success. When it was expressed as a value it was the underlying principle on which the work was s conducted. At times this entailed a belief in the importance of education, or knowledge-transfer, as it was sometimes expressed, in improving the lives of people or communities. The idea of the "Flying Jokers" by Augusto and Julián Boal underlies this concept of education as a value as well as a goal:

> an experienced Theatre of the Oppressed flies to a country where knowledge and skills are needed and thus initiates a multiplication process (Formaat 2008, p. 3).

> This is sometimes referred to as 'take over the world', theatre-as-education. Here there is a strong orientation to the value of action, which was placed under education in the coding as the implication often pointed to active rather than passive learning, and often aligned with philosophies recognisable as critical pedagogy (Kincheloe 2008).

Other times orientations to education were more about recognising the capacity of the participants *to* learn. Connected to this was the value of theatre as an enabling process, allowing a safe space and facilitated process to learn something difficult or confronting. A more nuanced version of education as an underlying value in applied theatre work was evident in references to the particular affordances that drama/theatre endowed the programs detailed in the documents. Drama was expressed as a particularly good way to teach – participatory, community oriented, agentive, and grass-roots, low-tech and resource-light.

A common category referred to in the documents was the 'learning' of the participants, cited as a measurable indicator of success. Measurability was key in this. As discussed above, unlike generally observed individual change, learning was

considered something more specific, and often data driven. Learning, in the documents coded here, indicated that participants gained specific knowledge or skills that they did not possess before the program. Entries were coded under this theme if the document alluded to the participants' learning as direct result of the theatre intervention. There was overlap with the individual change node in the coding of the data; 'learning' was coded separately when it referred to increases in knowledge, recall or understanding, but not necessarily to any behaviour change beyond this. While this may seem an arbitrary distinction, it affords a more nuanced understanding of the ways applied theatre programs can be seen to be successful.

When learning was drawn upon to demonstrate success, it often referred to a specific learning goal, such as participant understanding of where to get legal help, improved writing, or knowing how to respond to homophobic behaviour:

Half of the spectators surveyed either disagreed with or did not respond to the proposition that they knew "where to get legal help" before the event. However, most respondents in this category (72%) agreed that they did have this knowledge after the event. (Booton and Dwyer 2006, p. viii).

Some provided specific measurements around a more general goal: "Ninety-six percent (96%) of participating seventh grade students increased their knowledge, including knowledge of social norms" (ISCFC 2010). Unlike other forms of individual change, therefore, individual learning change seemed to be taken as measurable.

Similarly, impact on participants through a process of education was, in most instances, closely related to individual change, but is more specific in its attention to how changing knowledge or skills achieves the intentions of a program impacting on participants. There were many instances whereby education or skill development was generally cited as important, and as an intention or a generalised change for the program. This section attends more to specific discussion of education *as change*. The often-cited educative impact was taken to be the ability of participants to recall specific knowledge or recognise certain behaviours after their engagement in the theatre program. This was cited by several studies that focused on educating young people about issues such as homophobia, sexism, bullying, safe partying practices, and the like. It was also evident in some programs run in prisons. This was judged usually through participant responses, although at times it was aided by questionnaire/test or teacher/parent avowal. Instances whereby the main intention of the program was to teach about the law, one's rights, or access to services, often drew upon increase in access of these as evidence of change for the participants.

Agency: was oriented to as the building of agency, through participation, action, and empowerment, realised through the nomination of power as a key concept. In terms of agency as a value, documents explicitly referred to applied theatre as a tool for educating about, recognising, and subverting power, or, more commonly, empowering participants. This empowerment, expressed as the 'job' of applied theatre in many documents, is seen to lead to action, which in turn indicates agency – the idea that "people need to feel powerful in order to act" (Nelson 2011, p. 165). Scholars and practitioners in applied theatre have pointed to the way applied theatre

and social/political change are commonly connected in the literature, in promotion materials, and in professional practice, without much attention the mechanisms or problems associated with that connection (Snyder-Young 2013; Etherton and Prentki 2006). The findings here indicate that the connection between the values of participant agency and empowerment and social change, rests on an assumption that is taken to need no further rationale or explication.

The intention to 'empower' participants was significant enough in the coding that it warrants a separate discussion. Empowerment, as a concept in the documents, tended to fall into two distinct categories:

- *Generalised*: A general 'sense' of empowerment that oriented to several related ideas such as: having one's voice heard, expressing oneself, gaining confidence, 'good feelings', being inspired, and allowing participants to act in ways that could make them agents of social change. Sometimes empowerment was simply stated as a goal, often in a list with more specific attributes (such as 'empowered and confident') without any further attention evident to what this would look like or how it would be understood. This generalised empowerment of participants oriented heavily to participants from marginalised communities or situations and implied a particular form of the 'change agenda': that it is through such empowerment, brought on by applied theatre, that these participants can have opportunities to be less marginalised. Although this was rarely stated explicitly in these terms.
- *Tangible*: Specific orientation to empowering activities were also evident. Having opportunities to discover what participants are good at and experiencing success. This more tangible idea of empowerment is taken to lead to future outcomes such as engagement, skill building, or employment. Some documents were outward looking, with a focus on collective empowerment: for example, "[t]he TO (theatre of the oppressed) process encourages collective empowerment of communities by disseminating information and elaborating support networks" (Sullivan et al. 2008, p. 166).

The scholarly papers included in the coding corpus more commonly drew on concepts such as power, agency, decision making, and understanding and exercising rights when referring to programs as empowering. At times these pieces recruited the work of other scholars to connect directly with a specific perspective on the term (e.g., Freire 1972; Lather 1986; Foucault 2001).

Agency having impact, or as a demonstration of success, was coded when the focus was on individuals or groups having the capacity, after engaging with an applied theatre program or activity, to recognise power and act on the world to bring about some kind of change. Agency in the documents was often conceptualised around the ability for participant to take risks and the extent to which the applied theatre provided participants opportunities for risk taking. There was also a consideration of embodied risk taking; the documents discussed how participants 'tried on' new language, movement, or embodied solutions to problems. This was considered to be transformative for participants – change through action. Connected

to this idea, some documents oriented to the 'agentive' work of applied theatre by explicitly or implicitly drawing on metaxis. Often this was an acknowledgment that the program took place in an institution that had an unequal and, usually a fixed power dynamic (such as a school) but then oriented to 'change' when there were opportunities taken by participants to make decisions that were either disruptive of, or outside these generally taken for granted institutionalized ways of relating.

2 Drawing these Themes Together

One *Theatre for development* paper within the corpus of data suggested that unless a program has a stated political intention that they explicitly work towards and judge their work by, then they are just fortune hunters profiting from tragic circumstances (Nagel 2007). This paper remindeds us of how difficult it is to prove political change: drawing on feminist-education theorist Patti Lather's (1986) notion of "catalytic validity," which refers to how research processes engage participants in a process of understanding reality in order to transform it. This concept is key in so many of the documents in the data set for this research.

Similalry, two more general conclusions can be made to the very specific discussion of the documents in this chapter. The first is that much of the work discussed here is aware of the need for a broader philosophy of inclusion, despite the reality of working in the contexts they do. This ideais expressed by Butler (2015):

> The body politic is posited as a unity it can never be. Yet, that does not have to be a cynical conclusion. Those who in a spirit of realpolitik reckon that since every formation of "the people" is partial, we should simply accept that partiality as a fact of politics, are clearly opposed by those who seek to expose and oppose those forms of exclusion, often knowing quite well that full inclusiveness is not possible, but for whom the struggle is ongoing (pp. 3–4).

A second conclusion follows from this, that political impact, or change more generally, is the productive application of the themes organising this chapter, and that the subthemes are generalised or abstract, perhaps deliberatley, to the point where they cannot easily be argued *against.* The authors of these documents can be interpreted as creating 'designed ambiguity', leaving space of interpretation by diverse audiences for a variety of purpose. This reflects the variability in the potential sites, beneficiaries, and funders of applied theatre projects. In another document in the corpus, Somers argues:

> For many years, my theatre practice has aimed overtly at change. The work has ranged across Drama in Education in schools, drama workshops, Interactive Theatre and community theatre in many countries. Across this range, I have sought both to instigate 'hard' change – that is well-defined attempts to confront audiences or workshop participants with particular issues – and 'soft' change, where the purpose of making and performing the drama and the participation of others in witnessing it is less well defined. (Sommers 2008, p. 62)

This sentiment captures the fluidity of change as a concept in the field, and the potential productivity of designed ambiguity around notions of 'value' and 'change'

in applied theatre. Such an approach knowingly allows for various people and groups – radical to conservative – to 'latch on to' positivity in applied theatre to influence policy and practice in institutions and communities.

Beyond the geographic or social 'local' sites in which these notions of change are variously understood, they are further informed by the temporal political or ideological context. Although ideas may be drawn on in common sense, generalised ways, the authors of these documents are not orienting to their *personal* values (even if they personally share the values). That is not the reason they recruited them to support these documents. Rather, these are orientations to policy initiatives and ideological logics in the field within a current time and place. In this way, they are documents aimed at effecting live sites, rather than mechanical 'orientations' to be considered in the abstract. The chapter that follows draws us more deeply into this discussion by exploring the work these documents do in developing key logics in the field.

References

Anderson, K., Colvin, S., McNeill, F., Nellis, M., Overy, K., Sparks, R., & Tett, L. (2011). *Inspiring change: Final project report of the evaluation team.*. Retrieved from http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/mc-inspiring-change-april-2011.pdf

AREPP: Theatre for Life. (2005). Beyond gut feeling: Report of the AREPP theatre for life evaluation project http://www.comminit.com/africa/content/beyond-gut-feeling-report-arepp-theatre-life-evaluation-project-2002-2004

Arts Council of Northern Ireland. (2007). *Art form and specialist area policies 2006–2011.* Retrieved 4 Dec 2006, from: http://www.artscouncil- ni.org/artforms/artform_policy.pdf

Atalay, S. (2010). 'We don't talking about Çatalhöyük, we live it': Sustainable archaeological practice through community-based participatory research. *World Archaeology., 42*(3), 418–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2010.497394.

Balfour, M. (2009). The politics of intention: Looking for a theatre of little changes. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(3), 347–359.

Booton, J., & Dwyer, P. (2006). "Legal theatre" A theatre-based approach to community legal education. Retrieved from http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/lawed15.nsf/9f2043ee7ccfa2ddca256f1200115808/8d19068db99e3d7cca25720c000aac3f/$FILE/LegalTheatreRpt06.pdf

Butler, J. (2015). *Notes toward a Performative theory of assembly*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Day, A., Bryan, J., Davey, L., & Casey, S. (2007). The process of change in offender rehabilitation programmes. *Psychology, Crime & Law, 12*(5), 473–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/10683160500151209.

Dalrymple, L. (2006). Has it made a difference? Understanding and measuring the impact of applied theatre with young people in the south African context. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 201–218. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569780600671070.

Etherton, M., & Prentki, T. (2006). Drama for change? Prove it! Impact assessment in applied theatre. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 139–155.

Formaat. (2008). *The power of dialogue.* Retrieved from http://www.formaat.org/wp-content/uploads/PowerOfDialogue-Projectverslag.pdf

Foucault, M. (2001). In J. D. Faubion (Ed.), *Power: The essential works* (Vol. *3*). London: Penguin.
Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin.
Gallagher, K. (2007). *The theatre of urban: Youth and schooling in dangerous times*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
IFCFC. (2010). *Evaliuation report: Corner theatre troupe/peer education program* http://iscfc.emich.edu/projects/Evaluation_of_the_Corner_Theatre_Troupe/
Kincheloe, J. L. (2008). *Critical pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
Kramer, A., Chamberlain, F., McNamara, F., Nicholson, C., Giesekam, H., Somers, F., et al. (2006). Applied theatre/drama: An e-debate in 2004. *Research in Drama Education, 11*, 90–95.
Lather, P. (1986). Issues of validity in openly ideological research: Between a rock and a soft place. *Interchange, 17*(4), 63–84. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01807017.
Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
McDonald, B. (2005). Towards a theatre of 'little changes' - a dialogue about a dialogue. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 10*(1), 67–73.
McCreary Centre Society. (2013). MOSAIC's NuYu popular theatre project: Evaluation report*, June 2013*. Retrieved from https://www.mosaicbc.org/wp-content/uploads/ProgramDownloads/NuYu/NuYu-Evaluation-Report-2013.pdf
Middleton-Lee, S. (2013). End-of-project evaluation: 'Interactive theatre and legislative theatre for sex workers and their clients'. Theatre of a Change, Malawi.. Retrieved from http://www.tfacafrica.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/TfaC-Malawi-Community-Programme-Evaluation-2013.pdf
Mitchell, K., & Freitag, J. (2011). Forum Theatre for Bystanders: A New Model for Gender Violence Prevention. *Violence Against Women, XX*(X), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801211417152.
Nagel, E. (2007). An aesthetic of Neighbourliness: Possibilities for integrating community-based practices into documentary theatre. *Theatre Topics., 17*(2), 153–168. https://doi.org/10.1353/tt.2008.0003.
Neelands, J. (2009). Acting together: Ensemble as a democratic process in art and life. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(2), 173–189.
Nelson, B. (2011). "I made myself": Playmaking as a pedagogy of change with urban youth. *Research in Drama Education Journal, 16*(2), 157–172.
O'Connor, P. (2016). Moments of Beauty and Resistance through drama education. In K. Freebody & M. Finneran (Eds.), *Drama and social justice* (pp. 133–1420). London: Routledge.
Peacebuilding and Inclusive Local Development (PBILD). (2013). *PBILD Final Programme Narrative Report*. Retrieved from mptf.undp.org/document/download/11448
Sextou, P. (2013). *Community & Applied Drama Laboratory (CADLab) 'Give to our community'*. Birmingham: Newman University Birmingham.
Snyder-Young, D. (2013). *Theatre of good intentions: Challenges and hopes for theatre and social change*. Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Sommers, J. W. (2008). Interactive theatre: Drama as social intervention. *Music and Arts in Action., 1*(1), 61–86.
Sullivan, J., Petronella, S., Brooks, E., Murillo, M., Primeau, L., & Ward, J. (2008). Theatre of the oppressed and environmental justice communities: A transformational therapy for the body politic. *Journal of Health Psychology., 13*(2), 166–179. https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105307086710.
Wooster, R. (2009). Creative inclusion in community theatre: A journey with odyssey theatre. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(1), 79–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569780802655814.

Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre for Social Change: Defamilarising Key Words in the Field

Kelly Freebody and Susan Goodwin

A key aim of this research was to broadly explore texts related to applied theatre and map the intentions, values, understanding of success and references to change. The purpose of the mapping was to build an understanding of how these notions interact with each other, and how the idea of change is oriented to, addressed and built in the texts. The previous chapter shows that a number of terms and phrases are repeated in representations of applied theatre within the texts that were mapped. The repetition suggests an orthodoxy in certain ways of thinking about applied theatre – the linking, for example, of applied theatre to social justice, to empowerment, and to community building. It is clear that contemporary rationales for applied theatre have developed and depend upon these kinds of ideals. In turn, how these ideals are achieved (and also how they fail) are described through consistent referencing of activities such as 'education', 'learning' and 'skills' development as well as through 'participation'.

In this chapter we take stock of these repetitions in order to ask critical questions and interrogate the logics at play in the field. Essentially, we are interested in how and why dominant ideas in applied theatre make sense. This critical analysis draws on notions of critique informed by Foucault, who states that

> A critique does not consist in saying that things aren't good the way they are. It consists in seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established, unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based. (Foucault 1994, p. 456)

In this sense, the discussion presented here attempts to understand the ways representations of applied theatre work in public documents (evaluations, academic

K. Freebody (✉) · S. Goodwin
The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: kelly.freebody@sydney.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_5

papers, websites and so on) produce 'truths' and therefore, in turn, exercise power (Ball 1993). The notion of critical perspectives in applied theatre is neither new nor uncommon. As discussed in previous chapters, the field has often oriented to feminist, radical or progressive perspectives on the work being done, the context in which the work is done, and the tension between the two (e.g, Mullen 2015; Snyder-Young 2013; Balfour 2009). The distinctiveness of the critical analysis provided here is the focus on discourses or discursive practices. Again following Foucault, we view discourses as "socially produced forms of knowledge that set limits upon what is possible to think, write or speak about a given social object or practice" (Bacchi and Goodwin 2016, p. 35).

In undertaking this critical analysis, we suggest that particular concepts function as 'keywords' in the field. As Fraser and Gordon argued "keywords typically carry unspoken assumptions and connotations that can powerfully influence the discourses they permeate" (1994, p. 310). From the poststructural perspective taken in this chapter, keywords are to be problematized, rather than accepted uncritically as stable concepts whose meaning can be fixed or tied down. As a result, we engage with keywords in applied theatre as thoroughly cultural and historical: as invented categories/concepts, subject to different interpretations according to social and historical context. This approach gives us an opportunity to consider the *ways of thinking* associated with the emergence of some of the ideas that are central to applied theatre in the present, and to consider some of the possible effects of the ways in which these keywords are being deployed.

This exploration is informed by three pathways in and out of the discussion. Firstly, it acknowledges and attends to the memory and invention of applied theatre practice, research, and history (Nicholson 2010). As a study concerned with applied theatre texts, the exploration emerges from a discussion of history, context, and 'micro-accounts' (Kershaw 2016) of applied theatre and community arts practice. Secondly, the discussion draws on the conceptual resources of Carol Bacchi (2009), whose critical policy analysis approach promotes consideration of policies (and other governmental documents) as productive – as creating 'problems' and realities, rather than simply 'solving' 'real' issues. From this perspective, the role of the analyst is to investigate the contingencies lodged within documents, opening them up for challenge. Thirdly, the discussion is influenced by Somers' historical sociology of concept formation that argues that 'concepts are words in their sites' (1995, p. 113). As with Bacchi, Somers' work encourages critical researchers to be reflexive about "how we think and why we seem obliged to think in certain ways" (ibid.). The three perspectives have assisted us to be reflexive about taken-for-granted concepts in the field. We describe this work as 'defamiliarising' In addition, we draw on work from a range of disciplines that have been used to theorise contemporary social conditions, such as social and political theory. This has enabled us to broaden the analysis to consider some of the large scale patterns –in particular neoliberal rationalities - and their relationship to applied theatre discourses. Following these routes into and out of the texts, we have critically examined how particular terms have gained the status of 'truth', and then thought through what some of the effects of their deployment might be. This chapter unpacks (or defamiliarizes) the use of

'Social Justice', 'Empowerment', 'Community', and 'Education', as keywords and concepts that do the work of legitimizing and 'making sense of' applied theatre for social change.

1 Defamilarising Social Justice

It is unsurprising that 'social justice' is a keyword in applied theatre discourses. The term 'social justice' is currently in widespread use. Commentators have noted the way it has been taken up by institutions and organizations of all kinds – governments, non-government organizations, large corporations, small businesses, charities, elite schools, disadvantaged schools, universities, churches, as well as by political parties across the political spectrum. As Brodie argues "(r)allying calls for social justice" (Brodie 2007, p. 93) appear to be growing louder as the twenty-first century unfolds and social and political movements calling for social justice are spread across the globe. The almost ubiquitous referencing of 'social justice' suggests it has become a keyword in contemporary social life. That is, social justice has become a self-evident good thing for individuals to have and for institutions to promote.

As commentators have found in a range of other fields, and we noted in the previous chapter, references to social justice often appear interlaced with other concepts: diversity, equal rights, individual liberty, empowerment, the dignity and worth of the person, advocacy and resource allocation (Reisch 2002; Gil 2004; Olson et al. 2013; Kam 2014). It is also the case that contemporary usages of social justice can no longer be associated with particular political or ideological positions, but, rather reflect a number of political registers. Indeed, socialist, communist, social democratic, liberal, neoliberal, religious and postcolonial trajectories can be found converging in the contemporary "language of social justice" (Hawkins et al. 2001).

A brief overview of the history of the concept helps us to unpack this keyword. As Fook and Goodwin (2017) explain, the concept social justice only emerged in the nineteenth century in western political thought as the notion that governing forces (such as the state) could and should have influence on 'the social', including assurances of justice within the social realm. Originally, social justice was associated with the development of welfare states, and had a strong 'distributive meaning' in that it was concerned with addressing the unequal distribution of wealth and resources. In the late twentieth century, public and political notions of social justice shifted to a focus other forms of inequality, beyond material resources, as social movements politicized the needs of particular interest groups and 'identity politics' emerged. The meaning of social justice was expanded to include claims for recognition, as well as distribution. Common understandings of social justice in the present often orient to both redistributive and recognition effects of particular movements, policies, or practices (Fraser and Honneth 2003).

Social justice, as an organising rationale was evident in many of the applied theatre documents analysed. As discussed in Chapter "Values, Intentions, Success and

Impact in Applied Theatre Documents", often the 'social justice' frame was implicit, referenced via a vocabulary of 'rights', 'justice', 'equity', and/or an explicit goal of affecting change for vunerable or marginalized people. Considering the history of the term, understanding the repetition of social justice as a key concept in the documents invites us to consider whether or not these applied theatre programs were orienting to the redistributive or recognition effects of social justice (Fraser and Honneth 2003).

Overwhelmingly, orientations to a social justice agenda in the documents were concerned with recognition and identity building; aligning and empowering individuals as members of a specific an identifiable (often problematised) social or policy group. One example (and there were many more not explored here) of such an orientation is in the intention to 'give voice' to participants. Here 'voice' is conceptualized as a form of social justice – a right. Having voice, then, can be seen to either effect change, or give recognition, and therefore legitimacy to specific identity groups. This proposal can be seen to have three effects: firstly, it positions the 'having of voice' as good, usually without attention to how or why – therefore establishing an unproblematic 'truth' connecting recognition and the opportunity to 'have voice'. Secondly, the language of the proposal - '*giving* voice' can be seen to position being heard, or recognized, as a right (in its alignment with social justice agenda) but also a gift – given by outsiders to the participants. Finally, successfully solving the identified 'problem' that instigated the theatre work by 'giving voice' indicates the 'problem' conceptualises marginalized groups as unrecognized, not listened to, or not given options to be heard and understood.

2 Defamilarising Agency and Participation

A historical exploration of the relationship between applied theatre and change makes potent the idea of participation as agentive and empowering. Indeed, Alofabi (2016) refers to participation in applied theatre as "both a verb and a noun; a dual reality that should inform theatre practitioners' choice for the purpose of emancipation beyond the creative space and devising process" (p. 205). Here the notion of emancipation is closely connected with the participatory nature of applied theatre. Rather than passively receiving messages, education, ideas, choices, and so on, those involved in an applied theatre program actively create these things. This was evident in the documents – where the opportunity to act on, about or for, was considered to be empowering. It is also evident in historical discourses about applied theatre with several documents in this study, and texts about applied theatre more generally, referencing Boalian strategies and philosophies. However Nicholson points out, in a society where participation is now central to cultural and social life, increasingly adopted by institutions and brands to sell 'experiences', "it is no longer possible to suggest that participation in and of itself is radical" (Nicholson 2016, p. 249). It is therefore timely to unpack representations of the relationship between participation, agency, and power in the discursive practices in applied theatre.

Nicholson's assertion aside, many of the documents did unproblematically link agency, participation and change – with applied theatre is positioned as a 'tool' within and for this relationship.

Agency as a concept has been debated in the fields of psychology, sociology and philosophy for many centuries – notably the Seventeenth Century between Hobbes and Bramhall whose debate about the relationship between 'liberty' and 'necessity' is seen as a turning point in the history of discussions around free will and determinism (Kane 1985). Most modern interpretations of agency move past this historic tension and orient to the compatibility of free will and determinism – that we have the ability to enact agency within the constraints of the physical and socio-cultural world (Martin and Gillespie 2010). In terms of defamiliarising the concept and it's use in applied theatre documents, it's worth outlining three characteristics of agency (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) to establish the extent to which it can be 'had', 'gained' 'gifted' or 'controlled' in and through applied theatre:

- Agency is temporal - time is central to understanding agency. Not only does any act occur within time, but any act is also embedded in many temporalities in that it is oriented toward the past, present and future at once. Agentive behaviour looks to perceptions of social and historical patterns from the past in order to understand present conditions, and to imagine possible futures.
- Agency is contextual - Not only does agency exist within a time and place, but also within a context. Participants do not 'have' agency as a personality trait, rather, it is something that one has or acts upon within a context. One may have agency in one situation, but not in another (or may behave agentively one day, but not the next).
- Agency is able to both shift and entrench the status quo. This acknowledges that when participants are engaging in agentive behaviour, it is not necessarily for the greater social good – agentive behaviour is neither empowering or disempowering, but has the potential to do either.

The temporal element of power and agency is attended to in many of the documents that refer to the potential for applied theatre to give (or 'gift') control to its participants. When participating in applied theatre, as opposed to other interventions, participation allowed for those involved to have agency over their actions and decisions. The proposal here is that someone who would not normally have control over a situation can be observed as having control in a well-facilitated applied theatre program. Whether sustainable or not, this is seen to indicate that this program affected change in the participants' circumstances. Examples of this temporary gifting of control include people with disabilities who can access learning or new forms of expression, or incarcerated people exercising greater autonomy over their lives.

Another common discursive practice in the applied theatre documents connects power, participation and control. Here 'learning' discourses are also evidence as a lack of knowledge about, or identification of, power structures are seen as a key 'problem' of oppression. This is evident in the prominence of metaxis in discussions of agency and empowerment in drama. Documents discussed programs that 'gifted' and observed control and empowerment by changing the status quo and disrupting

usual communication or behaviour patterns associated with institutions such as schools and prisons. In this way 'usual structures' are problematized and power is given to participants by imposing a second structure (the theatre work) in a way that de-stabilises the usual structure (by allowing children to question adults, for example). Drawing on the three principles of agency outlined above, context and temporality are obviously evident here. However the third principle – the ability to shift or entrench the status quo – is also evident as this disruption could legitimise and reinforce the dominant and 'usual' power structures but establishing empowering situations as 'other' and unusual'.

3 Defamiliarising Community Building

While 'community' can be considered common-sense and obvious, it is a cultural construct. Communities as practical, real-life, tangible things, do not exist - all we have is imagined communities, individual or shared perspectives on what communities are, what they should be, and who belongs to them. Like social justice, the modern notion of 'community' can be traced back to the emergence of industrial capitalism in Europe and to the efforts of social theorists to 'make sense' of the impacts of urbanisation, in particular to make sense of the distinctions between the new and old kinds of social relations. The term 'community' captured the social ties of care, reciprocity, mutual aid and trust that was being eroded by industrialisation and a key characterisation of the times concerned the 'loss of community' (Simmel 1950; Lyon 1999; Goodwin 2003; Bradshaw 2008). Since this time, 'community' as a concept has become a common-sense way of conceptualising particular kinds of relations between the individual and society, distinctive from, for example, familial, kinship or economic relationships. Despite the emergence of a range of criticisms, including work on 'the dark side of community': such as the exclusions and/or hostilities that community solidarities are often formed around (see Blackshaw 2010), the notion that 'community' is somehow an unalloyed good, remains central in modern, western discourses, including, it appears, applied theatre discourses.

Like other keywords explored in this chapter, community is a central concept that makes applied theatre a legitimate and logical practice. Here we ask why does the concept of community have such potency in applied theatre writings, and more generally? There have been two waves of 'community' discourse that may be relevant to applied theatre representations of itself, and these two waves are linked. The first wave began in the 1960s and 70s, when new social movements were politicising a raft of new social needs, social identities and ways of organising. The concept 'community' was central in this politics which privileged local solutions to local problems and local organising over 'top down' approaches. The attention to 'grassroots' work that brings local people together as a core tenet of the values and intentions of the documents explored in the previous chapter. For example, work that was "developed with members of a community to address interests and needs they have identified, and are conducted relying on community core values" (Atalay 2010,

p. 420). This highlights the orientation applied theatre programs have to this idea – bringing local people together to do theatre projects that are attuned to local practices, values, and solutions to identified 'problems' through the theatre program was an idea evident in the documents that can be seen to have emerged from this broader discourse. In addition to emphasising a politics of the local, the language of community was employed to describe relations between people based on newly politicised identities – the 'disability community', communities based on 'race', ethnicity, sexuality and so forth. Processes and practices designed to 'empower communities', for example, through 'community development' are associated with this politics.

A second wave of 'community' discourse emerged more recently, that is more closely related to the activities of governments, or the idea of 'governing through community' (Rose 1999). For example, 'community capacity building' has become a central governmental objective in a wide range of policy and program areas. It is possible that these 'community' discourses are useful for applied theatre, helping to do the work of legitimising applied theatre as a community building exercise (which is taken for granted as 'good') and for rationalising funding because the practice is seen to have effects on the community, for the community. As a policy, or governmental approach, 'community' has re-emerged as the sphere of society that can and should be harnessed in the management of a whole range of areas. As Verity (2007) noted, the words community capacity building have increasingly become part of the policy and program language in areas as diverse as health, social welfare, family services, education, environmental issues and urban planning. As such 'community' discourses have traction. This discourse was also evident in the documents – where applied theatre understood it's success when the community knew how to do something that they did not know before. The discourse of community also connects with social justice discourses and education discourses in through concepts such as rights, access, and skill building.

Rather than 'good' or 'bad', community discourses can be understood as both enabling and constraining. A key concern about community capacity building discourses has been the way in which is recruited as a practice of 'governing through community', with the potential to be responsibilising rather than empowering. That is, community capacity discourses transfer the responsibility for, for example, poverty, inequality and disadvantage, to communities, who are encouraged 'to help themselves'. For instance, an applied theatre program that aims to address intestinal worms in Uganda – a health-related problem that "threatens millions of people, particularly the rural poor in the developing world" (Flemming 2011, p. 2), and, by doing so aims to assist Leaders committed to "reduce extreme poverty" (Flemming 2011, p. 2) engages young children in performing devised plays about appropriate hygiene practices. The plays are performed by the children for their community and pass on these important health-related messages in an attempt to stop the spread of the illness. Here we are not attempting to criticise this work, as it is an attempt to address a significant issue effecting some of the worlds most marginalised people. However, we are casting a critical eye on the discursive practices at play – here we see a responsibilisation of participants to help solve a problem caused by poverty,

infrastructure, and a lack of access to clean water. In this formulation, the organisations and programs that take on the project of community building *for* government can be described as implicated in the neoliberal forms of 'governing at a distance'.

4 Defamiliarising Education

Representations of Education can be seen as 'made' by the documents through orientation to two distinct discourses: learning discourses and skill discourses. Many of the documents expressed a commitment to education as a central tenet of the work being discussed. In this sense, there is an implicit – and sometimes explicit – representation that a key goal of applied theatre is 'to educate' and, in turn, for participants in applied theatre programs to 'learn'. How does it make sense for applied theatre to be understood through discourses of 'education'? Here we suggest a number of reasons that education has become an important way of framing what applied theatre is and what it does. The first may simply relate to sites of practice – the embedding of programs in education systems and institutions and, as result, applied theatre has become part of the contemporary educational apparatus: like maths programs or science programs, applied theatre is another thing that schools, community colleges, professional development programs, and universities can do. A second reason for the mobilisation of education discourses in applied theatre helps explain their use beyond educational sites of practice per se (such as in the youth service, the prison, the health program), and that is that in contemporary 'enterprise cultures' whereby all of our institutions are being remodeled along commercial lines, education has been reconstructed and re-positioned as the **means** by which individuals, communities and even nations can compete in increasingly competitivised economies. Besley and Peters (2007, p. 170), for example, suggest that "Education has come to symbolize an optimistic future… and the means by which countries can successfully compete in the global economy in years to come". In this context, representations of applied theatre as education implicates the valued activities of producing the kinds of skills, attitudes and activities required for the enterprise project.

A third, and possibly more interesting reason for the framing of programs through discourses of education relates to developments within the field that have been concerned with re-making 'education' in quite specific ways. For example, applied theatre practitioners heavily influenced by Friere were taken by his critique of education as a tool of oppression and sought to remake education as a dialogical process, making teachers and students jointly responsible for learning. In this conceptualisation of education "arguments based on authority are no longer valid; in order to function authority must be *on the side of* freedom, not *against it" (*Freire 1972, p. 63).

The ways the documents recruit the concept education, however, tend to represent education as a process of 'learning' or 'skills'. This formulation of education has important functions in installing certain norms and subject positions. For

example, policy analysts have argued that education policy has historically positioned Low SES and marginalised students as 'inherently lacking' (Bletsas and Michell 2014, p. 77). The notion that participants are capable of learning, and therefore 'fixing' their problems in the applied theatre documents, can be read as an orientation to participants of applied theatre as belonging to a category of people for which education such as this are for. In other words, those in need of intervention in order to learn these required skills.

The documents, then, play a critical role in forming subjects (such as participants) and objects (such as the applied theatre program), and give authority to certain discursive practices. For example, a comment regarding prisoners' pre-competence in communication skills produces this 'skill' (communication) as a human attribute that can be 'had'. Beyond this, it produces the notion of 'skills' as necessary by connecting the lack of skill with the problematisation of the Subject (prisoner). This places 'poor' communication skills in a common-sense relationship with incarcerated persons. Similar proposals can be seen in the documents relating to certain types of people (such as transgender persons) having knowledge about their rights and instances of police brutality against these types of people. People who have such knowledge may report fewer instances of institutional abuse. However, the notion that knowledge can be 'had' places the responsibility of 'having' on the participant, and in turn, considers those without the knowledge as problematic. This can be considered a neoliberal way of constituting subjects, through policy proposals that simultaneously problematise and responsibilise groups of people.

5 Conclusions and Reflections: Opportunities and Dangers

In this chapter we have defamiliarized some of the taken for granted concepts used in the field by considering them as historically emergent, contextually specific and contingent rather than as self-evidentally good things for the field to pursue and promote. As stated earlier, the purpose was not to 'criticise' the use of these concepts, but to enable us to scrutinize them in order to consider the possibilities and constraints associated with them. In what follows, we provide some of our own reflections on what we see as potential opportunities and dangers associated with the discourses we identified in our analyses.

5.1 Social Justice Discourses

The contemporary widespread use of social justice has been associated with neoliberalism, but this association has been depicted in two ways. On the one hand, it is argued that the concept is being utilized to stand in critical opposition to neoliberal political rationality, by 'putting the social back into our ways of seeing and

contesting neoliberal times' (Brodie 2007, p. 105). Examples of oppositional movements, such as the Arab Spring or the Occupy movement mobilising under the banner of social justice supports this suggestion. Conversely, it has been suggested that social justice discourses have been readily incorporated into neoliberal policies and proposals (Kam 2014; Subreenduth 2013). Here counter-examples where the language of social justice accompanies renewed individualisation, the compromise of decolonising aspirations, or the shoring up of global competition have been provided. Within the documents analysed for this project, and the writings and concerns in the field more generally, applied theatre work can be considered to align with both depictions of social justice as enabler or disruptor of neoliberal rationality.

5.2 Agency and Participation Discourses

The notion that 'voice, control, agency or power can be *given* to participants achieves two things – firstly, it places these 'traits' as outside the participants themselves and gives outsiders the right to allocate them. Secondly, it responsibilises interventions to produce empowering situations for participants. The extent to which this actually orients to active engagement, rather than passive reception therefore becomes problematizable. If the program 'gives' 'voice' to participants, for example, then the program, rather than the participants is positioned as powerful and active. Further consideration is needed in the field to deepn our understanding of the use of discourcxes that recruit or promote agency through applied theatre.

5.3 Community Building Discourses

The use of the language of Community in applied theatre is clearly related to the histories and trajectories of the community building discourses explored earlier in the chapter. But community discourses also fit with aspects of applied theatre practices that are distinctive. Similar to discussions earlier about the participatory nature of applied theatre work making participant discourses sense-making of and for the field. Applied theatre is a collaborative practice. Engaging in the work allows for particular connections between people to be made – Neelands explored this concept when he referred to the 'pro-social', 'ensemble' aspects of drama work (Neelands 2009). What we attempted to do in this chapter is not to indicate community discourses don't belong in applied theatre work, but to be cautious about the ways the discourse around community enables the field to place value on connections between people in ways uncritical or unhelpful ways.

5.4 Education Discourses

The valorising of education, achieved through applied theatre, suggests that participants' lives can be improved in a specific way. This, in turn, however, implicitly problematizes the participants' current lives in ways that orient to specific policy 'problems' or 'proposals' (such as addressing conflict in communities, or participants' knowledge of and access to the law). Discourses of education in the documents draw on notions of pre-competence (Austin et al. 2002). That is to say that participants are considered neither competent nor incompetent – rather they are considered capable of achieving competence through the process of education, supported by their participation in the applied theatre program/event. In this sense, education as an idea in the documents positions participants as changeable, 'fixable' in specific ways, through an active process of learning. Similar to the empowerment discourses above, this notion is problematisable. It requires the program and/or facilitator in this discourse to take the role of the 'fixer' - solving policy 'problems'.

Critical readings of discourses evident in documents related to applied theatre provide us with the intellectual distance necessary to ask difficult questions about how applied theatre work is situated in broader policy, political, and social environments. This chapter has sought to add to a growing collection of work that critically explores how applied theatre work orients to, understands, and positions itself within social change agenda. Applied theatre scholars and practitioners, in our experience, have emotional and embodied understandings of, and relationships to their work. However, the translation of these understandings into documents that serve formal purposes (research journals, advertising, websites, funding application, evaluations and so on) needs to be understood as actively constructing social and political positions. These positions have lived effects on how and why the work takes place, and how the participants, and their 'problems' are understood.

References

Alofabi, T. (2016). Theatre and participation: A critical examination of Sherry Arnstein's ladder of participation in the Kamiriithu theatre experience. *Applied Theatre Research., 4*(3), 205–221.

Atalay, S. (2010). 'We don't talking about Çatalhöyük, we live it': Sustainable archaeological practice through community-based participatory research. *World Archaeology., 42*(3), 418–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2010.497394.

Austin, H., Dwyer, B., & Freebody, P. (2002). *Schooling the child: The making of students in classrooms*. New York: Routledge.

Bacchi, C. (2009). *Analysing policy: What's the problem represented to be?* Sydney: Pearson Education.

Bacchi, C., & Goodwin, S. (2016). *Poststructural policy analysis a guide to practice*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Balfour, M. (2009). The politics of intention: Looking for a theatre of little changes. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(3), 347–359.

Ball, S. J. (1993). What is policy? Texts, trajectories and toolboxes. *The Australian Journal of Education Studies, 13*(2), 10–17.
Besley, T., & Peters, M. A. (2007). *Subjectivity & truth: Foucault, education, and the culture of self* (Vol. 303). Brussels: Peter Lang.
Blackshaw, T. (2010). *Key concepts in community studies*. London: Sage.
Bletsas, A., & Michell, D. (2014). Classism on campus? Exploring and extending understandings of social class in the contemporary higher education debate. In H. Brook, D. Fergie, M. Maeorg, & D. Michell (Eds.), *Universities in transition: Foregrounding social contexts of knowledge in the first year experience*. Adelaide: Adelaide University Press.
Bradshaw, T. K. (2008). The post-place community: Contributions to the debate about the definition of community. *Community Development, 39*(1), 5–16.
Brodie, J. M. (2007). Reforming social justice in neoliberal times. *Studies in Social Justice, 1*(2), 93–107.
Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology, 103*(4), 962–1023.
Flemming, F. (2011). *Acting against worms: Evaluation report*. On behalf of the acting against worm partners at SCI, Theatrescience and the Ministry of Health, Uganda. http://www.comminit.com/edutain-africa/content/acting-against-worms-evaluation-report
Fook, J., & Goodwin, S. (2017). Introducing Social Justice. In A. M. Mealey, P. Jarvis, J. Doherty, & J. Fook (Eds.), *Everyday Citizens and Social Justice: Perspectives for the 21st Century*. London: Routledge.
Foucault, M. (1994). So is it Important to Think?. In J. D. Faubion(Ed.) *Power: Essential Works of Foucault* (pp. 1954–1984), vol. 3, (trans: Hurley, R. & others). London: Penguin.
Fraser, N., & Gordon, L. (1994). A genealogy of dependency: Tracing a keyword of the US welfare state. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 19*(2), 309–336.
Fraser, N., & Honneth, A. (2003). *Redistribution or recognition?: A political-philosophical exchange*. London: Verson.
Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin.
Goodwin, S. (2003). States, communities, individuals. In G. McFie (Ed.), *Communities and their capacity to tackle disadvantage*. Sydney: ACOSS.
Hawkins, L., Fook, J., & Ryan, M. (2001). Social workers'use of the language of social justice. *The British Journal of Social Work, 31*, 1–13.
Kam, P. K. (2014). Back to the 'social' of social work: Reviving the social work profession's contribution to the promotion of social justice. *International SocialWork, 57*(6), 723–740.
Kane, R. (1985). *Free will and values*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Kershaw, B. (2016). Toward a historiography of the absent. In J. Hughes & H. Nicholson (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on applied theatre* (pp. 16–39). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lyon, L. (1999). *The community in urban society*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
Martin, J., & Gillespie, A. (2010). A neo-Meadian approach to human agency: Relating the social and the psychological in the ontogenesis of perspective-coordinating persons. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioural Science, 44*(3), 252–272.
Mullen, M. (2015). Managing applied theatre. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 20*(3), 267–270.
Neelands, J. (2009). Acting together: Ensemble as a democratic process in art and life. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(2), 173–189.
Nicholson, H. (2010). The promises of history: Pedagogic principles and processes of change. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 15*(2), 147–154.
Nicholson, H. (2016). A good day out: Applied theatre, relationality and participation. In J. Hughes & H. Nicholson (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on applied theatre* (pp. 248–267). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olson, C. J., Reid, C., Threadgill-Goldson, N., Riffe, H. A., & Ryan, P. A. (2013). Voices from the field: Social workers define and apply social justice. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 24*(1), 23–42.

Reisch, M. (2002). Defining social justice in a socially unjust world. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 83*(4), 343–354.

Rose, N. (1999). *Powers of freedom: Reframing political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

Simmel, G. (1950). The metropolis and mental life. In K. Wolff (Ed.), *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (pp. 409–424). Glencoe: Free Press.

Snyder-Young, D. (2013). *Theatre of good intentions: Challenges and hopes for theatre and social change*. Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Somers, M. R. (1995). What's political or cultural about political culture and the public sphere? Toward an historical sociology of concept formation. *Sociological Theory, 13*, 113–144.

Subreenduth, S. (2013). Theorizing social justice ambiguities in an era of neoliberalism: The case of postapartheid South Africa. *Educational Theory, 63*(6), 581–600.

Verity, F. (2007). *Community capacity building-a review of the literature. Workforce planning* (Vol. 1).

Introduction to the invited chapters

Understanding 'change' in applied theatre work is a large task to set any one text. We are not so arrogant to assume that it is even possible in one text. What we are hoping for in this work is an interrogation of the concept of 'change'. In doing so, one thing we are sure of, however, is that is useful to consider a multitude of perspectives, methodologies and approaches in an interrogation of a concept as large and complex as 'change'.

In the first half of this book our goal has been quite specific – to employ various strategies and perspectives to explore the way change is referenced in documents pertaining to applied theatre. It is an unusual, in many ways, for a field that is so steeped in practice, embodiment, and emotion, to focus solely on documentation. We do this acknowledging that documents about applied theatre do not realistically represent the practice of applied theatre. What we do believe, however, is that documentation about applied theatre influences the way in which the field is understood and socialised in policy contexts. It is therefore worth critically exploring how these documents conceptualise the intentions and effects of applied theatre work.

The following section attempts to contribute to the interrogation of 'change' in a different way - to provide diverse perspectives on the place of change in theory and practice in the field. This allows us to explore the idea specific to a context, or activity (such as development or evaluation of programs). As discussed early in this volume, it aligns with the notion of crystallisation – that one idea might have many facets and reflections to explore. The following chapters contribute to the development of this multifaceted understanding of a complex concept.

Snyder-Young opens the second half of the book with a discussion of evaluation practices in applied theatre. Her chapter reflects on the extent to which certain popular evaluation methodologies do or do not provide practitioners with useful information about how or why a program is or isn't working. She reminds us that we, as a field, **do** know how to 'do' evaluation in ways that discuss the transformative properties in our work, and which are useful and reflective – but that this kind of evaluation is rare. She discusses the context and 'material conditions' of applied theatre work that may serve to constrain our ability to engage in thoughtful evaluation of

whether a program is actually effecting change, and in what ways, and for what purposes.

McEwen follows with an exploration of how the mechanics of applied theatre for/as community and cultural development serve to bring about change. She does so by recruiting many of the ideas explored in the first half of this book – practitioner aims and values, participatory creative processes, and community development. McEwan draws upon and explores the tensions between the rhetoric of change and the actual outcomes of a successful applied theatre project that included an explicit intention to transform a community, in this case with youth living in a suburb of an Australian city. Change is critically explored using Bourdieu's Field theory and Habitus, drawing on data collected over a long period of time and making a distinction between short term 'outcomes' and longer-term transformation.

Ahmed also uses one applied theatre project to make broader comments on the relationship and tensions between applied theatre and a change agenda. He focuses upon the tripartite relationship between the 'political project' of neoliberalism, the social enterprise agenda of the world's largest NGO, and the outcomes of a theatre project in Bangladesh working with adolescent girls. He provides us with a practical perspective on such work; one that attends to the complexity that occurs when idealistic intentions drive work enacted in real, difficult, complicated places. Ahmed manages to both celebrate and problematize the potential of such work.

Next, O'Connor and O'Connor provide us with a chapter that is similar in its themes to others in the volume, but very different in its approach. Like Ahmed, O'Connor and O'Connor's chapter begins with the idealistic intentions of applied theatre work – specifically focusing on participant voice. They go on to make complicated the relationships between idealism and reality when working in contexts; contexts involving people, and with funders who seek outcomes. Drawing the reader in with expert perspectives from applied theatre work with children in state care, O'Connor and O'Connor weave inside and outside the theatre process to discuss how the applied theatre work worked, and how it did not. Rather than 'concluding', they reflect and question, providing us with insights into the personal dialogue of practitioners seeking to 'make change'.

Prentki's chapter, aptly titled *Bottom's Dream* draws our attention away from the particulars of any one project, and into an exploration of theatre and performance. He draws on theatrical modes, characters and techniques that apply, exploit or recruit the idea or practice of transformation. Steeping us in theatre history, Prentki embarks on an exploration of 'the trickster' in stories and plays to discuss the notion of transformation, both personal and public. He grapples with how theatre might sustain change beyond the performance, and concludes with a discussion of what applied theatre can learn about making change from the techniques and histories of formal theatre.

In the final chapter of the second half, Cahill once again returns us to an exploration of evaluation processes in applied theatre. The positioning of this chapter at the end of the book is not to insinuate that evaluation is at the heart of all discussions of change in applied theatre. Rather, Cahill's chapter provides us with a practical approach to incorporating theories of change into research, evaluation and reflection

on our work. The chapter attends to many (but not all) of the concerns and complexities raised by the authors of this volume.

Cahill encourages us to be 'hunter-gatherers' – collecting relevant knowledge and practice from various disciplines and theoretical perspectives. This notion aligns the philosophy of the book, as many of the authors in this second half use established theories and frameworks to make suggestions about how applied theatre could be developed, undertaken and evaluated in ways that allow us to understand the place and function of change in our work. Snyder-Young draws on the core principles of a student learning assessment process to explore a low-impact, but focused, form of evaluation. McEwen recruits Bourdieu's Field Theory to explore tensions between the outcomes of a project and 'significant change' of a participant or community. Prentki engages in an anthropological adventure into the stories and plays of the past to help us better understand possibilities in the present, and Cahill engages with transdisciplinary practices to develop co-constructed theories of change.

There are, of course, missing voices in this volume. As stated in Chapter "What is Applied Theatre Good For? Exploring the Notions of Success, Intent and Impact", the field of applied theatre is vast, and not necessarily well documented. One volume will only ever capture a small cohort of perspectives. There are relationships with companion fields such as drama education, youth theatre, community development, and arts programs that are not given much attention here. We are not, therefore, suggesting that this is a comprehensive view of 'the crystal' of change. What has been achieved here is a collection of different 'takes' on one central concept. There is much shared between the chapters to allow them to contribute to a broader conversation about change. There are also differences, idiosyncrasies and disagreements that acknowledge that we work in a rich, dynamic field where practice, theory, and policy intersect to create lived experiences for participants and practitioners.

No "Bullshit": Rigor and Evaluation of Applied Theatre Projects

Dani Snyder-Young

1 We Hate Impact Evaluation

Jennings and Baldwin (2010) articulate their experiences with impact evaluation of applied theatre projects in an essay aptly titled "Filling Out Forms was a Nightmare":

> Practitioners report that the administrative work involved in applying for and justifying funding is onerous, burdensome, and occurs at the expense of artistic activity. This is a very real concern when the time and effort devoted to 'filling out the forms' does not ultimately result in useful evaluative information. There are strong disincentives for organisations to report honestly on their experiences or difficulties, or undesirable impacts of projects, and this problem is not transcended by the use of external evaluators. Current evaluation processes provide little opportunity to capture unexpected benefits of projects, and small but significant successes which occur in the context of over-ambitious objectives. Little or no attempt is made to assess long-term impacts of projects on communities (p. 72).

This is why applied theatre practitioners hate impact evaluation. The term invokes mountains of paperwork, reports required to prove to funders that our programs have met the funders' goals. It operates more as a performance of acquiescence to the authority of funders than as a tool of reflective praxis. Those funders are typically interested in measurable outcomes. Etherton and Prentki (2006) warn how the impact assessment processes "can become one of seeking the lowest common denominator amongst the quantitative data", which "can then be spiced up by a few judiciously selected quotations—*the qualitative assessment*—about how a person's understanding of an issue has been altered by the process" (p. 14). An impact evaluation formula emerges—count the heads of participants, administrate a Likert Scale graded survey asking questions highlighting how the program fit the precise goals of the funder's program and/or the initial proposal for funding, crunch the numbers, and sprinkle in a few colorful quotes supporting how well the program fulfilled the

D. Snyder-Young (✉)
Department of Theatre, Northeastern University, Boston, MA, USA

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_6

promises of its proposal. As Eleonora Belfiore (2009) bluntly points out, "Any impact evaluation toolkit that promises to evaluate the transformative power of any form of aesthetic experience in '10 easy replicable steps', thus bypassing or refusing to address such complexity, is likely to be –let us be honest—bullshit" (p. 355).

Harry Frankfurt (2005) highlights the British use of the term "bull" as "tasks that are pointless in that they have nothing much to do with the primary intent or justifying purpose of the enterprise which requires them" (p. 39). This, perhaps, describes the onerous process described by Jennings and Baldwin and the formula invoked by Etherton and Prenki. Frankfurt describes "bullshit" as "unavoidable whenever circumstances require someone to talk without knowing what he is talking about. Thus the production of bullshit is stimulated whenever a person's obligations or opportunities to speak about some topic exceed his knowledge of the facts that are relevant to that topic" (p. 63). Cumbersome impact evaluation processes are "bull"; reports developed without data providing a full enough picture of applied theatre programs to enable stakeholders to see unintended changes and understand the processes by which changes happened are "bullshit".

In 2006—more than ten years prior to the writing of this essay-- Etherton and Prentki edited a special edition of *RiDE* and Philip Taylor edited a collection of essays focused on impact evaluation (or "assessment" as it is called in the United States). These writings advocated for evaluation processes to be collaborative, inclusive of the complexity of lived experience, and open to discovering unexpected outcomes. And yet, much of the impact evaluation applied theatre practitioners continue to engage in is, to use Frankfurt's indecorous but perfect term, "bullshit".

Most successful applied theatre practitioners are pragmatic—we do what we need to do in order to deliver needed programs. Like it or not, impact evaluation is as much a part of applied theatre praxis as program design and facilitation. An antagonistic attitude towards impact evaluation obscures its legitimate functions. It can be a useful tool for self-study, helping practitioners look at our work with clear eyes for the purpose of improving programs. It can be a collaborative tool, enlisting participants, institutions, and yes, funders in a process of clarifying their goals for a project and identifying how they will know if/when those goals are met. It can be an integral part of ethical practice, communicating to stakeholders what a program is and is not accomplishing in relation to those shared goals. This essay is not just about reframing an often dreaded task, but about taking steps to make it a legitimately useful tool for either reflective practice or intentional advocacy—and perhaps finding some shortcuts to help make the paperwork a bit less painful.

2 Business as Usual

Many applied theatre programs generate quantifiable evaluation data primarily through post-program surveys and use pieces of this data to highlight the program's successes. This is often contextualized with qualitative data collected through the same surveys and/or at events such as post-performance discussions. In this section,

I analyze an example of this dominant mode of impact evaluation. Fringe Benefits is an award winning US-based applied theatre company that does residencies in which they collaborate with schools or community groups to create plays to "promote constructive dialogue about diversity and discrimination" (Bowles and Nadon 2013, back cover). Fringe Benefits facilitators work with project partners to determine the program's activist goals and targeted audience. Norma Bowles and Daniel-Raymond Nadon (2013) "Ask our partners to use our 'Measurable Outcomes Worksheet' to flesh out these ideas and to specify how their outcome goals can be measured through post-show audience surveys or with some other evaluation instrument" (p. 51). This worksheet suggests some goals including "concern about anti-LGBTQ behavior on campus, desire and willingness to intervene, confidence that they have helpful tools/strategies for dealing with these incidents, ideas about how to proactively make their campus safer and more inclusive for all" (p. 276). These goals are admirable, but as I will address later in this piece, "concern", "desire", and "confidence" are difficult things to directly observe. In *Staging Social Justice: Collaborating to Create Activist Theatre,* an edited collection of essays detailing their work, all descriptions of program evaluations include post-performance surveys and some of their case studies also include descriptions of post-performance discussions and anecdotal descriptions of audience responses to performances.

The one essay in this collection focusing on impact evaluation engages with survey data collected to assess a 2007 program at a university in the US designed to decrease homophobia. Susan Iverson (2013), with the aid of research assistants, adapted Herek's Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG) Scale to examine student audience members' attitudes towards LGBT people. They administered a pre-show survey as audience members took their seats and a post-show survey following the performance and a post-show discussion. Each survey consisted of twenty likert-scale graded questions and an open-ended question. Quantitative analysis of this survey indicated minor—though measurable—gains in student awareness and changes in attitudes (p. 69). Iverson describes these gains as "significant"; on a 20-point scale, the aggregate women's general attitude score moved from 14.57 to 15.19 and men's moved from 13.88 to 14.30 (p. 71). However, this does not offer any substantial information as to *what* in the performance and discussion inspired the change, and therefore the survey is not a terribly helpful tool for reflective practice. The survey methodology does not help Fringe Benefits isolate what element or elements of their program are making an impact, nor does it help them understand what pieces could be working better. Change is messy and multifaceted, and the survey methodology does not give them room to see unintended changes or to understand the processes by which these changes happened.

Nadon (2013) describes a specific story from the play focusing on a recent real-life hate crime against a lesbian student. He describes qualitative data from the post-show discussions indicating that about 60% of students responding verbally to the play addressed this story, and of those students 2/3 of them demonstrated empathy for the victim of the crime and about 1/3 of responded with a "more personal concern for their own campus experience" (p. 81). This qualitative methodology focuses his attention on a particular piece of the performance that appears to have made the

most impact. He analyzes these responses in relationship to the quantitative survey data to determine that "the depiction of an anti-LGBT hate crime… provoked a 'sympathy response' as opposed to a 'stigma response'" (p. 82). Nadon concludes that the "movement" of attitude shift from the surveys alongside audience responses in discussions indicates that the performance of a real story from their own campus moved the audience toward compassion and understanding for LGBT people (p. 82).

Fringe Benefits' impact evaluation methodology is complicated and somewhat clunky. It sounds like a lot of paperwork to administer and analyze four page long surveys, and that labor has to come from somewhere. The data it yields is superficial. In addition, its data is self-reported by audience members, and after watching a play with overtly positive attitudes about LGBT people, many college students might offer "right answers" to survey questions that may or may not reflect their actual attitudes. The qualitative methodology sounds more promising, as it yields the more complex data on which Nadon relies to draw his conclusions of how change operates in a specific aspect of the program. It utilizes directly observed audience behavior, which may be a more reliable measure of the attitudes of audience members who choose to speak in a post-performance discussion and who respond physically in response to these speech acts. However, within the *Staging Social Justice* collection, Iverson's essay discussing the survey uses the language of impact evaluation; Nadon's clearly focuses on the impact of the performance but does not mark it as clearly—he primarily uses the language of "impact" to discuss Iverson's survey data. It is almost as though the editors of the collection, and perhaps the authors themselves, operated under the common assumption that impact evaluation only "counts" if it quantifies.

3 We Know how to Do Impact Evaluation in Ways that Are Useful

As I mention earlier, Michael Etherton and Tim Prentki co-edited a special issue of *RiDE* focused on impact assessment of applied theatre in 2006. They call for the need for "more sophisticated tools of measurement at different stages in a prolonged intervention into human development" (p. 140), highlighting how "arts workers are notoriously suspicious (often with good reason) of the mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation imported from the social sciences while being reluctant to develop their own" (p. 144). Twelve years later, relatively little has been published responding to this call—as a field, applied theatre remains suspicious (if not openly hostile to) impact evaluation and as a result has yet to develop sophisticated methods for the assessment of our own work.

In this edition of *RiDE,* Helen Baños Smith (2006) details a model of impact assessment used by Save the Children that may be of use to applied theatre practitioners. This model specifically measures changes resulting from the work rather than activities, outputs, or outcomes, and Baños Smith highlights how they "are not

only interested in *positive* changes, but also in *negative* changes that may have resulted from our work, and in *unintended* changes that we had not anticipated (p. 158). This model also aims to recognize context and include all stakeholders in the assessment process. It integrates an ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data into regular program activities. A basic method Baños Smith suggests is to ask each stakeholder "what they feel is the *most significant change* that has occurred as a result of the project or programme" (p. 159). This open question does imply that some sort of change has taken place, but does not presuppose the direction of this change. This qualitative data is collected, analyzed by staff and stakeholders alike, and synthesized for reporting not just to funders but to all stakeholders in the program. This process makes for a balanced and appropriately considered evaluation.

4 Yet this Kind of Impact Evaluation Is Relatively Rare

While applied theatre practitioners usually want to engage in deep, complex reflective praxis, the material conditions of applied theatre production often do not allow the luxury of time and space required for substantial reflection. Participants in applied theatre projects often live in contexts full of frictions and obstacles, making pedestrian activities such as getting to meetings or rehearsals on time a challenge. Facilitators are called upon to problem solve and re-work on the fly as we write, direct, teach, and not infrequently counsel, life coach, chauffer, and cater on an as-needed basis. Perhaps it's just me—but I often find the delivery of programs all-encompassing. When I'm in the midst of a project, I run on the fumes of caffeine and adrenaline. Anything that does not directly help solve the concrete problems requiring my immediate attention waits. So reflection happens after the sprint, once I've caught my breath.

The straightforward solution to that problem is to embed data collection and analysis into daily activities, so they are integrated into program delivery. But this can be challenging. Change is a non-linear process, and the data collected needs to provide a full enough picture to enable stakeholders and staff to see unintended changes and to understand the processes by which changes happened. However, if too much data is collected, it overwhelms an individual's or an organization's capacity to analyze it in an organic and useful way. Intimidating amounts of raw data lurk in unopened files or pile up physically on someone's desk. So practitioners designing programs in which data collection and analysis are as Baños Smith puts it "an ingrained part of normal activities rather than an 'extra' piece of work" (p. 165) must find the sweet spot at which they have enough data to paint a big enough picture but not so much that it cannot easily be used. Staff and stakeholder time needs to be built in to accommodate the data analysis process, but time is a finite resource, so again, the scale of the process needs to find the perfect point of balance in which it can go deep enough to be useful but efficient enough not to become an obstacle to other important elements of program delivery. This is not an impossible task, but it is difficult and its design and implementation require both training and practice. It

may take a few tries to get right, and applied theatre projects are often run with limited resources; many practitioners do not have the luxury of time to work through multiple messy program or project cycles to find the perfect point of balance.

This is in part because applied theatre work is often funded by grants from government and foundation sources. Even when a project is not specifically funded by a grant, it is usually embedded within the ongoing operations of an organization (such as a school, a theatre, or a social service NGO) whose work is partially funded from such sources. These funders want to support successful programming; "unsuccessful" programs are unlikely to maintain funding levels long enough for facilitators to work through a steep learning curve. As a result, as Jennings and Baldwin point out, "Practitioners have little motivation to assess their work critically, at least within the public sphere. Their continued employment has depended on positive (and positivist) individual project evaluations" (p. 73). Therefore, impact evaluation reports can "approach the level of a public relations or marketing exercise, where each report acts as a form of superficial self-advocacy on behalf of the delivery organization and the commissioning agency" (p. 74). In other words, the material conditions of applied theatre production can *require* bullshit evaluation selling programs' success to funders. Bullshit, in this case, "is empty, without substance or content… no more information is communicated than if the speaker had merely exhaled" (Frankfurt 2005, p. 42–3). Such positive reports are not necessarily insincere—applied theatre practitioners generally believe our projects are doing more good than harm in the world—but these sort of reports often stem from impact evaluation methodologies that do not yield useful enough data and rigorous enough analysis to enable practitioners to see unintended negative consequences. I'll return to the capacity of bullshit as a conscious advocacy tool later in this essay, for it is not without its uses—but it can be all too easy to, as Kelly Howe (2015) puts it, "believe our own grant-speak".

Baños Smith highlights how trust and transparency in stakeholders' participation in assessments "can be complicated by a number of factors including funding relationships and issues of dependency, as well as fear (among staff and stakeholders) of reporting negative examples for various reasons" (p. 163). Applied theatre practitioners are not the only stakeholders dependent on funding; community partners, too, often have vested interest in programmatic success. Participants and other stakeholders may feed "right" answers to external evaluators when asked to self-report. The participation of multiple stakeholders in impact evaluation processes is no panacea to the problem of "bullshit" assessment.

5 Make It Easy

In this section, I call upon Barbara Walvoord's (2010) approach to the assessment of student learning, applying its core principals to applied theatre impact evaluation. Walvoord frames the impact evaluation process as a "natural, scholarly act" (p. 2), asking if our programs are doing what we want them to do. Stakeholders set goals,

gather and analyze information, and take action based on what they learn. Through her approach, each impact evaluation cycle examines a single, focused goal in an easy, low-impact way. Through multiple cycles of evaluation, stakeholders are able to analyze many aspects of programming, adjusting in response to learnings and slowly gathering the kinds of complex data that enable deep analysis.

It begins with the collaborative act of determining a set of *real* program goals shared by all stakeholders. Goals cannot be generic, unfocused, or focused on program actions. They cannot be "bullshit" program goals that mirror the language of a funder's call for proposals or a set of externally determined educational standards or a set of "right answers" that sound like the sort of thing that would please external authorities. Baños Smith points out the obvious, "If a programme does not have a very clear idea of what changes it aims to create than it is much harder to measure whether or not the programme is making a difference" (p. 164). This is the hard part: stakeholders need to identify what they *really* want the program to do and the milestones that would indicate that these goals have been achieved. As I mention earlier, vague but common goals such as "concern", "desire", and "confidence" are challenging things to directly observe, so they are easy to bullshit but difficult to document. Walvoord uses the format "Students [or participants] will be able to…." as a basic framework for articulating clearly observable goals (p. 14).

In addition, if program goals are clear and specific, external evaluators know what they should look for and at. This specificity mitigates the risk Helen Cahill invokes in her chapter in this volume that evaluators will measure the wrong things and fail to notice the elements of a program most valued by facilitators, participants, and internal stakeholders.

A side benefit of engaging in the collaborative process of goal setting is that it offers the opportunity to clarify the spots in which stakeholders' interests and agendas do not line up perfectly. As Etherton & Prentki suggest:

> If facilitators are transparent about their intentions, about the 'baggage' they bring with them into the work, there is a chance that any contradictions which may emerge between the aspirations of the participants and those of the facilitator can be used as part of a developing analysis which may itself be a prelude to a discernable, sustained impact (p. 150).

As I mention earlier, this is the hard part—figuring out, together with stakeholders, exactly what you want an applied theatre program or project to do, and to define together how you will know it when you see it.

Walvoord advises to "build on what you're already doing" (p. 2) to collect data. Identify existing elements of programs and projects that might offer opportunities to observe if program goals are being met. For each evaluation cycle, collect data on just one goal, keeping the data tightly focused and manageable in volume. One approach is to collect qualitative data as participants and facilitators observe and document behavior within the workshop that demonstrates participants doing specific things demonstrating a particular goal is being met or highlighting behaviors demonstrating that it isn't. Reflection is a standard feature of applied theatre projects, though it can sometimes land on the backburner as more pressing problems take focus. Reflective activities can be designed to generate bits of qualitative data,

and this "double dipping" can help position reflection as an essential element of programming for stakeholders. An alternate approach to embedding data collection in program activities is to use very simple rubrics, in which a facilitator and/or participant(s) can check off that they can see a single skill in use at a level that is "absent", "developing", or "established" in particular moments of action in dramatic activities. If the goal is easily observable, this data collection, embedded in ongoing activity, can be straightforward and easy.

Stakeholders collaboratively analyze the data, examining why the goal is or is not being met and—if it is not being met—how to adjust programming to better meet the goal. This may be a straightforward discussion or it may utilize collaborative arts-based methods of analysis (such as Mantle of the Expert). It should be planned into ongoing program activities, so it is integral to program delivery. This moment of collaborative analysis can be designed to generate concrete material that can be used for formal reporting to authorities—this may be meeting minutes capturing the discussion or texts generated via dramatic activities.

This form of *direct* impact evaluation relies on observations of behavior in action. This stands in contrast with *indirect* forms of evaluation in which participants or other stakeholders are asked to self-report impacts or changes. Direct data can offer a more clear-eyed view of what changes are *or are not* taking place. Walvoord's "easy" approach does not, in a single program cycle, yield the complexity of data to enable extensive analysis of the multiple, interlocking elements of an applied theatre program. Each cycle generates a little bit of data on something specific and engages stakeholders in collaborative reflection and problem solving based on a focused, manageable data set. Over time, these small, specific, and easy pieces fill out a bigger, more complex picture.

Because this method of impact evaluation requires a commitment to long-term self-study, it is flexible. With each evaluation cycle, stakeholders can make adjustments to programs and goals and make new decisions about what they want to examine and to do. When a program yields an unexpected byproduct, teaching stakeholders about a goal they did not know they had, goals can be adjusted for subsequent cycles. When a program works well, applied theatre facilitators *know it when we see it*, and this focused approach enables us to dig into the "beautiful radiant things" (Thompson 2009, p. 6) to articulate what it is about them we value and want to be able to deepen or replicate.

However, this method of impact evaluation as collaborative reflection requires long-term commitment. It does not work for one-off projects that only operate for a single cycle. It does not work well for projects designed primarily to meet the goals of a funder, needs of an institution, and/or agenda of a researcher. And when we take a clear-eyed look at the landscape, an awful lot of applied theatre praxis (including my own) fits this description.

6 Doing It Badly and Owning the Failure

I offer an example of a simple qualitative impact evaluation of a project from my own praxis that failed to meet its goals. The project was a production of the play *Nickel and Dimed*, based on Barbara Ehrenreich's book by the same name, which focuses on a middle class journalist's experience attempting to get by working minimum wage jobs in the United States. I directed the play and facilitated a series of community dialogues and events around performances, with the goal to get an audience of middle and upper middle class mainstream theatre audience members to recognize and identify their own class privilege. This was a one-off project, designed around goals I designed by myself—so I did not develop them with any community stakeholders. My interest in privilege stems from my larger research agenda, and part of what I wanted to do with the project was conduct a case study for my next book. From the start, this was *bad applied theatre*. I define formal performance with explicit political or social goals as applied theatre. Not everyone reading this will agree with my definition, and so some of you will think this an example of *especially bad* applied theatre praxis, since it involves no interactive dramatic activities. I don't think interactive dramatic activities would have helped solve the problems caused by my assumptions and lack of legitimate collaboration with program partners. I was doomed from the start.

However, my impact evaluation methodology helped make these problems visible. I began with a clear goal. I worked with several pre-existing organizations to bring groups to see the show and participate in pre- or post-show workshops and dialogues. These events included facilitated discussions including specific questions about audience members' understanding of privilege.[1] They were an integral part of the program. I collected qualitative data in the form of field notes and analytic memos after these interactive events, sitting down for twenty minutes or so the morning after each event to capture what happened and what sense I made of it.

A pattern emerged pretty quickly: most audience members did not know what I mean when I asked about "privilege" and had trouble understanding the concept even with additional intervention beyond the performance. I offer an extended excerpt from my field log as a representative example:

After the talkback, the ushers—a couple who appear to me to be in their late 60s or early 70s—stopped me. They told me about a friend's husband who works a corporate job for a salary of around 200 K, heading to work at 7 am, coming home at 7 pm, getting on the computer after dinner and continuing work until 10 or 11 pm. He works hard, they tell me. "He's rich, but he isn't privileged." I had to stop and realize they were defining "privileged" as "entitled"—rich but lazy and unwilling to work. I stopped and re-defined the term "privilege" in relation to their example.

[1] At different events, facilitators included myself, dramaturg Sarah Menke, assistant director Britnee Ruscitti, sociologist Jim Sikora, and Rabbi Alison Abrams. Facilitators were sometimes determined by scheduling and sometimes selected for their relationships with particular groups—for example Rabbi Allison Abrams co-facilitated an event with the National Council of Jewish Women.

That corporate executive has the choice to leave his high paying, intense job for one with lower pay and shorter hours. That choice is a privilege. The [working class] characters in this play aren't compensated enough for their long hours to survive, and they do not have the choice to do something else that alleviates their daily strain. The middle class protagonist of the play has this choice, but the working class characters do not. It's structural, not personal. I'm still not sure the couple got it. I don't think I changed their minds.

I asked for conversation, and I got it. But I didn't get transformation. I collected clear qualitative evidence that I was not meeting my goals. Since I had not set my goals in a collaborative manner, I did not have anyone with whom to analyze my data. And since this was a one-off project, I was not able to "close the loop" to strengthen this particular program—although I certainly learned some lessons about what to do differently on future projects.

However, my low-key qualitative impact evaluation methodology captured data on some unintended byproducts of the project. For example, my goals were focused on audience members, but the stage manager and light board operator absorbed and took ownership of the project's goals. After one particularly frustrating event, I noted:

> Austin [the stage manager] and Aimee [the light board operator] later laughed at me that I sat through the discussion with a look of frustration on my face. Aimee said, "If it was us, you would have said, 'dig deeper' and shut up and made us work harder."

I had not intended to teach the light board operator facilitation skills, but she watched enough events to be able to offer a concrete (and apt) critique of my facilitation praxis. She was at the time a student in the program in which I taught, and in subsequent semesters demonstrated her mastery of a facilitation skill set she picked up by accident while working on this project. My failed applied theatre project yielded a small, unintentional pedagogical win.

7 Bullshit Impact Evaluation Reporting

Omasta and I (2014) critique the way too much applied theatre scholarship uncritically claims itself successful, but I recognize that one reason for this is that, when work is funded, we cannot claim to our funders that we have responsibly spent their money meeting the criteria we have promised and then turn around and publish articles and books about how we weren't really able to do that. The reason I can use this case study without getting into trouble with my funder is because the primary goal of the grant program under which it was funded is the artistic and/or scholarly development of faculty members at the institution at which I was then employed; the grant was to produce the play with me as the director and my colleague Curtis Trout as the scenic designer, and to host discussions about the issues raised in the

play following several performances.[2] We clearly filled the promises made to our funder, since the play opened and ran as promised in the grant narrative, and the performance run included six post-performance facilitated discussions and a pre-performance workshop focusing audience members on issues of social class and privilege in the play.

The goals I gave my funder focused on program activities, rather than impact or change. They are "bullshit" goals—as Frankfurt would say, "empty, without substance or content" (p. 42). They are separate from my *real* goals for the program, the ones I hoped to achieve but did not know if I could deliver. The grant report I needed to write required no actual evaluation of impact: no claims of social change, education, or transformation. Just simple, easily observable facts—the play ran, the discussion events took place. So the grant report was *easy*.

Since the underlying goal of the program funding this project was for me to learn things to become a better scholar/artist and teacher, my publication of the above learnings—messy though they may be—demonstrates how the project legitimately fulfilled the funder's larger program goals. In some ways, this essay operates as more organic, voluntary grant report, getting under the concrete deliverables I promised, articulating how the project served the funding program's larger goals. My qualitative impact evaluation captured the information I needed to report deliverables back to my funder, but left me plenty of room for genuine reflective praxis. Researchers ethically need to seek truthful interpretations; the demands of grant reports do not always require, or even always *want*, the kind of extended narratives required to articulate the messy, multi-faceted nature of change. This approach would not work for all programs—but *no* single approach will work for all programs. In this case, framing my *real* goals (hard goals, goals I did not automatically expect to meet) separately from the deliverables I promised to my funder enabled me to satisfy that funder even though my program did not succeed in meeting *my* goals.

8 Bullshit as Advocacy

In print, Philip Taylor (2006) rails against the political forces requiring impact evaluation in educational contexts (which he calls "assessment" because he writes within a US-based context). But in his assessment class at NYU, which I took in 2007 as part of my PhD training, he teaches legitimately useful frameworks for defining the terms on which arts work is evaluated, toeing the political line while subverting the positivist paradigm. He writes, "We cannot separate assessment and evaluation from the learning experiences" (p. 114), and he teaches how to embed

[2] This project was made possible with the aid of an Artistic and Scholarly Development grant from Illinois Wesleyan University. Sarah Menke's work on the project was underwritten by an Illinois Wesleyan University Eckley Fellowship for student research. Most of the rest of the program costs were covered by ticket sales and some small individual donations.

them in teaching and learning processes. Taylor took the class through a complex process drama, highlighting the ways different activities demonstrated specific skills included in the New York City K-12 standards for theatre education. He taught the class to design rubrics that can be easily applied to directly measure straightforward skills students need to demonstrate in order to complete projects or elements of processes.[3]

In this way, Taylor's class taught an impact evaluation method similar to Walvoord's "easy" one, but utilizing pre-determined goals defined by a larger institutional authority. When structural systems of power require bullshit impact evaluation— that is, evaluation "tasks that are pointless in that they have nothing much to do with the intent or justifying purpose of the enterprise which requires them" (Frankfurt 2005, p. 39), they can be used as a transverse tactic. As de Certeau (1984) notes, "Sly as a fox and twice as quick: there are coutless ways of 'making do'" (p. 29), and in this spirit "easy" impact evaluation methods can be designed to operate as advocacy tools. Sometimes, "bullshit" can make for effective advocacy—it is legitimately useful to be able to speak the language of power.

To offer a concrete example, the United States has developed national Common Core standards for K-12 education; some of the Grade 3 literacy standards include "establishing a situation", "introducing a narrator and/or characters", and "using dialogue to develop experiences, events, or show the response of characters to situations" (www.corestandards.org). These goals are all easily observable. A playmaking project would require students demonstrate all of the above skills – it would be difficult if not impossible to create a play without them. (Admittedly, 3rd graders *could* craft post-dramatic plays that might not include characters or dialogue—but that requires a more advanced aesthetic skill set than might reasonably be expected of 8 year olds raised on the linear narratives of mainstream film and television.) Alternately, many dramatic activities one might include in a process drama would require students demonstrate these same skills. The evidence of these skills is apparent in final playmaking projects or in moments of dramatic activity during a process drama, which can be evaluated on very simple rubrics indicating the skills are "absent" "emerging" or "established". If goals are selected and framed in such a way that it would be impossible to complete the activity without demonstrating the goals, this evaluation provides evidence of the efficacy of drama education on terms valued by institutional and political authority. Activities can be documented on video as evidence to be shared with administrators, funders, or other stakeholders. "Easy" bullshit can operate as a tool for advocacy.

The learning goals themselves may come from an external source, but they are broad enough to be used to support exploration of almost any content of a teacher's choosing. This "bullshit" has the capacity to open up a space for critical thinking within a playmaking unit or process drama by demonstrating (via minimal effort) how these dramatic activities satisfy external learning standards. Specific goals can be clearly observed so it is obvious when they are or are not being met. Data collection is embedded in artistic and learning practices. This form of impact evaluation

[3] This was probably the single most useful class I took in graduate school.

only really requires analysis if students are not meeting the goals. If students are *not* meeting the "bullshit" goals a teacher expects them to meet easily, this impact evaluation exercise ceases to be bullshit and becomes an actual space for reflexive praxis for a teacher to try to figure out why she is not seeing what she expects to see.

9 Conclusion: The Impact of Aesthetics

Applied theatre is an aesthetic medium, and as a field, our over-reliance on bullshit impact evaluation has prevented us from developing our own tools for capturing and analyzing what Michael Balfour (2009) calls "the affect of aesthetics" (p. 356). If one ignores the aesthetic aspects of applied theatre, one might as well be doing popular education, community organizing, activism, or conflict negotiation without an artistic component. Yet aesthetics are often ignored in discussions of impact. Gareth White (2015) highlights the importance of "asking rigorous questions related to quality, and about what kind of quali*ties* matter" (p. 256). Aesthetics have their own values and politics, and beauty, dissonance, roughness, and abstraction all impact audiences and participants alike. We need to be able to understand how aesthetic choices impact participants and audiences, and for determining what "aesthetic quality" means in specific and varied applied theatre contexts.

Isolated tools exist for studying aesthetic quality, and for collaboratively determining "what kind of qualities matter", but they are rarely used in concert. It is not unusual for applied theatre facilitators to also work as theatre teachers and, in this capacity, routinely evaluate aesthetics for the purposes of grading individual student learning. These skills can be adapted for use in different contexts. Facilitators can collaborate with stakeholders to, as White puts it "examine the conceptual basis of quality" (p. 256) and determine context-specific aesthetic goals. One of the benefits of Walvoord's cyclical evaluation method is that it builds organizational capacity for collaborative inquiry. Stakeholders learn to work together to communicate, set clear goals, ask real questions as they analyze data together, and make plans to adjust programs to act on learnings. The long form nature of the self-study enables collaborators to get better at it over time. Facilitators and stakeholders can use these skills to ask real questions about what aesthetic choices are *doing* to participants and together start to dig into deeper questions of *why*. This reflective praxis digs deeper than most grant reports will require, getting to the heart of the impact of the work.

Thompson (2009) argues for moving the ephemeral "unarticulated" byproducts "such as joy, fun, pleasure, or beauty" from the margins to the center of applied theatre praxis (p. 116). These are important aspects of applied theatre production, and can be explicitly named as goals or "qualities that matter", articulating and making explicit their value. There is nothing bullshit about the value of "making friends" or "solving problems as a team" or "laughing together"; dig under the grant-speak to get to the *real* goals participants, facilitators, and program partners have and work together to rigorously evaluate how programs are actually working—and not working—for everyone involved.

References

Balfour, M. (2009). The politics of intention: Looking for a theatre of little changes. *Research in Drama Education, 14*(3), 347–359.

Baños Smith, H. (2006). International NGOs and impact assessment. Can we know we are making a difference? *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 157–174.

Belfiore, E. (2009). On bullshit in cultural policy practice and research: Notes from the British case. *International Journal of Cultural Policy., 15*(3), 343–359.

Bowles, N., & Nadon, D.-R. (2013). *Staging social justice: Collaborating to create activist theatre*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. www.corestandards.org. Retrieved October 9, 2015.

de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkley: University of California Press.

Etherton, M., & Prentki, T. (2006). Drama for change? Prove it! Impact assessment in applied theatre. *Research in Drama Education, 11*(2), 139–155.

Frankfurt, H. G. (2005). *On bullshit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Howe, Kelly. (2015). 'To in the present: What was political yesterday is not necessarily political today'. Unpublished conference paper presented at Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference, Chicago, IL, June 13.

Iverson, S. (2013). Inspiring change and action: Measuring the impact of theatre for social justice. In N. Bowles & D.-R. Nadon (Eds.), *Staging social justice: Collaborating to create activist theatre* (pp. 66–75). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Jennings, M., & Baldwin, A. (2010). "Filling out the forms was a nightmare": Project evaluation and the reflective practitioner in community theatre in contemporary Northern Ireland. *Music and Arts in Action, 2*(2), 72–89.

Nadon, D.-R. (2013). Sympathy vs. stigma: Writing the "victim". In N. Bowles & D.-R. Nadon (Eds.), *Staging social justice: Collaborating to create activist theatre* (pp. 76–83). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Taylor, P. (Ed.). (2006). *Assessment in arts education*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Omasta, M., & Snyder-Young, D. (2014). Gaps, silences and comfort zones: Dominant paradigms in educational drama and applied theatre discourse. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 19*(1), 7–22.

Thompson, J. (2009). *Performance affects: Applied theatre and the end of effect*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Walvoord, B. E. (2010). *Assessment clear and Simple: A practical guide for Institutions, departments, and general education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

White, G. (2015). *Applied theatre aesthetics*. London: Bloomsbury.

Change and Continuity in Applied Theatre: Lessons Learnt from 'the Longest Night'

Celina McEwen

1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter One of this book, most applied theatre practitioners and theorists agree that applied theatre practice can help bring about social and political change for participants. For example, in Australia, where this kind of work falls under what is commonly known as community and cultural development (CCD), the main government funding body defines this kind of work as "collaborations between professional artists and communities based on a community's desire to achieve artistic and social outcomes […] distinct from other arts practice as it is the creative processes and relationships developed with community to make the art that defines it, not the art form or genre" (Australia Council 2016).

As is apparent in this definition, there is a common belief that this kind of practice can lead to social change, such as help address issues of social justice and equal access. In fact, change is one of five key elements that characterise applied theatre or CCD (McEwen 2008). The five elements are: (1) use participatory and creative processes; (2) engage with a 'marginal community'; (3) generate an aesthetic product that does not belong to the category of institutionalised art, such as the ballet, the opera, etc.; (4) is significantly financed through the relevant government funding body; and (5) intend a socially efficacious outcome.

These practices are thought to bring about change because they offer a break from routine and daily activities. They can become a catalyst for change and the expression of a culture counter to the mainstream because they can help stimulate reflection, the reimagining of situations or rethink "habitual views of life" (Cohen-Cruz 2002, p. 7), through dialogical and play-based encounters. They can, therefore, encourage people to see themselves as makers of history rather than as passive subjects (Clark 2002; Shepherd and Wallis 2004).

C. McEwen (✉)
School of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_7

The processes used in this work have an important role to play in bringing about change. The participatory and creative processes used are significant because they place participants as actors and active decision-makers in relation to all or parts of the content and/or format in applied theatre projects, rather than as simply vehicles to represent the artistic vision of a practitioner. The importance of the product or output should not, however, be ignored. Applied theatre products, such as public performances, showcases, and so on are also an important aspect of this practice. Not only can they be seen as part of the process, but, as the publicly visible element of applied theatre, they can increase the value and recognition of a project and, thus, further support the change agenda.

The kind of change practitioners claim or seek through their work, however, varies. A review of the literature on applied theatre published in scholarly papers between 2005 and 2015 (Chapter "Values, Intentions, Success and Impact in Applied Theatre Documents", this volume) highlights several layers of change. One layer of change relates to the aims or outcomes intended from the onset for the participants involved in these projects. These changes can be categorised as: awareness raising or developing; capacity building or strengthening; and transforming or empowering (Fig. 1).

In addition to that, there is another layer of change that pertains to the practitioner's own epistemology or personal approach to this work. For instance, practitioners might be motivated by a political agenda, an activist drive or a wellbeing goal to intervene on social change. Stanley (2002) defines this layer of change according to three categories: building social knowledge; stimulating social action; and supporting social change.

The third layer of change relates to the domain or the practical focus of change in participants embedded in the project. This can be one or a combination of the following three domains: skills and opportunities; community and belonging; and citizenship and identity.

The ways in which these layers intersect in applied theatre projects highlights the complexity and diversity of practices that exist in this broad field of practice (see Fig. 1). This also shows the range of potential change, from structural and systemic, to community-based or individual. While this work can be seen as providing a channel for participants' voices (Kelin 2001) and encouraging participants to see themselves as makers of history (Clark 2002), whether this actually happens for participants remains contentious. How these intentions and potential are translated into real change and what constitutes evidence of change for participants remain under-researched.

In this chapter, I discuss the kind of change that occurred for participants in an Australian applied theatre called The Longest Night (TLN). Through the use of a range of complex participatory activities, the project developed a three-part performance that included a *Dance-off* between local young people, a *Tour* of the site where the work was devised and a play also called *The Longest Night*. This project was, and remains, an exemplary project because, for reasons discussed later in this chapter, it had a greater potential than most applied theatre projects to achieve some social and political change for participants and their communities. Also, it was an

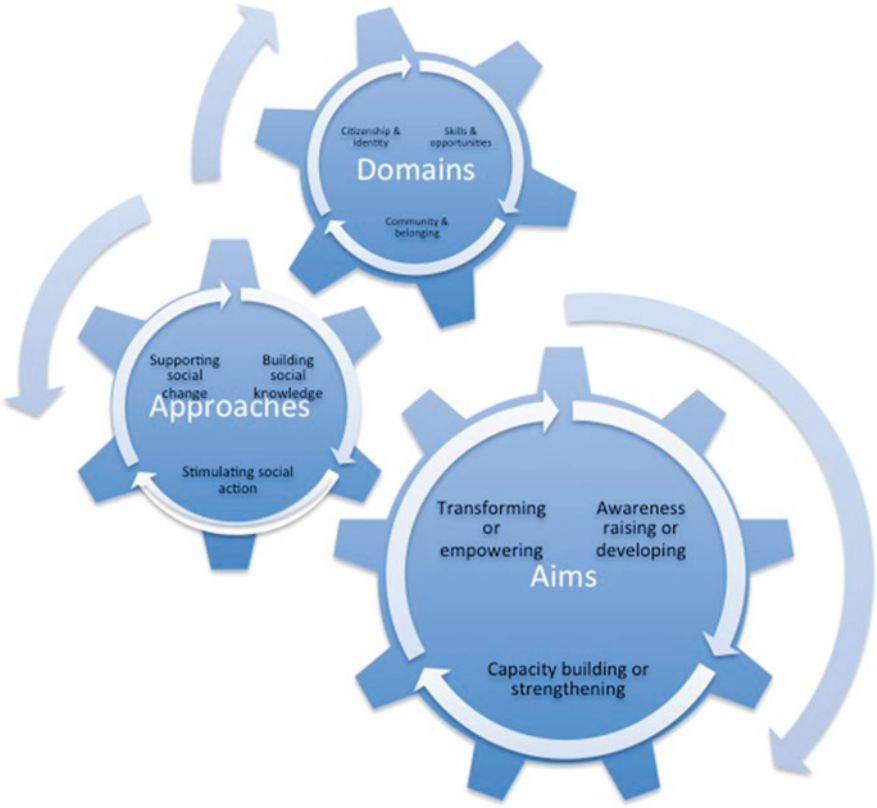

Fig. 1 Interplay between layers of change in CCD and applied theatre

exemplary research project, because data were collected between 2001 and 2006, a longer period of time than is usually offered such projects. This extended length of research time provided an opportunity to better analyse the relationship between processes, aesthetic product and change. Then, using Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical approach to field analysis, I highlight some of the tensions between the rhetoric of social change and outcomes for participants in these projects. I argue that participation in these projects fosters hope and provides a mechanism to recruit and train practitioners for the field of applied theatre. I also contend that though these projects might deliver in the short term promised change for individuals, this is often only short-lived, they do not deliver on promised changes to communities as a whole, let alone the rest of society. Finally, I come to the conclusion that this is the case because the practices and interests that maintain the field tend to contain change to the margins of society and limit change to raising awareness or building the capacity of certain individuals.

2 Methodology

2.1 Field Theory

Bourdieu's concept of 'field of practice' (Bourdieu 2000; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Swartz 1997) is useful in understanding the inner workings of applied theatre and the value of this work for participants and practitioners. According to Bourdieu, fields can be political, religious, legal, literary, intellectual, artistic, scientific, bureaucratic spaces, where people compete for positions, goods and services in order to acquire or maintain a certain position, or what he calls 'capital'. This can often lead to struggle and conflict as members of fields try to hold onto or accumulate resources according to specific logics and values. These resources enable members to practice and acquire economic capital, the most influential form of capital, but also provide them with signs of recognition and status.

Though Bourdieu often discusses four types of capital (social capital, cultural capital, economic capital, symbolic capital), it is important to note that there are as many forms of capital as there are human interests and as many 'fields' as there are capitals. Each capital is distributed throughout a specific field. It is also important to realise that each form of capital can represent and mean different things in different contexts according to people's interests (Bourdieu 1986). Fields are, thus, defined by an 'economy of interest'. This interest can be materialistic, economically deterministic or mechanical as well as non-rational or philanthropic. Moreover, it can be conscious or unconscious as well as explicit or hidden or misrepresented—e.g. appear as self-interest or disinterest—,or yet again personal or collective (Bourdieu 1984; Swartz 1997).

This capital can also be used by members of fields to establish their own sense of worth. Again, this is done by applying a field's accepted logic and regulatory principals around the accumulation of capital. Often these logic and regulatory principals are closely aligned with those valued by the field of power. However, it also happens that members of some fields assert their particular logic and regulatory principles over those of any other field. Which logic or principles are used can help determine the level of autonomy or dependence of the given field to the field of power, the overarching, or meta, economic field at the centre of power made visible by its members, the financially dominant members of society (Swartz 1997). In other words, a field's autonomy decreases the more its members recognise and legitimise the forms of capital that are of value to members of the field of power (Accardo 2002). This level of autonomy is also indicative of a field's capacity to influence society or enact change within and outside of its field.

To better understand why people seek out certain things and ascribe them a particular value, we need to turn to Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus'. 'Habitus' describes elements of culture that are the product of a socialising process that predisposes people to behave and think in a specific way—including actions that perpetuate dominance or subservience— in a given context (Bourdieu 1979; Swartz 1997). This socialising process can be understood as the internalisation of historically

developed structures that teach people how and in which fields to act, improvise and strategise to further what they have come to see as their interests. As Bourdieu states "the field structures the habitus, which is the product of the embodiment of the immanent necessity of a field... [and] habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and with value, in which it is worth investing one's energy" (Wacquant 1989, p. 44).

Because Bourdieu's conceptual framework was developed to understand Western capitalist cultures in the twentieth century, it is only fair to ask how field theory holds in an environment where rational thinking is no longer a core currency and where there is increasing fragmentation of fields (Piketty 2014). I contend that Bourdieu's concepts are still relevant even in societies where change is the new constant, where borrowing and reusing values from across fields has become a norm, where structures and fields are more and more unstable, where, in terms of progress, "when you stop, you lose" (Bauman 2012) because his concept of homology provides a useful analysis of these mechanisms. Indeed, Bourdieu's notion of homology of fields, or the temporary alliances across fields of practices to help members of fields better compete for resources within their main field of interest, can help us understand the current interplay between and across members of different fields. In this context, even though the economic capital has become anti-capital, built on debt, hybridisation and movement, all changes to capitals are relative to each other in different ways and his notion of accumulation of capital remains true (Grenfell 2004; Piketty 2014).

3 An Ethnographic Approach

Bourdieu's theoretical framework was used to analyse TLN, a nine-months long applied theatre project co-created by a contemporary theatre company and young people 'at risk' for a major Australian arts festival. Over a six-year period, I gathered data by shadowing the artistic team members, observing participants and workers as well as, on occasion, participating in the project as a facilitator of some of the workshops with young people. The main tools used included observation, interviews, audience surveys, performance analyses and a literature review.

A combination of participatory and non-participatory observation of workshops, staff and production meetings, rehearsals, consultation sessions and performances were conducted. I conducted a substantial number of informal and formal interviews to gather different kinds of data as well as to establish, develop and maintain different kinds of relationships between informants and the researcher. These included face-to-face and over the phone interviews, one-on-one or with groups of young people, participants' carers, festival staff, theatre company staff and social workers, at the beginning, during and immediately at the end of the project as well as a year, three and four years after the project. Interviews lasted between thirty minutes and two hours. They were based on formal and informal semi-structured questions designed to collect subjective data.

Though this data is not discussed in this chapter, I also designed and used a post-performance audience survey to gather data on the impact of the performance on spectators. Data from the performance was also gathered using Gay McAuley's (1998) performance analysis schema to establish the meaning of the performance produced as part of TLN project.

Finally, I reviewed two sets of literature. One review of the literature was conducted to better understand community and cultural development (CCD) practices and their socio-historical development and the other to ascertain the history, demographics and socio-economic profile of the site and the local population where the project took place.

At this stage, it is worth highlighting some of the limitations of the study. Such a long and complex investigation is bound to carry with it some difficulties. The main challenges included maintaining contact with all the informants, because of a high number of transient people who participated in TLN and/or who moved because of the forced relocation program of housing trust tenants. There were also challenges in collecting evidence of change because it required being able to measure the unpredictable and unexpected and compare it with the hypothetical or what might have happened had the participant not taken part in the project. In addition, there was the challenge of understanding whether what might constitute evidence of change for one group of people might not be for another. Further, even if we accept that change can be observed or self-reported, there was an issue with determining whether any change could directly and solely be attributed to participating in a project. Moreover, the case study raised questions about the potentially biased sample of participants due to the payment of some of them for their input into the devising of the play, the production's inclusion in an international festival and the potential these elements might have had in attracting participants more 'committed' than most. Finally, as addressed earlier, the project was called into question about how representative it was of applied theatre projects.

4 The Case Study

TLN was an exemplary as well as an extraordinarily ambitious applied theatre project. TLN was initiated by Urban Theatre Projects (UTP), a Western Sydney-based contemporary performance company, who was commissioned by the 2002 Adelaide Festival of the Arts to co-devise a performance with young people living in The Parks, in the north of Adelaide. TLN had the capacity to meet its intended efficacious goals because it did not lack recognition; it was valued for its aesthetic quality and structure; participants were given a certain level of legitimacy as creative partners (they were paid $25 for attending consultation sessions to give dramaturgical input as a direct, rather symbolic, recognition of their contribution); it had enough resources (e.g. funding, seven professional artists from diverse performance disciplines); and the practitioners had the required skills and approaches to make it succeed (McEwen 2002).

5 The 'Longest Night' Processes and Products

Though TLN departed from standard applied theatre projects, it can be described as applied theatre because it conformed to the five characteristics of applied theatre mentioned earlier. It received significant government funding from the Australia Council's CCD Board (CCDB), the main government funding body of CCD at the time.

TLN engaged with marginalised community groups located in a disadvantaged area in the Northern suburbs of Adelaide to devise and perform with professional actors a highly physical and emotionally charged, three-part in-situ performance. The project's participants included young people from a local alternative schooling program called Western Youth Directions, aimed at helping out-of-school-teenagers back into the public education system. It included young people from a local African community group (a majority of Sudanese and some Somali and Ethiopian people) and young people from a first time parents group, managed by the local health service.

Additionally, TLN included a change agenda. In fact, the project included explicit intended aims or outcomes for participants that addressed all aspects of the three layers of change discussed above. UTP's artistic director sought to raise TLN participants' awareness about their capacity to be expressive and be seen and heard by outsiders to the area. There was also an intent to transform a community. Peter Sellars, the initial 2002 Festival director, sought, with this project, to affect the local community and culture, as well as the Adelaide's arts practice and society in general. Further, UTP's artistic director wanted to use this project to create a 'moment of realisation', a time and space for participants where they can envisage the change or greater potential in their everyday lives (McEwen 2008).

Moreover, both UTP and the Festival's artistic directors were motivated by a political agenda to build social knowledge, stimulate social action and support social change. UTP's artistic director's approach included initial activities (e.g. meetings, interviews and focus group sessions) dedicated to finding more about the living and working conditions of The Parks staff (i.e. health, youth and social workers) and young people as well as their concerns and hopes for the areas and the project to determine ways of meeting their needs through TLN processes and product. Plus, in a way, the Festival director took ownership of The Parks area and its local services and residents by deciding to involve them in TLN. Lastly, through the use of devising processes and performance, UTP's artistic director explored with participants, workers and spectators, alternatives to the existing conditions in The Parks in an effort to improve participants and workers' lived experience in and spectators' perceptions of the area. Through the use of 'exit interviews', UTP's artistic director also sought to address the life choices of some of the participants by encouraging greater reflection on their circumstances and the emergence of new possibilities.

Finally, there was also an intention to foster practical change in participants by creating new opportunities and helping foster new skills, help participants focus on

issues community and belonging, as well as on issues of citizenship and identity. For example, the initial artistic director of the 2002 Adelaide Festival brought The Parks and UTP together to give participants the opportunity to experience something unique and exciting. The UTP's artistic director hoped participants would acquire new creative and/or social skills. The theme of belonging was explicitly explored throughout the project and, more specifically, foregrounding the co-devised play. As well, the Festival's artistic director intended the project to help develop greater cross-cultural relationships, including with local Aboriginal people. Lastly, UTP's director focused on issues of citizenship and identity as highlighted by her use of a range of strategies, such as intentionally working with diverse performers (i.e. a male and female performer of Anglo-Celtic ancestry, a female performer of Italian and a male performer of Aboriginal ancestry), and by developing characters for the play whom participants could relate to and see as positive role models, to, in turn, be able to see themselves in a positive light.

Core participatory and creative processes were used with the young people recruited through the local youth, health and arts services. Focus group sessions, consultation sessions, workshops, mentoring and performances were the main activities used with participants to develop trust, establish relationships, devise performances and create 'moments of relations'. In the first six months of the project, 12 focus group sessions were held with local young people between the ages of 15 and 25 referred to the project by local workers or invited to attend by the artistic team. These were designed as a one-off activity to recruit local youth, confirm participants' interest in the project's major themes of 'belonging' and 'change', and establish sub-themes and possible story lines for the performance. These sessions had three parts: group dynamic games (e.g. variation on musical chairs, focus game requiring participants to repeat in turn gestures representing another member of the group), an information session (i.e. questions and answers about the project) and a party (e.g. a disco, a barbeque).

In the last two months of the project, six consultation sessions were held with groups of up to ten participants to develop a play with the same title as the project, *The Longest Night*, in collaboration with UTP's artistic team. During these sessions, participants watched sections of work-in-progress—initially devised by the artistic team based on the information gathered during the initial focus group sessions—, which they then discussed in terms of its credibility and accuracy of the content, before brainstorming to generate new material for the rest of the play.

Also, during the last couple of months of the project, a series of workshops were organised by UTP and the local youth services. Free two-hour music making and recording workshops, acrobatics, and hip-hop culture workshops led by members of UTP were offered to all local young people. Their main aim was to the develop material for the *Dance Off* and the *Tour*, the first two of the three components of the project's final performance product. The workshops also served to engage with younger participants through more familiar and playful activities, create friendships among young people, overcome some of the 'ethnic' divides, "give something back" to some of the participants, help performers demonstrate their skills, and

Photo 1 B-boying workshop in the community centre square with local young people and performers Shannon Williams (standing to the left) and Morgan Lewis (on the linoleum mat centre). Photograph taken by Sophia Koutroulis, Community Development/Youth Worker, Adelaide Central Community Health Services, Parks, Dept. of Human Services, Government of South Australia

establish close 'teacher-student' relationships between performers and participants in the hope that these relationships might create a strong learning experience.

Around the development of the performances, some one-on-one mentoring activities also occurred with participants who showed a greater interest in the social or creative aspect of this work. This consisted in pairing one participant with a member of UTP's artistic team to engage in non-formal activities, such as conversations or one-on-one training sessions. These non-formal activities culminated in what the artistic director called 'exit interviews', one-on-one confidential conversations aimed at fostering a 'moment of realisation' or a time and space for greater reflection for participants on their learning and to challenge them to think "bigger and better" about their future (Photo 1).

The participatory and creative processes were used to produce a three-part performance presented as part of the Adelaide Festival program and held at The Parks Community Centre in February and March 2002. The three components of the performance were: a *Dance-off* between local young people, a *Tour* of the grounds and *The Longest Night* play. The *Dance-off* was a highly physical set of four distinct performances showcasing young local performers' acrobatics, b-boying, Soul and

Photo 2 Gathering in the community centre square of participants of the *Dance Off*. Photograph taken by Sophia Koutroulis

Rap music, and R'n'B dancing abilities. During half an hour, young people took turn in performing short energetic routines on an elevated podium decked out with three concrete sails decorated with Aboriginal dot painting designs of a brown serpent, three black death-like figures, a starry sky and a black and white animal-like figure, in the community centre square, a large outdoor space bordered by grey concrete buildings and a few eucalypt trees (Photo 2).

The *Tour* comprised several concurrent tours taking spectators on a journey through local young people's life stories. During fifteen minutes, participants led spectators around the buildings of a typical example of 1970s welfare architecture and through the services housed in The Parks Community Centre, such as the library, sports centre, youth centre, security services and the canteen. These tours ended at the doors of the community centre's machine maintenance workshop where *The Longest Night's* play was held (Photo 3).

The Longest Night was a play performed by professional theatre practitioners, depicting the gritty reality of some youth people's lives in The Parks area. Through a mix of comedy, gentle teasing, drama and moments of barely contained violence, the play dealt with the main character identity crisis. Bernie is a single mother who has recently been allocated a house in a public housing estate and hopes to be able to overcome her old habits developed over many years of homelessness in order to secure the custody of her son who is in the care of the State. Her decision to be

Photo 3 Spectators being led by local residents and participants during the *Tour*. Photograph taken by Celina McEwen

drug-free and prove she can be a reliable mother is, however, challenged by the arrival of friends from her former life on the streets. Though they only stay with her for one night, when they finally leave, the spectators are left wondering whether any change is possible for Bernie and her child (Photo 4).

6 Stories of Change and Continuity

During interviews conducted at the beginning of the project, some participants speculated that their involvement would bring a "good memory", some skills ("Learn to break dance" or "Trying acting and comedy") and new friendships. A small number of interviewed participants hoped that the results of the project might also have an impact on people outside of the area, as this quote from a participants highlights: "[This project will] show the snobs what it's like in people's house [sic]" (Dale 2001). In interviews conducted in the aftermath of the project, most participants saw new opportunities and expressed new aspirations (e.g. "It might lead to work as a youth worker", "I am going to make my own film and help with workshops as a volunteer" or "might work at the bike shop"). Some also reported changes in circumstances linked to their participation (e.g. "Made me go back to dad, to my family instead of bumming around", or "Got work as a volunteer driver"). Some

Photo 4 Open-door rehearsal in the community centre machine maintenance workshop with community members and performers (*left* to *right*) Bernadette Regan, Charles Russell, Morgan Lewis, Shannon Williams and Lucia Mastrantone. Photograph taken by Sophia Koutroulis

also expressed changed views about themselves ("I learned that I am special and I have a role to play in the community").

By taking part in a range of activities and events with different groups of people, participants became part of a 'web of relationship' (Cohen-Cruz 2002, p. 7), that enabled the development of a strong sense of belonging to a more or less durable community formed by and around members of TLN. This occurred by working collaboratively on a performance that helped transform an imagined community into a lived one (however temporary) or a "viable and 'voiced' social entity" (Watt and Pitts 1991, p. 130). It also enabled participants (local expert dramaturgs as well as local *Dance Off* performers and *Tour* guides) to make artistic and logistical decisions that drove them to "engage in the ordering of ideas, people, and things" (Handelman 1990, p. 16) and, thus, create meaning in their personal lives.

Taking part in this highly visible performance helped boost some participants' levels of confidence because they were heard and seen in a different light by their family and outsiders of The Parks. This was implied by a key informant who stated:

> You can see the input that you've put into it, and that's pretty much the most valuable thing because you give something to make something good... People see it first hand and we know it's us and they don't know it's us. Their reactions is [sic] probably the best thing (Dale 2002).

This kind of recognition is important because it often leads to further opportunities to be seen and heard and ultimately to the opportunity to acquire additional forms of symbolic capital, increase social status, and accrue more resources and financial gain. For example, in 2001, Greg was a young 15 year old Nunga (i.e. southern South Australian Aboriginal) man who took care of his two younger siblings. He became involved in TLN first as expert dramaturg, then as MC in the *Dance Off* and guide in the *Tour*. Dale was a single teenage mother. She was involved in the project as expert dramaturg and *Tour* guide. Because of their contribution to TLN, they were perceived by some local workers as success stories and treated as local celebrities. As a result, Greg became the unofficial 'Parks MC' for subsequent youth activities, such as Youth Week. Dale became the face and voice of TLN beyond the activities of the local services, and was asked to present at conferences in Adelaide and Sydney and interviewed on radio programs to talk about her involvement in the project.

June was an outstanding example of securing gainful employment as a result of participating in TLN and acquiring cultural capital in the form of an extended vocabulary to describe her situation. June was a young woman who had been referred to the project by a member of staff of the local health service. June was attracted to TLN because she had been looking for something to distract her from her struggles in securing the custody of her son. In a post-project interview, she reflected that she had been attracted to the project because:

> [T]he Longest Night was like a job, kind of thing, like, you know, come in to work every[day], like coming to Parent[ing Network] or coming to The Longest Night and helping The Longest Night out 'cause we had to do that at least a couple of times a week if not more (June 2005).

June had grown up in an orphanage in India and had been adopted by an Anglo-Celtic family in Australia when she was 11 years old. At the beginning of the project, she was withdrawn and sad not to be able to be with her son, who lived with his father. During TLN project, she was in and out of court, but by 2005, she had been successful in her quest to live with her son and was, also, proud to be employed. After TLN, June remained involved with the local health service, first as a volunteer driver, then as a one-day-a-week paid driver and a volunteer at her son's school canteen. She also became involved in a subsequent large-scale inter-services project undertaken in The Parks, was coached in numeracy and literacy, attended a short course in peer education, and enrolled in a short technical and further education (TAFE) course she hoped would lead to qualifications as a community worker.

Despite the new opportunities generated by participating in TLN, in 2006 there was an overwhelming impression of continuity rather than change. By 2005, Greg was no longer performing voluntary duties at The Parks. He had fathered two children, was in and out of employment, and had not been able to follow up on his earlier hopes of studying at TAFE. Dale was battling severe bouts of depression following the birth of her second child and then the death of her third child from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Though June had gained increased levels of confidence, sense of responsibility and connectedness to the local community, she was

still feeling isolated ("My television's my best friend") and was struggling to remain focused and occupied when not with her son. What remained, however, for them was increased interest in participating in social life and raised levels of hope gained from their brief experience of the possibilities life might offer (Hage 2002).

7 Discussion

The Parks workers and residents were not new to social intervention and to arts-based practices, but TLN offered something different as this comment made by a local worker closely involved in the project reveals: "the festival experience was unique and nothing can duplicate that … It made things ecstatic for that time" (Katherine[1] 2004). It achieved higher levels of participation and engagement than any other similar past projects and produced a performance that had high artistic merit and visibility. It also, for a time, helped participants acquire various skills, provided a sense of community, order and meaning, increased levels of recognition, sustenance and hope for participants, and provide them with a glimpse at some possible pathways and new identities. These changes were, however, short-lived. On the whole, participants did not embody or embrace change in a way that might have led to longer-term changes in their everyday lives and conditions. Indeed, by late 2005, what remained of the experience was mostly good memories and raised levels of hope. In what follows, I discuss examples of change and explore some of the reasons why they were limited in their scope.

8 Change Contained by Lack of Autonomy

One reason why despite discourses and practices that engaged participants, motivated them to seek change or to pursue new opportunities, and fostered some level of individual reflection, when change occurred it was mostly only for a short while is because no processes were used to help aggregate individual changes into collective change. No processes were used to help participants gain deeper or new insights and knowledge about local or global historical themes and events. Neither were there processes used to enable participants to name the changes required, challenges to and issues in the development of a better community beyond a focus on individual and personal changes. For example, this could have included activities where TLN participants assisted The Parks workers or mentored other local young people. It could also have included activities where members of the wider community came together to discuss past local events and developments, such as the origins of The Parks and other historical activities that sought local change, and their relationship with TLN activities and other changes taking place in the are, such as the effects of

[1] All names have been changed to protect the identity of the participants.

the relocation program imposed on the local Housing Trust tenants as part of the Westwood (Parks) Urban Renewal Project.

These processes are essential steps to help transform existing conditions or make a difference on a social and political level (Freire 1972), but due to time and financial constraints they did not happen. Indeed, while these practitioners and practices are funded, the level of funding has increasingly been reduced and whatever is provided is mostly afforded because senior government bureaucrats and politicians have been able to use applied theatre and, more broadly, CCD practitioners and their practices as a tool for containing instances of social risks at the 'margins' of society rather than for enabling change that would challenge the status quo (McEwen 2008).

Further, these constrains (time, financial, etc.) serve to restrict practitioners' autonomy to really enact change and help sustain change for their participants. Though staff and board members of the Australia Council for the Arts, the main funding body of applied theatre in Australia, might not have consciously set out to contain applied theatre practitioners and their practices, the financial constraints, felt through the limited access to funds and the restrictive funding rules, contributes to the field's limited autonomy.

Their restricted autonomy is also related to the fact that practitioners do not work in isolated social spaces, but rather consume and produce discourses and practices that are hierarchically related to other fields. The legitimacy of their practices is limited inside the broader field of arts, and at a great distance from the field of power. This is evidenced by practitioners moving in the field of applied theatre and the broader field of the arts in pursuit of work or to seek recognition as artists according to social and cultural norms valued in the broader field of arts. And to close the loop, the knowledge circulating within the field of applied theatre and their priorities in terms of production and consumption of culture are controlled through funding mechanisms and policies implemented by well-established members of the field of cultural production and the meta-field of power.

9 Change Contained by Habitus

Bourdieu (1993) argues that people are, potentially, in a constant state of change as they assess what they have and what they want and how to obtain more it. He also argues, however, that people's capacity to effect change is limited by their habitus. This is the case because people rely on the dispositions of thought and actions learnt from past experiences to determine what present and future actions are possible, probable or impossible (Swartz 1997, p. 104). As a result, people become more or less resistant to change because they have internalised what to value and how to compete for it drawing on and/or recombining limited and historically defined sets of strategies.

As for the possibility of large-scale change dominant values and norms, Bourdieu (Swartz 1997) argues that it requires structural changes triggered by the mobilisation of a large group of people and/or a social crisis that helps make domination

visible. While these major structural changes are possible—for example in France in May 1968—, they are rare occurrences because they are an elaborate process that require dominant positions on offer within a field, including those with(in) established hierarchies, to alter and, in turn, affect all other positions. This only rarely happens because most positions tend to be reinforced through conservative education and other symbolic hierarchies.

Change for those who took part in TLN was limited to the acquisition of small amounts and forms of capital, limiting participants' capacity to compete for resources and other positions in society. There was no evidence to suggest that participation in TLN helped foster change at a broader level, such as the accumulation of significant levels of capital or an increase in individual and/or collective exercise of power. Though participation in TLN might have changed The Parks' environment, this was, perhaps, not for long enough to allow people to adapt their habitus to the change, not long enough for the small-scale types of changes to become 'natural'.

This lack of significant change can, perhaps, also be linked to the fact that though habitus is transposable, and conditions, attitudes, and on so, do change, changes that occurred for individuals while participating in an applied theatre project, were not of great enough value or legitimacy inside their dominant field of practice. Another possible explanation for this failure to effect significant change might be that, overall, The Parks residents' had a diminished interest in acting on local matters, as a key informant within the Health Service suggested:

> People are really unhappy. And we've certainly found that as a community development team that it's harder to engage people around "let's do some community action together" or "what issues are important to you?" There's certainly issues [sic], but [there's] not necessarily the energy that people want to commit to actually working with us on a project that might take twelve months, because they don't know if they're going to be here … Even if they've been here a while, the community that they've lived [in] is being, you know, dismantled, so you know, why would they want to put energy into a community that, you know, they might not be a part of and that they don't think is the same community that they used to be a part of (Katherine, Interview, 2005).

This diminishing interest, or lack of belief, in participating or intervening in local matters is a key issue, which can be linked to people's lack of hope for a better future (Hage 2003, pp. 222, 225). Though some major difficulties in working in The Parks were overcome, some of The Parks residents' wariness and the habit of being disappointed by the familiar short-term and one-off community development and social intervention programs and projects that came and went with little long-term benefit for local residents, were more entrenched, and thus more problematic to overcome, as this quote from a local Health Service community development worker, stated:

> A lot of my concerns come from working with young people in the local area and knowing that their experience has [been] that they may've been given things at some stage and then things are taken away from them. Or, things like the sports centre here being free five years ago or however many years ago and now being, you know, a privatised, yeah, privatised business that wants to make money that they can no longer afford to access. And, you know, The Parks high school being here that they used to go to, no longer exists. And things like

> that, things that come and go in young people's lives, that often set them up and are either disappointed or something, you know, really significant, like education, is taken away from them. So, I guess that's sort of some of the disadvantage that I see in the community that I, as a community development worker, I feel I have a responsibility not to further. So, I guess that's, as far as I'm concerned, setting young people up, kind of, not to fail necessarily (Katherine, Interview, 2005).

As this comment implies, the implementation of projects intended to bring about some positive change for local residents have been seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand this kind of investment is seen as developing or strengthening social cohesion. On the other, it is seen as a potential threat to local residents developing a sense of community because of the gap left behind once the project investments are over.

10 Hope and Moments of Realisation

The overall impact for participants in the aftermath of TLN was not as far reaching as applied theatre practitioners' discourses might suggest. Though there was some evidence of outstanding changes in attitudes and, to some extent, in circumstances during and immediately after the project. Five years later there were only a few traces left of positive changes. The increased opportunities and levels of hope had mostly been replaced with an overwhelming sense of continuity. I have argued that this can be attributed to three main factors.

Even though the final stages of this research project occurred in 2006, these findings are still relevant today. This is the case because the conditions in Australia have remained broadly speaking the same. Indeed, though the way the government funds this type of work has changed (reduced, no longer a stand-alone funding stream, more focused on excellence, etc.), there have been no significant changes to the practices and context within which it operates in Australia. Further, discourses and practices have also remained similar.

Though this case study highlights more continuity than change for participants in applied theatre projects, it might be unrealistic to hold practitioners accountable to aspirational or idealistic discourses and seek irrefutable evidence that their practices can achieve intended changes of sustained social and political efficacy. After all, applied theatre practitioners and their practices still have an important social and political role to play as enablers of increased interest in participating in social life, in general, and in the arts, in particular. Though the elements of culture produced and consumed through applied theatre practices ultimately reproduce legitimised social and cultural values and norms, the creation and maintenance of this kind of work can increase levels of hope by providing participants with a 'moment of realisation' that change is possible. This is not negligible.

11 Conclusion

What constitutes success in applied theatre remains contentious as it can be determined either based on the practitioners' intentions, on funding bodies' criteria of return on investment, or on participants' personal and/or collective levels of learning and change. Finally, the reproduction of culture and structures is not systematic and domination is not fixed or irreversible. This means that the positions of domination are complex and fragile positions that need constant attention and maintenance and can, therefore, be overturned.

Researching TLN was an exciting challenge, but it raised more questions than it was able to answer. For example, how to capture and better understand the complex relationship between intent, processes and success as well as between discourses and cultures consumed and produced, between change, everyday life and an arts-based set of practices, and between potentially transgressive forms of expression and more established and conservative expressions of culture? Additional studies are required to further understand this complexity. In particular, more research is needed focusing on the mid- to long-term impact on participants in applied theatre projects, the nature and significance of the aesthetic product generated by these projects and its impact outside of the local theatrical space, into the global sphere, as well as ways of reducing the gap between discourses, intentions and actual changes.

References

Accardo, A. (2002). *De Notre Servitude Involontaire: Lettre À Mes Camarades De Gauche*. Retrieved October 15, 2007, from http://jurisacos.free.fr/doc/homage.htm.

Australia Council. (2016). *Community arts and cultural development.*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artforms/community-arts-and-cultural-development/

Bauman, Z. (2012). *Liquid modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Books.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2000). *Esquisse D'une Théorie De La Pratique*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). The field of cultural production, or: The economic world reversed. In P. Bourdieu & R. Johnson (Eds.), *The field of cultural production: Essays on art and literature* (pp. 29–73). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital (R. Nice, trans.). In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook for theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Questions De Sociologie*. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.

Bourdieu, P. (1979). *La Distinction: Critique Sociale Du Jugement*. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.

Clark, M. M. (2002). Oral history: Art and praxis. In D. Adams & A. Goldbard (Eds.), *Community, culture and globalization* (pp. 88–195). New York: Rockefeller Foundation.

Cohen-Cruz, J. (2002). *An introduction to community art and activism*. Retrieved May 2, 2005, from http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archive/intro-activism.php.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin.

Grenfell, M. (2004). *Pierre Bourdieu: Agent provocateur*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Hage, G. (2002). 'On the side of life' – Joy and the capacity of being: A conversation with Ghassan Hage. In M. Zournazi (Ed.), *Hope: New philosophies for change* (pp. 150–171). Sydney: Pluto Press.

Handelman, D. (1990). *Models and mirrors: Towards an anthropology of public events*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kelin, D. A. I. (2001). Jodrikdrik nan Jodrikdrik Ilo Ejmour: A performing arts tradition is born. In S. C. Haedicke & T. Nelhaus (Eds.), *Performing democracy: International perspectives on urban community-based performance* (pp. 150–158). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

McAuley, G. (1998). Performance analysis: Theory and practice. *About Performance, 4*(1998), 1–12.

McEwen, C. (2002). Protocols of engagement*: Planning, evaluation and negotiating the fault lines in CCD practice*. Paper presented at the Dance in the Landscape Forum, Brisbane, Australia.

McEwen, C. (2008). *Investing in play: Expectations, dependencies and power in Australian practices of community cultural development* (unpublished doctoral thesis). Retrieved from Sydney eScholarship Repository, http://hdl.handle.net/2123/3680.

Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the 21st century*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Shepherd, S., & Wallis, M. (2004). *Drama/theatre/performance*. London: Routledge.

Stanley, T. (2002). Let's get digital: Using multimedia and the internet in community cultural development. In D. Adams & A. Goldbard (Eds.), *Community, culture and globalization* (pp. 140–155). New York: Rockefeller Foundation.

Swartz, D. (1997). *Culture and power: The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press.

Wacquant, L. (1989). Towards a reflexive sociology: A workshop with Pierre Bourdieu. *Sociological Theory, 7*(1), 26–63.

Watt, D., & Pitts, G. (1991). Community theatre as political activism: Some thoughts on practice in the Australian context. In V. Binns (Ed.), *Community and the arts: Australian perspectives* (pp. 119–133). Sydney: Pluto Press.

In the Interstice of Intension and Intention of Transformation: Where Applied Theatre Fosters Neoliberal Entrepreneurship

Syed Jamil Ahmed

As robust economic growth lifted Bangladesh from a 'low-income' status to a 'lower middle-income' status in 2015, there ensued increasing concern among the NGOs operating here that donor funding will dry up by 2021 when the country is expected to achieve 'middle-income' status (Saha 2016). In this changing scenario, an insider in the field observes, most of the NGOs "working on various development issues are facing funding drawbacks as international donors are shifting their focus from Bangladesh" (Alam 2016). Outlining the perspective, another well-placed insider points out that, "global foreign aid architecture is changing, resulting in a significant reduction of aid flowing into countries such as Bangladesh. Bi-lateral donor countries are increasingly focusing on conflict-affected areas and many are moving towards trade as opposed to aid" (Building Resources Across Communities [BRAC] 2016b, p. 4). The donors in Bangladesh have already redirected their interest "towards projects focusing small and micro enterprise development, human skill development and technical education", and the NGOs have followed suit by transferring their attention from poverty reduction to "development of entrepreneurship and improving living standard by establishing 'dignity in life'" (Alam 2016). BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities), the largest NGO in the world measured by the number of employees and of people it has helped (BRAC 2016a), is geared up in meeting this challenge as it has already cut down its dependence on donor funding from 100% in 1990 to 30% in 2011. By 2021, this multi-national organization operating in twelve countries in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean (BRAC 2016b, pp. 84–85), expects to be completely self-financed (Financial Express 2012). If applied theatre in Bangladesh has long been driven by donor agenda and prerogatives, and consequently have served neither the theatre practice nor the community (Ahmed 2002, pp. 207–219), how does BRAC meet up to this challenge by virtue of its relative independence from donor funding? What is the consequent impact on applied

S. J. Ahmed (✉)
Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_8

theatre mobilized by the NGOs in Bangladesh such as BRAC as the country heads towards 'middle-income' status and eyes the prospect of donor funding drying up?

This paper seeks to answer these questions by drawing on the notion of 'neoliberalism' as a political project that drives towards "rolling back of the state, marketization of the public sector, [and] transfer of responsibilities from political subjects to communities and individual subjects", to the effect that "collective objectives of economic growth, social security, and employment are outsourced from political institutions to enterprises and individual subjects, trusted to possess endemic entrepreneurial capacities" (Marttila 2013, p. 1). It acknowledges that the 'entrepreneur' has transformed from an economic agent "who sets up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit" (OUP) to a "more or less society-wide role model of social subjectivity" (Marttila 2013, p. 5), endowed with the capacity "to deal with problems actively and find solutions, to turn ideas into actions", more generally, "*one who just does*!" (NUTEK 2003, p. 5; cited in Marttila 2013, p. 5). In seeking to obtain a nuanced reading of neoliberal entrepreneurship, this theoretical enterprise mobilizes two key notions of 'intension' and 'intension'. For the purpose of this examination, 'intention' denotes 'an aim or plan' (OED), and by extension, objective, purpose or goal; on the other hand, the term 'intension' stands for 'the internal content of a concept' (OED), and by extension, the sum of the attributes contained in a concept.

Working within the theoretical parameter outlined above, this paper seeks to trace how BRAC attempts to inculcate neoliberal entrepreneurship in the adolescents of Bangladesh, by mobilizing applied theatre as a tool in its programme titled Stimulating Theatre for Adolescent Girl Empowerment (STAGE). It draws on primary data gathered from field-level investigations conducted as a participant-observer at five BRAC performance sites located in five administrative districts of Bangladesh, semi-structured and structured interviews of STAGE practitioners and BRAC staff,[1] and secondary data collected from BRAC's published documents and

[1] I conducted two field level investigations to Jamalpur, Sherpur, and Netrokona administrative districts from 4 to 6 October 2016, and to Khagrachari and Rangamaati districts from 25 to 28 October 2016. During the first visit, I attended performances held at Ghunti bazar (six kilometers south of Jamalpur town), Shalchura village (three km north of Jhinaigati town in Sherpur district), and Dhonpur village (three km north of Mohanganj town). During the second visit, I attended a performance at Kalabunia village (5 km north-west of Rangamati town, and visited two adolescent clubs at Kalabunia village and Paindong village (2 km south of Ramgarh town). I also engaged in informal interviews and interactions with Ms. Rashida Parveen, Senior Programme Manager (Education), Head Office, Dhaka, Mr. Pankaj Kanti Aich, Sr. Sector Specialist, ADP, Head Office, Dhaka, Mr. A.K.M. Fakhrul Alam, Regional Manager, Chittagong Region, Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Senior Area Manager, Khagrachari, Mr. Mohammad Hedayetulla, Senior Area Manager, Sherpur, Mr. Syed Ariful Islam, Area Manager, Rangamati, Ms. Hafiza Khatun, Area Manager, Jamalpur, Ms. Hekmatunnesa, Program Organizer, Jamalpur Sadar, Ms. Nurjahan Begum, Area Manager, Netrokona, Mr. Abdur Razzak, Branch Manager, Mohanganj, Mr. M. Jillur Rahaman Khan (Shanto), Adolescent Trainer, Jamalpur, Mr. Mehadi Hasan, Adolescent Trainer, Jamalpur, and Mr. Habibur Rahaman Hanif, Adolescent Trainer, Netrokona. This paper would never have been possible without their generosity in answering all my questions with frank openness. I express my heartfelt gratitude to these people who make it possible for BRAC to realise its goal.

unpublished research. The paper proceeds in three parts. The first locates the transformative principle of BRAC by outlining its array of programmes built on the model of 'social enterprise'; the second examines how STAGE performances are devised and performed, to serve as interventionist tools to promote transformation in vulnerable adolescents by engaging with issues such drug addiction and financial literacy; and the third uncovers a fault line in the STAGE programme by scrutinizing how the aim, plan or objective (i.e., intention) of BRAC's transformation, run contrary to the internal content of the concept (i.e., intension) of transformation mobilized by the NGO. The paper concludes by arguing that as BRAC's relative independence in asserting its own vision of transformation today, and of complete independence by 2021, is driving its applied theatre programme for vulnerable adolescents towards fostering neoliberal entrepreneurship.

1 BRAC's Transformative Principle Driven by the Notion of 'Social Enterprise'

A Bangladeshi educated in Britain and a former head of accounting staff at Shell Oil, Fazle Hasan Abed is a Good Samaritan who sold his share of a four-storey Edwardian house in London in 1971 for £7000 (95,000 USD at current value), and in February 1972, invested it in setting up Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee (BRAC) as a small-scale relief and rehabilitation project (Smillie 2009 pp. 17, 18, 24; The Economist 2010). By then, the War of Liberation against Pakistan had overwhelmed Bangladesh, reducing millions to destitution or death. At a time when the country was branded as an "international basket case" by US government's interdepartmental Washington Special Actions Group (Bari 2008), Abed's willingness to invest his own money had won the confidence of the donors in his entrepreneurial capacities, and within nine months after its inception, BRAC had rebuilt 14 thousand homes and built several hundred boats for the refugees, with the funding it had received (BRAC 1990, p. 6). Today, nearly 80 years of age and serving as the president of BRAC, Abed is recognized worldwide as an entrepreneur par excellence, as demonstrated by numerous awards conferred on him, such as Schwab Foundation's Social Entrepreneurship Award (2003), Inaugural Clinton Global Citizen Award (2007) and Entrepreneur for the World Award (2009), by his appointment as the Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George by the British crown in 2010, and by his placement among the top 50 leaders of the world by *Fortune* in 2014 (GHRF Foundation 2016, p. 122; Fortune 2014).

An entrepreneur par excellence, as the oft-quoted founding myth of BRAC demonstrates, the Good Samaritan Fazle Hasan Abed has today "built one of the world's most commercially-minded and successful NGOs", observes *The Economist* (2010). Having retained its founding acronym but renaming itself as Building Resources

Across Communities, BRAC today envisions "a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential" (BRAC 2016b p. 1). It has set its mission as "empower[ing] people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice", by means of "interventions aim[ing] to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programmes that enable men and women to realise their potential" (BRAC 2016b p. 1). Importantly, the key phrase inserted in BRAC's vision as well as mission is 'to realise […] potential'. Hence, it can well be argued that the principle driving BRAC to transform the world into one free from exploitation and discrimination, is intervention through economic and social programmes that will 'empower' disadvantaged communities to realise their potential.

In order to translate its transformative principle to actuality, BRAC intervenes in the social as well as economic domains of Bangladesh, through a vast network of 2119 branch offices located all over the country. This network, monitored from its headquarter located in Dhaka city, allows the organization to mobilize throughout Bangladesh a huge array of development programmes called Targeting the ultra-poor, microfinance, skills development, disaster, environment and climate change, gender justice and diversity, community empowerment, advocacy and social change, urban development, human rights and legal aid services, health, nutrition and population, education, integrated development, agriculture and food security, water, sanitation and hygiene, and migration (BRAC 2016b, p. 2). Run by a mammoth task-force comprising of 111,252 employees and 117,083 community health workers, the development programmes are global in outreach, as these seek to 'empower' 138 million people of the world living in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Haiti ((BRAC 2015; BRAC 2016b, pp. 84–85). If this NGO is a development success story "touching the lives of one in every 50 people across the world" as it claims (BRAC 2016b, p. 4), it is largely because of its well-known community-based approach titled 'social enterprise'.

The BRAC model of social enterprise is completely home-grown, and "comprises of a collaborative network of enterprises, development programmes and investments" (BRAC 2016c). One node of the model is BRAC Enterprises, which include a dairy and food project, and a chain of retail handicraft stores called Aarong. The enterprises of the node are run as development programmes generating financial surplus. Half of the surplus is invested in the second node, i.e., BRAC's development programmes run at no or little profit, while the remaining half is re-invested in the enterprises. Importantly, microfinance is a development programme and is a vital constituent of the second node in the BRAC model of social enterprise.[2] The third node is comprised of financially profitable units, such as BRAC Bank and Industrial Promotion and Development Company; these generate financial return while adhering to social values. Dividends from such investments support

[2] The programme has disbursed a total of 2.5 billion USD to 4.9 million borrowers (BRAC 2016b, p. 21).

both BRAC enterprises and development programmes by acting as a safety net against any liquidity crisis. "The synergetic effect of this integrated model has contributed significantly in reducing BRAC's dependency on donors and external funding" (BRAC 2016c).

Standing out prominently among BRAC's huge array of development apparatus is its Education Programme (BEP), which was launched in 1984, and today is operating in seven countries. The programme, claimed to be the largest secular and private education system of the world (BRAC 2016d), received 12.76% (71,400,180 USD) of BRAC's total expenditure in 2015 (BRAC 2016b, p. 83). It runs highly-successful pre-primary and primary schools, where over 60% students are girls.[3] As a sub-set of BRAC's school for older children, BEP has been running Adolescents Development Programme (ADP) since 1993. Defining adolescents as young people between ten to nineteen years of age,[4] and recognizing their vulnerability to pervasive gender discrimination and impendent oppression, ADP attempts to invigorate BRAC's transformative principle by intervening through social and economic programmes that will 'empower' the adolescents, especially the girls, and "to create and sustain a supportive environment for adolescent girls' development at the household and community level" (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 4).

ADP seeks to promote the economic condition of the members by providing livelihood training. Already, a total of 37,173 adolescents have been trained in beauty care, photography, computer operation, journalism, poultry farming, driving, tailoring, block printing etc. (BRAC 2016e). The social intent of ADP is materialized by means of adolescent clubs (*kishori* clubs) that operate as safe centres in an environment of inclusiveness and playful learning, especially for the girls. Each club, catering to 25–35 adolescents, make it possible for the members to socialize, and have open discussions on personal and social issues with their peers. They can also read books, play indoor and outdoor games, and participate in cultural events that include dancing, singing, poetry recitation, sketching and performing plays. From its inception in 1993, ADP today runs 10,875 clubs with 368,001 members, 80 percent of whom are girls (BRAC 2016f; STAGE n.d.; BRAC 2015).[5] One of the programmes run by ADP is Stimulating Theatre for Adolescent Girl Empowerment (STAGE).

[3] The pass rate at the Primary School Certificate (PSC) examination from 13,800 BRAC pre-primary schools for 400,072 students is 99.99%, while that at the Primary School Certificate (PSC) examination from 22,791 BRAC primary schools for 681,794 students is 99.97% (BRAC 2016e).

[4] BRAC definition of 'adolescents' is in keeping with World Health Organization (WHO) definition "as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19" (WHO 2016).

[5] For a visual introduction to ADP, see 'Documentary: Adolescent Development Programme' available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCZfSxsHjmA

2 STAGE: Disseminating Information and Initiating Dialogue

About 40 kilometers eastward from the administrative district headquarter of Netrokona is Mohanganj, a town sitting on the edge of the famous *haor* (wetland) region that begins northeastward from here. Passing by the busy fish market of Mohanganj and across the Kangsa on which river's bank the town is situated, a narrow country road branches off from Mohanganj-Alokdia-Satur road to a village named Dhonpur. Here, on the afternoon of 6 October 2016, I attended the performance of a STAGE play named *Shesh Parnnam* (lit., The End Result). Beside a clump of bamboo grove standing at one end of a large clearing through which the country road passes, the performance space was already set up by the time I arrived. Cordoned by ropes outlining a rectangular space (about twenty feet by ten), and backed by a black curtain at one end, it provided for spectators to stand and sit on its three sides. There was provision for the actors to enter the performance space from the two ends of the black curtain. Expectant and excited children were already sitting on a floor mat spread out on the side opposite to the tree and the black curtain, and the elders were gradually making their way.

The artistic performance began with a narrator, deftly singing a song that provided the necessary exposition to weave the world of fiction situated in rural Bangladesh, where two very good friends live in two adjoining villages. The friends have two children, a boy and a girl, who grow up as childhood sweethearts. Quite unexpectedly, the artistic performance was jolted by the daily-life performance of two adolescents riding a screaming motorbike through the road to announce their presence, and halted a little far from the spectators. Brushing the jolt aside, the artistic performance continued, and in the world of *Shesh Parnnam,* the boy, Sagar, reaches his late teens. He travels abroad seeking a better future, and the girl waits at home for her beloved. By this time, the adolescents who had arrived screeching in dally-life performance, decided that they had enough, and with all the plumes of their manliness in full display, galloped away in utter disdain. In the artistic performance, the narrator continued to link the episodes of the performance with songs that jumped time and place as necessary, to facilitate the development of the fiction. In this world of fiction, Sagar returns from abroad, now a young man, and he is happily married to his sweetheart. But their happiness is short-lived, for Sagar returns home late, and is more keen to spend his time with his friends. In such meetings, they inject intravenous drugs to escape the torment of their dreams that appear impossible to materialize. Although the in-laws of the girl stand firmly by her, it is soon reveled, by means of information received by a villager through his relative also working abroad, that Sagar has contacted AIDS. The artistic performance climaxed with a tearful plea by Sagar, asking the spectators as to what could do. At the end of another song led by the narrator, in which all the performers joined in to reinforce the core message of *Shesh Parinam*, the actor playing Sagar abandoned his character and in the role of a 'facilitator', invited the spectators to ask question. Thus began the interactive session.

There was an uneasy silence. As I looked around, I could see that some of the spectators were smiling, and others were getting ready to leave. I decided to attempt initiating an interaction with them by asking the 'facilitator' as to why the young man had taken to the drugs in the first place. The 'facilitator' answered that inhuman working conditions led to depression, which in turn had led him to drugs. I looked around the spectators to ask if such addicts are to be found in their village. Immediately I sensed that this was an unexpected question, and the men around me either denied or turned away. At this point, Pankaj Aich, the head of the STAGE programme who was travelling with me, provoked the spectators further by reminding them that only a few weeks back the newspapers reported a teenager in Dhaka city burning his father to death after he was refused the latest model of motorbike, and another teenager in Chittagong murdering his mother after she reprimanded him for failing to pass his exam even after a re-evaluation.[6] Someone standing among the women spectators murmured. Aich seized the opportunity, drew her forward, and coaxed her to speak up by asking her why children take drugs. She responded saying that the parents fail to look after their children, provide them allowances but do not keep track of how the money is spent. Sometimes, the children are so adamant in getting their allowance that they even throw tantrums and resort to breaking household articles. She concluded saying that regardless of circumstances, the parents must look after their children. Not many joined in after the woman's observation, but evidently, the spectators had become more attentive. I reminded all of the consequence of over-protecting their children and not being observant about their slow digression from the family life and values they inculcate. There was a murmur of approval and soon the facilitator announced the end of the performance. As the local branch manager commented over a cup of tea late in the afternoon, the spectators realized the serious intent of the play only in the post-performance interaction. When I enquired as to how he came to the conclusion, the manager replied that he was sitting with the spectators, and their comments among themselves clearly demonstrated as much.

The performance of *Shesh Parnnam* at Dhonpur is a successful example of the STAGE programme fulfilling its objective: disseminating information and initiating dialogue among community audiences on various issues that are social (such as sexual harassment, early marriage, dowry and child protection), economic (such as financial literacy, savings practice and livelihood skills), and health related (such as health care, family planning and sexual diseases) ((BRAC 2016f; Gani and Nath 2016, p. 6). As of 2016, 182 theatre groups comprised of 2730 members executed STAGE programme. Last year alone, these groups presented 1476 performances in 60 out of 64 administrative districts of Bangladesh. Many of these groups also participated in several district and national level theatre festivals and have received awards (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 5). The groups usually perform any one of the fifteen dramatic texts that the programme has in its repertoire. Most of these texts have been produced since 2012, when the programme introduced a unique process in collaboration with the theatre departments at four public universities. In this process,

[6] See bdnews24 (2016) and Daily Star (2016) for further details.

a group of 20 theatre students from a university and ten BRAC adolescent group members engage in a five-day-long workshop under the supervision of a faculty member from the university, at a BRAC Learning Centre (BLC).[7]

The workshops begin with ice-breaking games and an introduction to the relation between development and theatre. Selecting one of the issues focused by STAGE, the workshop participants are divided into two groups, and they spend half a day gathering data and incidents pertaining to the issue by means of informal interaction with the residents of a village adjoining the BLC. All actual incidents related to the issue that the participants gather are written on poster paper, and displayed on the walls of the workshop space. There follows a session of analysis leading to ascertaining the cause and effect of the incidents. Thereafter, the most relevant incidents are selected to form the outline of a narrative, to which bits and pieces are added to form a coherent plot. In the next stage, the two groups of participants devise two performances by means of improvisation, and for this effort, they devote a full day to a day and a half. Thereafter, the plays are field-tested in the village from where the incidents were collected. At the end of the performance, the participants interact with the spectators, eliciting their reaction, observation and opinion. The two groups then return to BLC and incorporate necessary changes based on the feedback received. Thereafter, they produce both the plays as a dramatic texts, and display the texts on the walls of the workshop space for further deliberation among all the participants. Once finalized, the two texts are given a final performance, to which other visiting trainees and facilitators at the BLC attend as spectators. Their observations go into the final bits of polishing the texts and these are then added to STAGE repertoire. These dramatic texts are circulated to the STAGE groups for performance.

The STAGE groups, in their turn, are created by selecting adolescent club members adept in basic skills required for performance. The selection is based on auditioning interested members, prioritizing those who can sing, dance and recite poems. Each group, supervised by a BRAC a Programme Organizer or a Field Organizer, consists of 15 members drawn from a number of clubs, all located within 3 km radius so that transportation is never a huge issue. It is mandatory that seventy to sixty percent of the members are girls. The selected members are then given an orientation training at a BRAC Learning Centre for five to six days. The training is residential, and is conducted by BRAC staffs including its staff trainers and adolescent trainers.[8]

The training at BLC culminates in the production of two of the fifteen dramatic texts that STAGE has in its repertoire. The trainees are not paid any remuneration, but BRAC bears the cost of their transportation, food and accommodation. At the end of the training, the group is expected to present one performance each month,

[7] The theatre departments from the following public universities have participated in this process and created a total of nine dramatic texts: (1) University of Dhaka (2), Jahangirnagar University (2), Jatio Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (4) and Rajshahi University (1).

[8] The adolescent trainers are usually adept graduates of a STAGE group who have crossed the age limit of nineteen years, and have received advanced six-day-long residential training in direction and acting conducted by Pankaj Kanti Aich, Senior Sector Specialist, ADP, Head Office, Dhaka.

and nine performances a year (as three months are exempted for school/college examinations). Under the supervision of the Programme Officer, a group assembles in the morning for rehearsal at local BRAC area office, and usually performs in the afternoon at an open-air venue previously designated. For each performance, a group member receives Taka 50 as honorarium, and Taka 30 for transportation from their homes to the area office. They are also provided lunch and the cost of transportation form the area office to the performance venue.

It was after one such rehearsal followed by lunch at the BRAC area office at Rangamati town in the south-eastern hill region of Bangladesh, that a group of fifteen STAGE theatre group members had set off on a mechanized boat speeding across the Kaptai Lake. I was accompanying them, as were other BRAC officials, and our destination was a tiny Chakma island-village known as Kalabunia, situated on the lake, 5 km away from Rangamati. As I sat captivated by the exquisite and tranquil scenic expanse all around, I could not erase from my memory that the lake is often referred to as the sea of sorrow by the seven hundred thousand Chakma and other indigenous peoples of the Chittagong hills. In 1962, when Bangladesh was known as the eastern wing of Pakistan, the government had built the Kaptai dam across Karnafuli River in the heartland of the Chittagong hills, to run a hydroelectric power plant that initially generated 80 mw electricity.[9] The dam gave rise to the Kaptai Lake, spanning an area of about 655 square kilometers, and in the process, flooded 1036 square kilometers of lands, 54% of which was the best arable land of the indigenous peoples. The lake also displaced about 100,000 of the indigenous peoples from their ancestral homes (Chakma 2014). In the 1980s, after the emergence of Bangladesh, the plight of the indigenous peoples was exacerbated when the state began to sponsor the migration of the Bengali Muslim settlers in the hills, which, in turn, lead to a protracted bush war with the indigenous peoples. Although an uneasy peace has been established since the signing of an accord in 1997, the conflict between the indigenous peoples and the Bengali Muslim settlers is far from over.

Frankly, I did not dare to hope that the STAGE performance I was going to attend would even broach any of these problems. What I did not expect, though, is to attend a performance that would be, in effect, the imposition of Bengali culture on the Chakma people. For, *Sanchayi Artha Shiksha* (lit., Education on Financial Literacy), the play presented at Kalabunia on 27 October 2016, was in Bengali language, ironically performed mostly by Chakmas (thirteen out of the total fifteen), to spectators who were all Chakmas (except for me and the visiting BRAC officials). It was built on the story of a farmer's adolescent daughter, Bijli, who, despite her father's objection to her joining the bi-weekly gathering at the local BRAC adolescent club, continues with her mother's support. Bijli's independence is further demonstrated when she successfully thwarts a group of adolescent boys' sexual harassment directed to her and her friends walking in the street. She is well-rewarded for her struggle against patriarchal norms when she receives a cash prize from a BRAC official, for her stellar dance performance at the club. Bijli sets up a tiny poultry farm with the

[9] By 1988, the generation capacity was increased to 230 MW when it runs full capacity.

prize money, and saves her earnings from it. Ironically for the father, his daughter's disobedience turns out to be his lifeline, for, when struck by severe gastro-intestinal illness, it is Bijli's savings that goes into paying the cost of medical treatment. Upon recovery, the father realizes his folly, and gladly extends his permission to her participation in the club activities. The performance ends by inviting all the spectators to follow the daughter's example of saving money.

The spectators sat through politely, and even clapped at the end of the performance. There were gracious but lukewarm responses from them when the performance opened up for the interactive sessions. All agreed that the practice of saving money, as demonstrated in the play, should be emulated, and some even said that it was quite common among them. As the interaction petered out to a dull proceeding, I decided to test the validity of the audience reaction by participating in the interaction, and invited two members from the spectators to the performance space. I requested them to play as the father and the mother in Chakma language instead of Bengali, in the scene where the father refuses to let his daughter join the adolescent club meeting. I had to coax both the participants quite extensively to have them engage in the scene but, once again, without much success. I was perplexed, and deciding not to probe further, thought it would be best to end the proceeding by paying respect to the language of the host community. For this, I invited some more spectators to the performance space to sing a Chakma song. After four spectators volunteered, the song began tentatively, but built towards a boisterous ending as the spectators joined in, and all the performers sang and danced around the singers.

My perplexity as to why the problem posed in the play generated mild and polite response from the spectators was resolved when I visited an adolescent club in the same Chakma village of Kalabunia. The girls were very confident, presented traditional Chakma songs and dances, and were unanimous in their endorsement of the club activities. As I talked to them about *Sanchayi Artha Shiksha* performed in their village, which they had all attended, I realized that the play was underpinned heavily by the social codes of the Bengali Muslims. The girls were unanimous in pointing out that traditional practices of the Chakmas imbibed in them the skills of weaving, an income generating activity that led all the girls to earn for their families, and even to save. Further, they asserted, harassing the girls in their own community was quite unheard-of. They faced this situation not in their villages from Chakma adolescent boys but in the towns heavily populated by the Bengali Muslims.

As I rode the mechanized boat back to Rangamati across the apparently tranquil waters of the Kaptai Lake, one of the BRAC officials accompanying me observed that the Kaptai Lake may have been a sea of sorrow in the beginning, but now is a boon for all the indigenous peoples, because it provided easy access for them and their products to the marketplaces in the towns. It would be pointless to remind him, I realized from the tone of his voice, that the access to the towns is not free from economic exploitation of the Bengali Muslims, and the gains in the present access to the marketplaces is by far less profitable to the loss of land initially accrued by the indigenous peoples. As I rode back in silence, I could not help but be aghast as to how a numeral majority can become trapped in cultural aggression as it engages in well-intentioned developmental interventions across ethnic boundaries.

Later that evening, when I discussed organizational matters pertaining to the performance of the day's play with local BRAC officials, I realized that I was, at least partly responsible for the act of cultural aggression that afternoon, for the play was specially organized for me to attend. When I asked why did not they choose another play that would, at least, bear some semblance to the social and economic problems of the Chakma people, they said that none of their plays were devised with particular focus on the community.

3 Uncovering the Faultline: Intention and Intension of Transformation

Any evaluation of the STAGE programme must first take into account its stated objective. Since 2005 when the programme was initiated, STAGE has been seeking "to empower adolescents, especially girls, to participate meaningfully in decision-making that affect their lives so that they can become active agents of social change and community development, specifically avoiding early marriage and dowry, empowering through savings, raising awareness on health and family planning" (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 5). Importantly, the life skills that the programme seeks to inculcate in the adolescents include "problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking as well as effective communication" (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 5). If such is the objective of the programme, field-level investigation that I conducted clearly demonstrated that the female STAGE group members have everywhere shown remarkable confidence, energy, intelligence and fair amount of boldness in their daily-life as well as artistic performances. Given the fact that the semi-urban and rural landscape of Bangladesh is extremely patriarchal, and hence, female public performance is often heavily stigmatized, it was a fresh and welcome sight to see that the girls, having cast aside timidity and shyness, were assertive and upright. This observation is further augmented by a cross-sectional study recently carried out by BRAC, by applying two-stage cluster sampling technique in conducting a survey, as well as qualitative techniques such as case study and focus group discussion in gathering relevant data (Gani and Nath 2016, pp. vii, 9, 11).

As the study reports, members of adolescent clubs as well as STAGE groups demonstrate outstanding knowledge regarding physical or emotional changes during adolescence, sexual harassment, and financial literacy, when compared to groups of adolescent population that are either only members of adolescent clubs or neither the clubs nor the STAGE groups (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 58). ADP supports some of these encouraging signs, such proclivity towards savings, by a recently-initiated project that encourages adolescents, especially the girls, to operate accounts with BRAC mobile banking service (BRAC 2016f). The study also reveals that STAGE group members have shown better ability to decide by themselves, when such decision-making abilities are measured by indicators such as going to offices or judicial courts, attending concerts or fairs, making household purchases, and seeking healthcare (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 58).

However, so far as the matter of early marriage (before the age of eighteen) is concerned, the study finds partial success. On the one hand, it finds that girls who hold membership of the clubs and perform in STAGE plays demonstrate outstanding knowledge regarding the dangers involved in early marriage, and adolescents who are members of STAGE groups have proven to be the dominating agents in preventing early marriage (Gani and Nath 2016, p. 58). STAGE presents its case with plays such as *Mukti* (lit., "Freedom").[10] It demonstrates how the parents of an adolescent girl living in a village are forced by a community leader to consent to her marriage, although the girl wants to continue with her studies instead of getting married. The girl is saved only after news arrives immediately before the marriage is solemnized that the community leader's niece, who was also married underage, has died during childbirth. Thus affected by the problem at the personal level, the community leader is brought to realize the danger of early marriage, and he halts the ongoing marriage. In addition to such plays produced by STAGE, ADP intervenes at the grassroots level by creating Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC), an informal community structure constituted with adolescent club members and opinion leaders of a community. The committee attempts to prevent early marriage by intervening into reported cases, and working towards an amicable solution with all parties concerned. However, despite such concerted efforts, the study found 3.0% of female STAGE members had married before the age of eighteen, compared to 5.7% of girls who were only members of adolescent clubs, and 5.8% of girls who were neither club members nor STAGE group members. (Gani and Nath 2016, pp. 58 and 59). In other words, even with their concerted efforts, STAGE and ADP have failed to produce significant difference.

It must nevertheless be acknowledged that STAGE has an impressive list of success, which has been possible because, theatre has not been the only tool mobilized to initiate change, but has worked as a part of the multi-pronged approach set in motion by ADP. As Ross Kidd, supported by his immense experience in theatre for development in Africa in the 1970s and the '80s, had observed years ago, "theatre is a powerful catalyst, but on its own cannot achieve significant social change. It must be integrated with the organizational capacity for action. Otherwise, it will never be anything more than an interesting and exciting spectacle" (Kidd 1979, p. 7). Indeed, BRAC's transformative principle, as already discussed in the first section, is supported by a strong organizational capacity for action, as evinced in its huge array of development programmes that include microfinance, skills development, migration, urban development, agriculture and food security, water, sanitation and hygiene, disaster management, environment and climate change, gender, human rights, health and nutrition, and education. In this gigantic machine mobilized by BRAC, the STAGE programme is only a cog within ADP, which in turn is a larger cog of the education programme, which, in turn works together with all other programmes-as-cogs. A key difference in BRAC's approach to development that

[10] It was presented at a primary school located at Ghunti bazar, six kilometers south of Jamalpur administrative district headquarters.

sets it apart from Grameen Bank, which also mobilizes social enterprise[11] but emphasizes microfinance, is that it recognizes education and culture a significant cogs in its holistic development machine. On the other hand, two notable NGOs in Bangladesh, Rupantar (which implements applied theatre projects justified by the principle that culture and sustainable development are closely connected), and Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts or BITA (which asserts culture as a tool for development), are heavily dependent on donor funding, and hence, their visions of development are heavily compromised by donor agendas - both hidden as well as open (see Ahmed 2002 and Ahmed 2016).

Having thus sung all glory to BRAC, there is still a snag. If BRAC's intention, articulated by its transformative principle, is intervention through economic and social programmes that will 'empower' disadvantageous communities to realise their potential, then its intension of transformation, in other words, the internal content of the concept of transformation, is nestled in its homegrown model of 'social enterprise' comprised of a collaborative network of enterprises, development programmes and investments. The synergetic effect of this model may have contributed significantly in reducing the NGO's dependence on donors funding, but it also reveals a fault-line. For the model of 'social enterprise' is neoliberal to its very core. When BRAC materializes, if ever, its avowed vision of a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination by the synergetic effect of 'social enterprise', it will be a world where the disadvantageous have paid upfront for their freedom. This is because the NGO, as a self-sustaining development enterprise, will need to ensure total economic return on its investment on social development programmes. And to succeed, BRAC has drawn out a five-year strategic plan for Bangladesh in 2016–2020.

The strategic plan has set the overreaching goal of "empower[ing] 20 million of the most underserved and disenfranchised women and men" while continuing to maximise opportunities for 120 million people it already reaches (BRAC 2016b, p. 4). In order to achieve this goal, the programmes of the NGO will, inter alia, seek to "eliminate extreme poverty in Bangladesh by 2020", by equipping 500,000 underprivileged young people "with skills training and link them to decent jobs or entrepreneurship" (BRAC 2016b, p. 4). In order to meet the challenge of 2021, BRAC has adopted a number of financial strategies and organizational focus. The priority in its financing strategy is to increasingly deploy the social enterprise model in its development programmes, with initial focus on health, education, skills and employment, migration and human rights and legal services. It will seek to enhance economic return on its social development model "with diversified financing options (free, subsidized, fee based, etc.) available for different economic groups" (BRAC 2016b, p. 4). On the other hand, the priority of its organizational focus will be to "develop management and business thinking capacity" by changing leadership style

[11] "Grameen Enterprises span a wide variety of business sectors from knitwear to software. One of its most innovative programmes is the Village Phone (or Polli Phone in Bangla) started by Grameen Phone in collaboration with the Grameen Bank and Grameen Telecom" (Singapore Management University 2008).

to one that encourages risk taking and promotes innovation, and by "attract[ing] staff with business skills who can implement social enterprise models" (BRAC 2016b p. 4).

All signs indicate that BRAC will succeed – so long it is run by Fazle Hasan Abed, entrepreneur par excellence, and so long as it can employ development staffs equipped with acute management capacities and sharp business skills as envisioned by the new strategic plan. It is because of such deployment of managerial, financial and entrepreneurial strategies that the organization stands out as an excellent example of neoliberal principles translated into a global enterprise that eschews state intervention, thrives on marketization of the public sector, and can take over the responsibility for collective objectives of economic growth, social security, and employment. Not unimportantly, BRAC as a neoliberal enterprise is guided by an individual subject, Abed, who has accepted the responsibility of social transformation and has proved himself to possess endemic entrepreneurial capacities.

If BRAC's vision is a world free from exploitation and discrimination, then ADP is translating BRAC's vision not by producing a future generation in Bangladesh endowed with endemic entrepreneurial capacities like Abed, but a generation of skilled labourers for the neoliberal world market, by training the adolescents, as already observed, in beauty care, photography, computer operation, journalism, poultry farming, driving, tailoring, block printing etc. In this effort, the STAGE programme works on the mental landscape of the adolescents, by seeking to 'empower' them to take care of themselves in such matters as executing daily chores unhindered by sexual harassment, save money, and avoid being trapped by early marriage. If, in this world fast transiting to an information society, 'knowledge' is recognized as a factor of production along with land, labour and physical capital (Dohse 2001, p. 131), and if knowledge-based economy "relies primarily on the use of ideas rather than physical abilities and on the application of technology rather than the transformation of raw materials or the exploitation of cheap labour" (World Bank 2003, p. 1), then the adolescents nurtured by BRAC will indeed be poorly equipped to emerge as entrepreneurs or even as active agents in a global knowledge economy that promises unlimited resources of knowledge will ensure unlimited development.

The two central characters of the two plays discussed earlier, Sagar and Bijli, demonstrate how STAGE nurtures - and even attempts to interpellate - the future generation of Bangladeshi foot soldiers for global knowledge economy. The farmer's adolescent daughter in *Sanchayi Artha Shiksha,* Bijli, is the successfully 'empowered' foot soldier, who is able to thwart sexual harassment, overcome patriarchal objection, and, in a miniaturized reflection of BRAC's foundational narrative of Abed investing his own money in BRAC for saving the lives of war-raved refugees, investing her money in a tiny poultry farm which generates enough savings to save her father. If one needs a Cinderella type of success story justifying the core principles of neoliberal world order, this is it, for Bijli is a Bangladeshi Cinderella. On the other hand, Sagar in *Shesh Parnnam* is the embodiment of failure. He stand as a stern warning to the adolescents that their dream of emerging as a successful foot soldiers will be lost if they are beguiled by the horrific enticement of drug

addiction – however may their life be miserable in the sweatshops at home or abroad.

Bijli and Sagar need to be seen in the frame of reference etched out by *Harano Shaishab* (lit., Lost Childhood),[12] another play that I attended during my field-level investigation. Focused on the issue of child labour, the play demonstrates how two adolescent children of a poverty-stricken farmer are forced to seek employment because their father is too ill to work. Their mother employs them as domestic help for the family of a local elite, but the boy is sent to work at a brick kiln, where he crushes one of his legs, and the girl runs away after she escapes attempted molestation at the house, and ends up at a brothel. The protagonists and their parents of *Harano Shaishab* are, in effect, the ideal 'objects' for whom BRAC exists, its *raison d'etre.* It is these 'objects' that the NGO has set its mission of setting free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination, and has tasked itself with the mission of 'empowering'. Not unimportantly, such 'objects' will soon need to pay up for their freedom, as BRAC seeks to fulfill its own goal of self-sustenance.

Since July of 2016, as informal interviews with BRAC officials revealed, the NGO has adopted a policy that the community must bear 40% of the cost of each STAGE performance, which amounts to tk. 1200 out of the total cost of tk. 3000. When I enquired if the money is realized by 'passing the hat' after each performance, the officials confided in me that more often than not, it is collected from local affluent persons or members of rural elected representatives. In some cases, such as *Harano Shaishab,* the governing body of the high school where the performance was presented, bore the share. Now, if the 'objects' had to pay for a play that examines a problem of their own choice, a problem that they deem important, perhaps the matter of payment would entail the effect or implication pertaining to, what Brecht (1964 p. 73) calls, "pleasurable learning, cheerful and militant learning." Perhaps, it could even veer close to the effect produced at Kamiriithu Community Cultural and Educational Centre in Kenya in 1976, where Ngugi was Mirrii engaged the villagers of Kamiriithu in a Freirean adult literacy programme, and then Ngugi was Thing'o joined them to devise plays such as *Nagaahika Ndeenda* in 1977 and *Maitu Njugira* in 1979, entirely with the community's own resources. (For details, see Björkman 1989.)

However, BRAC rejects Freirean dialogue, and instead, embraces a top-down didactic strategy for preaching and disseminating information on an issue of its choice, and then attempting to convince the spectators of its arguments in the interactive session. Underpinning this strategy is the assumption the socio-economic problem in Bangladesh is uniform, unwavering and similar. As senior BRAC officials assured me repeatedly with confidence, the NGO has years of experience and field-level data to support this assertion. When I insisted on the case of Kalabunia, one of them masked his irritation by assuming a polite smile and reminded me, exception is never the rule, exception goes to prove the rule.

[12] It was performed at the high school located at Shalchura village, three km north of Jhinaigati town in Sherpur district.

4 Conclusion: The Good Samaritan Playing Piano at Maidan when "Change is in the Air"

By way of concluding, it is now necessary to sum up the findings and answer the questions posed at the beginning of this essay. To this effect, I will be brief. Firstly, BRAC's Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ending on 31 December 2015 demonstrates its relative independence from donor funding. Its total income for the year was USD 726,945,088, of which USD 176,743,490 (or slightly over 24%) was received as donor grants. Of its self-sustaining income totaling about 76%, two major sources are microfinance programmes generating about 47% (USD 342,081,589) and social enterprises generating another 23.5% (USD 171,095,228) (BRAC 2016b, p. 83).[13] On the other hand, the total expenditure for the year 2015 was USD 559,387,574, and post-taxation surplus was USD 165,442,129 (BRAC 2016b, p. 83)[14]. As the statement demonstrates, BRAC is dependent only on 24% of its total expenditure on donor grants. Further, as already observed, this multinational organization expects to be completely self-financed by 2021 (Financial Express 2012). However, BRAC does not make use of its present state of relative independence and future state of self-reliance from donor funding to implement an agenda any less insidious that the international donor agencies. For, the agenda ADP has tucked up in its sleeve is clearly to produce skilled labourers for the global market, as BRAC joins hands with the political project of neoliberalism "that tries to render the social domain economic and to link a reduction in (welfare) state services and security systems to the increasing call for 'personal responsibility' and 'self-care'" (Lemke 2001, p. 203).

Secondly, as Bangladesh heads towards 'middle-income' status and eyes the prospect of donor funding drying up, current signs indicate that the consequent impact on applied theatre mobilized by BRAC will be to increasingly implement it by the mechanics of social enterprise, so long as its collaborative network of enterprises, development programmes and investments generate enough liquidity to sustain the STAGE programme. Since the NGO is already seeking 40% return from the community on each performance, it is possible that the programme will either be completely jettisoned or downsized, if the community fails to pay up, and if the two nodes of the collaborative network, i.e., enterprises and investments, are strained to generate enough liquidity for this development programme. As well-placed insiders inform, other NGOs in Bangladesh, such as Rupantar, BITA and ASK (Ain-O-Salish Kenrda) have downsized or are in the process of downsizing their programmes. Whereas BITA is seeking revenue from rental of its real estate, and at the same time is exploring avenues for implementing profitable income generating

[13] The rest is derived from social developments programmes (13,536,938 USD or about 1.86%), investment income (22,303,609 USD or about 3.06%) and housing property (1,184,234 USD, or about 0.16%).

[14] Of this amount, 34.94% (195,440,613 USD) was invested in microfinance programmes, 26.92% (150,605,937 USD) was invested on social enterprises, 12.76% (71,400,180 USD) was spent on education programme, and 10.49% (58,704,566) on health programme (BRAC 2016b, p. 83).

enterprises for producing and marketing homegrown commodities, Rupantar is hopeful that some projects such as those related to climate change, will continue to attract donor funding beyond 2021. ASK has already downsized its programme on human rights awareness through theatre to five administrative districts in place of thirteen, and reduced the number of its full-time theatre activists to two from nine.

Having summed up thus, it is important to add a disclaimer. The expectation maintained by the Government of Bangladesh that the economy of the country will notch up to middle-income status by 2021 is built on the economic trend of a world economic order that is motored by the twin forces of globalization and neoliberalism. However, "change is in the air", as British Prime Minister Theresa May unhesitatingly declared at a recent banquet in London (The Independent 2016). For, a major reorientation of the economic order is in the offing in this world already charged by Britain's decision to exit from European economy that represents 22.8% of global GDP, and Donald Trump's scrapping of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) that was set to harness 40% of global GDP. This new world order rings with eerie and uncanny notes, for it is not the Occupy protest movements but the guardians of the neoliberal economy, such as Theresa May and Donald Trump, that are denouncing globalization. As this coterie of elites riding high on populism, desperately seek a new concoction that will ensure free markets and free trade, but, at the same time, guarantee that the jobs of *their* citizens are not outsourced and *their* wages are not undercut—by building fences if not walls— China gleefully eyes the prospect of building its very own neocolonial empire with the "Belt and Road" Initiative. As this new world order increasingly looms over the horizon, one may only wonder, whither are countries such as Bangladesh bound? And how will applied theatre mobilized by BRAC and other NGOs of Bangladesh fare in this new world order?

One can only hope that Fazle Hasan Abed will hear Margaret Thatcher turning in her grave and muttering once again, "No-one would remember the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions. He had money as well" (Knowles 2007, p. 312). For Abed has always been a Good Samaritan with a bit of money, and he will surely find a way to win the confidence of the guardians of the new world order, and BRAC will surely prosper—with or without STAGE. At this point, I cannot but help remember Antuanetta Mischchenko, a music student, who played an old piano painted in Ukranian national colours blue and yellow, during the protest movement in 2014 at the Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square in Kiev. Every day and night she played the piano in the street, in the midst of demonstrations against the pro-Russian government. This was her gesture of peace and defiance against police aggression with the protesting crowd gathering around her, and the piano grew into a symbol of the revolution (Aljazeera 2016).[15] Mischchenko's intention of transformation did not run contrary to the intension of transformation she sought. She was one who did what she wanted to do, but she was not "*one who just does*!" Nor was she a political leader promising to make her country great again, but of an activist spurred by the

[15] For further details, see *Piano,* Vita Maria Drygas's documentary available at http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/witness/2016/11/piano-ukraine-uprising-161115084841161.html

notion of social justice. It is this notion that appears no longer to be blowing in the wind now that "change is in the air". Perhaps, today, applied theatre of Mischchenko's brand is no longer viable. Perhaps, now that global capital has shed its mask of liberal values, now that the US and the UK have discovered, much to their surprise, that globalization is not a one-way traffic only for their benefit, it is time for a macabre performance by Donald Trump and Theresa May playing the piano at Maidan, and singing "America first" and "Take back control". You may be sure, the Good Samaritan Fazle Hasan Abed will be present somewhere on or offstage, making himself useful...

References

Ahmed, S. J. (2002). Wishing for a world without 'theatre for development':Demystifying the case of Bangladesh. *Research in Drama Education, 7*(2), 207–219.

Ahmed, S. J. (2016). Applied theatre and climate change in Bangladesh: Indigenous theatrics for neoliberal theatricks. In J. Hughes & H. Nicholson (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on applied theatre* (pp. 150–171). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alam, M. (2016, January 12). Lower-middle income status cuts aid projects. Daily Sun. Retrieved from http://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/106368/Lowermiddle-income-status-cuts-aid-projects

Aljazeera. (2016). *Piano: Ukraine's uprising*. http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/witness/2016/11/pianoukraine-uprising-161115084841161.html

Bari, M. R. (2008). The basket case. Forum: A Monthly Publication of the Daily Star, 3(3). Retrieved from http://archive.thedailystar.net/forum/2008/march/basket.htm

bdnews24. (2015, October 19). Legal marriage age for girls proposed at 16 years under 'special circumstances'. *bdnews24.com*. Retrieved from http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2015/10/19/legal-marriage-age-for-girls-proposed-at-16-years-under-special-circumstances

bdnews24. (2016, September 17). Young man attempts suicide after 'killing his mother' in Chittagong. *Bdnews.com*. Retrieved from http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/09/17/young-man-attempts-suicide-after-killing-his-mother-in-chittagong

Bjorkman, I. (1989). *Mother, sing for me: People's theatre in Kenya*. London: Zed Books.

BRAC. (1990). *BRAC report 1990*. Dhaka: BRAC.

BRAC. (2015). *BRAC at a glance*. Retrieved from http://www.brac.net/sites/default/files/ata-glance/BRAC-at-a-glance-december-2015.pdf

BRAC. (2016a). *BRAC at a glance*. Retrieved from http://www.brac.net/partnership?view=page

BRAC. (2016b). Annual Report 2015. Dhaka: BRAC.

BRAC. (2016c). *BRAC nterprises*. Retrieved from http://www.brac.net/enterprises?view=page

BRAC. (2016d). *Education*. Retrieved from http://www.brac.net/education

BRAC. (2016e). *Education programme*. Retrieved from https://www.brac.net/sites/default/files/factsheet/june15/education.pdf

BRAC. (2016f). *Adolescent development programme*. Retrieved from http://brac.net/education-programme/item/782-adolescent-development-programme

Brecht, B. (1964). *Brecht on theatre: The development of an aesthetic* (trans: John Willett). London: Methuen.

Chakma, M. K. (2014). Kaptai Dam and indigenous Jumma peoples in CHT,. Bangladesh. Retrieved from http://www.pcjss-cht.org/?page_id=515

Dohse, D. (2001). Knowledge creation, knowledge diffusion and regional growth. In J. Bröcker & H. Harrmann (Eds.), *Spatial change and interregional flows in the integrating Europe: Essays in honour of Karin Peschel*. Heidelberg: Physica-Verlag.

Dyrgas, V. M. (filmmaker). (2016, November 20). Piano: Ukraine's Uprising [Television series episode]. In *Witness*. Qatar: Aljazeera.

Financial Express. (2012, 6 June). BRAC to be fully self-funded by. 2021. Retrieved from http://print.thefinancialexpressbd.com/old/more.php?news_id=131952&date=2012-06-06

Fortune. (2014, March 20). *The World's 50 greatest leaders (2014).* Retrieved fromhttp://fortune.com/2014/03/20/worlds-50-greatest-leaders/

Gani, M. S., & Nath, S. R. (2016). *BRAC STAGE study 2016: Improving adolescent girls empowerment through motivation by theatrical performance* [1st draft of an unpublished report]. Dhaka: Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC.

GHRF. (2016). Commission (Commission on a global health risk framework for the future). *The neglected dimension of global security: A framework to counter infectious disease crises.* Retrieved from http://nam.edu/GHRFreport. doi: https://doi.org/10.17226/21891.

Kidd, R. (1979). Folk theatre: One-way or two-way communication? *Development Communication Report, 28*(1), 5–7.

Knowles, E. (Ed.). (2007). *Oxford dictionary of modern quotations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lemke, T. (2001). 'The birth of bio-politics': Michel Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality. *Economy and Society, 30*(2), 190–207.

Marttila, T. (2013). *The culture of Enterprise in Neoliberalism: Specters ofEntrepreneurship*. New York: Routledge.

Saha, P. K. (2016, January 10). Survival of NGOs in context of middle income country, the independent.. *Retrieved from* http://www.theindependentbd.com/home/printnews/29853

Singapore Management University. (2008). *A tale of two NGOs: Bangladesh's Grameen Bank and BRAC*. Retrieved from http://www.smu.edu.sg/perspectives/2012/06/26/tale-two-ngos-bangladeshs-grameen-bank-and-brac

Smillie, I. (2009). *Freedom from want: The remarkable success story of BRAC, the global grassroots organization That's winning the fight against poverty*. Sterling: Kumarian Press.

STAGE. (n.d.). *BRAC Education Programme: STAGE Guideline*. [unpublished document]. Dhaka: BRAC.

The Daily Star. (2016, September, 21). *Teenager burns father to death for a motorcycle.* Retrieved from http://www.thedailystar.net/country/teenager-burns-father-death-motorcycle-1287355

The Economist. (2010, 18 February). *BRAC in business*. Retrieved from http://www.economist.com/node/15546464

The Independent. (2016, 15 November). *Theresa May uses major speech to attack new global elite that has changed communities*. Retrieved from http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-some-company-bosses-believe-i-am-anti-business-a7417241.html

WHO (World Health Organization). (2016). *Maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health*. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/topics/adolescence/dev/en/

World Bank. (2003). *Lifelong learning in the global knowledge economy: Challenges for a Developing Countries*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Hearing Children's Voices: Is Anyone Listening?

Peter O'Connor and Briar O'Connor

Two performers enter from the wings and sit on two high backed chairs. The dialogue begins:

Twelve years, 60,000 children and young people. We've been listening to children talk about family violence and child abuse for a long time. We've heard a lot of things

We've seen some things too.

We started back in 2003 when The Department of Child Youth and Family (CYF) approached us to ask us to be part of Everyday Communities, a community based project to help build community response to the issues of family violence and child abuse.

Everyday Communities, that's why we called it Everyday Theatre, wasn't it? That, and Brecht.

CYF said they were successful in getting adults to talk about child abuse, but that children were missing from the conversation. Sounds right doesn't it?

P. O'Connor (✉) · B. O'Connor
Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand
e-mail: p.oconnor@auckland.ac.nz

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_9

What?
The conversation is always *about* children but not often *with* them.
They wanted us to take a show in and do it as an assembly piece. Tell kids what they needed to know about families. We turned *that* on its head.
So it's us who now get to hear what kids know about families. We're not teaching them anything new really, are we? No messengers or missionaries on our train. No great "Lets change the world cavalry charge."

We've been funded by central government for twelve years to provide a safe forum for young people to talk about the issues of family violence and child abuse. It was always designed to change the way in which children could talk about the issues. We never saw it as being able to change the underlying issues. Did we?

There has always been this tension in applied theatre. The desire to show that theatre can be an instrumental force for change and recognition that theatre is an art form that resists this utilitarianism.

Yes and those of us who have worked in this field know that the arts aren't linear. We have been tempted to say to funders "Do this and this will happen and you can measure the impact of the theatre work you've done." If only it was that simple. It's a huge trap for the whole field.

Applied theatre is complex. It's a messy process. However, we know that theatre can be a forum, a place for people to talk about things that matter. In the end it's the only thing that can you guarantee. Safety through fiction to talk about the way the world is and how it might be.

No great claims for changing the world. We used to do that a lot in applied theatre. We've always seen this work as providing a way for young people to safely explore the ambiguous nature of families. Back in 2009 we wrote

> There is no attempt to assist the audience to transform the theatre message(s) into real –life truth and knowledge that may meaningfully inform their lives (O'Connor 2009, p. 587)

Emotional wisdom we named it, after a while (O'Connor and O'Connor 2009). We set it up so that kids could talk about the issues without having to talk about their own families.

Yes, *The Family Game,* the hardest game there is.

It's all in the setting up when you think about it. So we bring two classes of 11 and 12 year olds together and they meet the games masters...

GM1 *(To kids) Kia ora everyone! My name's JJ and we are here from Every day Theatre to work with you today. Who here's ever played video games or computer games before? Xbox, playstation, Ipad, ipod? Fantastic! Today we'll be playing a new virtual reality game. Hey, instead of me talking about it, how about I jump on it and show you how it works? I'll grab this games piece – this belongs to Jack, Jack's 12, and when I put this on I'll become Jack. Then you guys will have to help swipe me in okay? I'm gonna count down from three, and I want you to swipe the play screen in front of you, like this, ok? Ready 1 2 3 Play!*

GM2 *What did you do that for? It's in multiplayer mode – hey JJ, you can't play on your own, it's in multiplayer mode. Hahaha, Now she's going to be stuck in there forever… Hey everyone, my name's Doc and I'm a Games Master, got the shirt Games Master, and jacket, I'm just playing for the badge. I'm the best there is, you see my name at the top of all the online achievement boards. I've clocked nearly every game there is, except this one, that is. It's called The Family Game Reloaded, they say its hardest game in the arcade. You see it switches between all these profiles and players, and it gets really confusing. The only way to win is to help this family and everyone stuck inside it, and as this one found out, if you don't play by the rules you can get stuck inside forever! She's done the right thing in taking on the games piece of Jack. Jack's 12. Jack and T keep skipping school, hanging out at some carpark, I don't know why. If you count me in, you can send me to the carpark and we might be able to find out… 3,2,1 play.*

T & JACK: CARPARK

T *Sup.* ***T passes Jack the drink, Jack has some then passes it back to T.***

T *Hey, your Mum's not gonna be home this weekend eh?*

Jack *Nah, why?*

T *Reckon it'd be ok if I crash at yours?*

Jack *What, again?*

T *Yeah, it's just that Mum's going to that Brian fella's house again for the weekend. And I'm meant to be going to stay at my Dad's.*

Jack *Oh, he's not doing it again is he? Yeah, all good, you can stay at mine.*

T *Great, I don't want to have to stay at home alone again.*
T passes Jack the drink again, Jack has another sip and returns bottle to T.

T *Hey, It's 3 o'clock, we can go now.*

Jack *Sweet. Hey where did you get that from?*

T *I got my stash!*

Jack *Come on, where did you get it?*

T *Jatinda's Superette! You hungry?*

Jack *Yip*

T	*Cool, I'm starving. How much you got?*
Jack	*How much you got?*
T	*Oh…*
Jack	*Never mind. Chips?*
T	*Yup*
	Freeze
GM2	*And release! See that's how you play the game. Grab the games piece, jump on in. Check it's not in multiplayer mode…*
GM1	*Sorry, totally forgot. How embarrassing. Hey look at all the people online today…*
GM2	*Hey, are you thinking what I'm thinking?*
GM1	*What are you thinking?*
GM2	*Let's show them what the family was like in the past, then maybe they want to play it sometime.*
GM1	*Cool*
GM2	*Who do you wanna be?*
GM1	*I want to change profiles – I'll go in as Maraea, T's mum*
GM2	*Then I'll go in as Dave, T's dad – But he's really tough. How about you guys send us back to about six months ago? And we'll try to work the controls from the inside? Ready to swipe us in? 3 2 1 play!*
	DAVE GETS KICKED OUT
Dave	*What's this? You've packed. You don't have to do this, I said we can sort it out. You don't have to leave.*
Maraea	*I'm not leaving, you are!*
Dave	*What? Stuff this, this is my house!*
Maraea	*It's my house too!*
Dave	*What about T?*
Maraea	*What about T? He'll stay with me.*
Dave	*Oh, and him! He's here isn't he?! Where is he? Where is he?!*
Maraea	*Stop making a fool out of yourself. He's not here … he's got a job …*
Dave	*This is my house!*
Maraea	*Get out of my face.*
	Maraea pushes Dave and Dave goes to hit Maraea. Freeze
GM1	*Pause! I wonder how they got like this? Maybe if we rewind to a few years ago when T was little, we might be able to find out, I'll have to jump in this one, so you ready to swipe me in? Ready, 3 2 1 Play!*
	Maraea/Dave Scene Dave sitting playing play station, Maraea nervously comes in
Maraea	*Have you had any luck getting a job?*
Dave	*Oh don't nag, you know I have been trying, I have been all overtown trying to get a job, you know that.*
Maraea	*It's just I don't know if I will have enough for everything this week, you don't know how hard it is to be at the supermarket and not knowing if you have enough to pay for it all.*

Dave *Can we talk about it later, I have to go out, for a job interview actually, so I need you to pick up T after school, okay?*
Maraea *You are always telling me what to do, I have to do everything around here!*
Dave *Dammit, you made me lose the game!*

They see a fair bit of the family. Dave losing his job, Maraea cheating on Dave, The big fights between them over T. It's a hard game to try and work out how you might help them. And it ends badly.

THE HIT
Dave *Salt.* ***T passes Dave the salt.***
Dave *What did you get up to on Thursday?*
T *Nothing, school.*
Dave *You sure?*
T *Mhmm.*
Dave *Not down at the car park?*
T *Nup*
Dave *T, you need to tell me the truth.*
T *'Bout what?*
Dave *T, I am giving you a chance.*
T *I said I wasn't there.*
Dave *Yeah? Well I was 12 once too, I know what you are up to!*
T *Yeah right, don't try and live your life through me again.*
Dave *What did you say?*
T *Nothing.*
Dave *Don't lie to me.*
T *Oh stuff this, I'm going to Jack's.* ***Dave stands and puts his hand onto T's shoulder.***
Get your hand off me!
Dave *You are not going to Jack's.*
T *Fine then, I'll go to mum – And Brian's house.*
Dave goes to hit T
Freeze
GM2 *Release! Oh it's so hard! You have to try and help the family but as soon as you become them it's impossible to help!*
GM1 *Yeah, but hey, we went much further today than ever before and I think it was because there was two of us!*
GM2 *We could use more people to play this game – How about you?*

So when the young people play the game, for the next few hours they get to be inside the virtual reality of the game. Different levels to the game and each level is harder than the one before.

Like all good computer games. In level one they get to meet T in the hotseat and they ask him all sorts of things:

Do you know what it will take to change things?
Do you love your dad even though he hits you?
Do you think he loves you?
Why don't you tell anyone else except Jack?

They ask Dave some hard stuff, and Mum doesn't ever get off lightly, either. It's pretty intense most days.

In the next level they enjoy using the rewind and pause button and recreating still image moments from T's life. You see all sorts of things:

The day when Dave left
For the last time.
The first time Dave hits Maraea,
When Dave was little
The day when T stopped Dave from hitting Maraea.

The writing button is when they write what they hope might happen in the future, as if they are a member of the family.

Then to win the game they have to find ways to help all members of the family. We do that in different ways. Creating video clips to insert into the game can make for some pretty interesting viewing.

And it is always hopeful. Every child has hopes and dreams. That's the password they work out, from getting through all the levels. Even when we've played the game in residences, where kids are locked up. They are hopeful for T and his family.

It was exciting when Child Youth and Family (CYF) asked us last year to work with children who were living in care. They had worked out that Every day Theatre provided an opportunity to listen to what children thought about difficult and sensitive issues.

They probably wouldn't have used Gavin Bolton's term of protecting into emotion (Bolton 1979) but that's what they like about what we do.

It's the idea that because the kids aren't talking about themselves, but are distanced from their own lives by working with a fictional family, inside a video game, that they feel safe enough to feel deeply about what happens. The old double framing idea (O'Connor et al. 2006).

It's an emotional and cognitive connection to the issues. They are protected into feeling. And that frees them up to talk honestly, even passionately, about how they feel and think about things.

So the work we're talking about today, with children in care, was very different from our usual day in schools. In 2015 Child Youth and Family wanted us to use Every day Theatre as a research tool. They wanted to find out how children who were in care were thinking and feeling about that experience – of being in care, of going into care. It was they said an opportunity for them to hear the children's voices.

Children in care is a term used to define children and young people up to the age of 17 who are under the statutory care of the state. It means they have been removed from the care of their parents, ostensibly for their own protection. Children in Care in New Zealand numbered 5312 in June 2016, and the proportion who are Maori is 60.4 per cent. Care placements range from foster homes, community provided shelters, residential care properties which may include high security placement where children as young as ten are placed in locked and guarded facilities.

We've put children in "care" for a long time in New Zealand. Mortality and poverty led to fostering of children from early in Pakeha settlement. Churches, and later the state, tried to care for neglected or delinquent children.

The government became formally involved in fostering in the 1880s through industrial schools. From the beginning of these institutions, children could be boarded out and fostered, children might be adopted at any time.

There was also significant 'baby farming' where women were paid to care for unwanted babies.

The case of Minnie Dean of Winton, hanged on 12 August 1895 for the murder of two babies in her care, led to public agitation and government action. The Infant Life Protection Act 1896, administered by the Police, sought to regularise fostering and protect children, whether they were fostered privately or boarded out by the industrial schools.

The operation of the child in care processes in New Zealand are now managed by Child Youth and Family (CYF). CYF is a service arm of the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). CYF has the legal authority to intervene to protect and help children who are being abused or neglected, or who have serious problem behaviour, or have committed offences. It employs around 3000 staff who deliver services from 76 nationwide sites. In addition, CYF supports around 4500 caregivers who provide foster care or respite care to children around the country.

CYF also operates eight residences where children stay if they are at risk in the community: four for children with serious risk of harm who cannot be placed at home or in the community and need to be cared for and protected; and four for young people who have been placed in residential care because of their offending. CYF also contracts Barnados to operate one specialist residence for young people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviour and can no longer be supported in their own communities.

The Senior managers from CYF we met with said they wanted to use what they heard to inform government policy around children in care. They were particularly interested in how kids experienced their first day or days in care. How they settled, what worked - and what didn't.

They had seen Everyday Theatre in action and they thought it could provide a context for children to talk openly and honestly about these issues. They said that there was a genuine interest to hear and act on what was said.

The Commissioner for Children wrote at the time we began our work, "What Child, Youth and Family can and must do is listen to children and young people. They can make sure the child's voice is heard. They can communicate with the other services involved in a child's care."

The life chances of children are seriously impacted by going into state care. From the 1950s over 100,00 children were put in care. Over 60% of them Maori. Social Development Miister Anne Tolley noted that "By the time children with a care placement who were born in the 12 months to June 1991 had reached the age of 21; almost 90 per cent were on a benefit. Over 25 per cent were on a benefit with a child. 83 per cent of prison inmates under the age of 20 have a care and protection record with Child, Youth and Family" (Kirk 2017).

Elizabeth Stanley argues, "Māori children are uplifted at 4–5 times the rate of non-Māori — not just for abuse and neglect but also for just being Māori." She says, "Child welfare officers encourage the public, teachers and religious leaders in delinquency spotting. And complaints regularly saw the very presence of Māori children to be the problem. In their referrals "concerned" citizens objected to Māori because they were Māori and displayed an astonishing antagonism towards them" (2017, p. 86).

We planned with CYF how we might begin to listen to the voices of those in care. The CYF team arranged for groups of young people who are in care to work with us. We decided we would show them the Every day Theatre game, and then ask them to help us write more for the script, as if T was taken into care after the last time Dave hits him. We would ask them to improvise, devise and then script new scenes. The Every day Theatre game would be the pretext for getting them to talk openly about their experience, as script writers for our video game. We thought this would provide enough aesthetic distance to emotionally engage safely with the issues.

When we met the groups of young people we told them, we don't know anything about the experience of being taken into care and you people do, are you happy to help us create new scenes? It was a commission model approach (Heathcote 2002) which was real. We would build a script and we would use their genuine expertise in building it.

We explained that, as scriptwriters alongside us, they would be able to assist us to develop and improvise scenes. It was to build into a virtual reality game so they didn't have to talk about themselves, just how they imagined it might be for T.

But they did talk about their own experiences, and they used them to build the scenes. We heard some pretty harrowing stories - and stories of hope. It's the dual affect process really. Talking about themselves but not talking about themselves all at the same time.

We worked with four different groups over two days. Two to three hours with each group. Some sessions we laughed a lot, as we imagined what our play would now look like. By and large the young people enjoyed being able to direct adult 'actors' into new scenes, using their words and their language and their mannerisms.

Other sessions were pretty tough, though. We worked sometimes by improvising small scenes and one of us would write what we were devising down verbatim. Other times it was la form of forum theatre where we would act out scenes of the day T is taken into care. We would get advice or they would replace one of us and we would try it out.

Other times we sat and drew what we thought T might see on his first day, stressing this is sometimes how actors prepare for new plays. Or we'd help them create soundscapes and someone else would write feverishly in the corner – or record everything that was said on the trusty iPhone.

It was pretty much like that for all except one group. We had worked with kids who were the age of those we regularly run Every day Theatre with and older – 11 – 12 years old and up to about 15. Then one group arrived and they were a *lot* younger - one girl was only 5 or 6, wearing a princess outfit with wings. And she stayed cuddled up with her foster dad for most of the morning.

So we improvised, knowing that Every day Theatre had been created to work with young people over the age of 10. We worked with the story of Goldilocks. A messed up family whose child wanders into other people's houses because she's tired and hungry - but safer than the Every day Theatre story we had been working with, with the older children.

We played Goldie in trouble with the bear family. We created tableaux of the bears finding her in the house. We hot seated Goldie and when we asked what they thought should happen because she was in so much trouble the children suggested we got a fairy godmother to help. Fairy Godmothers: what do they do to help families?

Wonderful things, we found out. Suggestions from them for the new final scene in the Goldilocks story included:

Give Goldilocks to the Fairy Godmother
Give her to someone you really know and trust, give her porridge and nice comfy food.
Fairy Godmother's house is in Fairyland, it is nice and warm and has a chimney. When the Fairy Godmother says 'Time for breakfast,' she says it in a nice way.
Goldie looks at her a bit nervous when she arrives. There is a witch that's nice and makes spells for people, she wishes she could go to a land where she could have a happy family.
Fairy Godmother's house might have some bad sounds. Fairy Godmother & Fairy Godfather might be fighting with each other. About who cooks the food or Fairy Godmother wants to go out with her friends and Fairy Godfather wants to do that at the same time so they would fight about that. Goldilocks would just lie in her bed while they were fighting and listen **[Pause]**
If Fairy Godmother was kind, then Goldie would be nice back
You need to talk to somebody instead of keeping it inside yourself – that makes you sadder
If Goldie stays there too long she might forget her Mum and Dad. If it's too long she might call Fairy Godmother 'Mum' – it's a good thing **[Pause]**

After we worked for the other children we transcribed and wrote up everything we generated over the two days. There was a jumble of data that needed sorting.

We got a team of actors in to work with the pages of words we had heard, read, drawn and overheard, the fragments of script we had made, the lists of sounds we created. We played with it over a series of devising workshops. Using phrases that resonated with us and our memories of the days interlaced by the actor's responses to the lines we made small scenes, wrote them up and then played with them again.

We searched for a truth in retelling what we heard. We were determined to honour the stories given to us.

And we searched for an aesthetic power in the retelling. We felt a burning desire to tell our story well to the CYF managers. In a manner that would be too compelling for them to ignore. We weren't giving voice to the young people, they had voice enough already, but instead we wanted to make sure their words could be heard.

The scripting process was therefore a form of analysis and synthesis of the data generated over the two days. We chose phrases and lines that enabled us to explore "cognitively, corporally and figuratively" (Bird et al. 2010, p. 93).

Stanislavski understood "analysis is not solely an intellectual process. Many other elements enter into it, all the capacities and qualities of an actor's nature (1936/1990, p. 19).

This is the script we planned to present to the CYF managers. We also committed to show it to the children who we made it with. It's another play inside this play.

	Opens with revised EDT script. These scenes follow after 'Salt' scene
Waiting #1	
T	[T is sitting alone; SWs A&B busy behind: SWs moving, miming]
T	The social workers, they act like they're the fucking sweetest person in the world.
	They write down everything you say, and then they repeat it. Repeat it.
	They whisper to each other, but you can still hear what they're saying.
	You get to sit in the office for AGES
SW B	*[comes over]* would you like another Milo, T?
T	Milo's pretty sweet though.
	I think I'm going into care.
	I'd rather get the bash than go into care.
	I'd rather live on the streets than be in care.
	Fuck foster care.
	So where's my clothes?
	Where's my stuff?
	Where's my mum?
	Man, I've been sitting here for ages PAUSE
T	My dad wouldn't open the door to the social workers, so they came later with the police. *[flashback to just after the last EDT scene]*
Police come *[Dave: Playing playstation, T elsewhere in room. There's a knock at the door]*	
T	Dad, someone's at the door. *[Dave ignores]*
	Why won't you answer the door?
Dave	Just finishing my game
T	Dad, it's the cops
Dave	*[slowly finishes game, opens door]*
Police	I'm here with CYFs, I'm here to talk about a concern we have
Dave –defensive	Oh yeah?
Police	I think you know why we're here
	[Police and Dave continue talking, in mime]
T – mono – confused	What's going on?

	What the fuck you saying about my parents?
	[Dave gets physical with police, pushes]
	Handcuffs? Seriously?
	Where's he going?
	Where are they taking my dad? *[Police & Dave go]*
	Who's that behind the cop?
	Maybe that's CYFs
SW A	You're T aren't you?
T	How'd you know my name?
SW A	You need to come with me right now
T	Am I going to my mum's?
SW A	We can't track down your mother right now.
	We can't leave you here by yourself, you need to come with me now.
	You'll be back soon, it'll only be for a couple of nights
T	Yeah, more like a year *[from now on, makes no eye contact with SW]*
SW A	You're coming with me
T	Can I get my things?
SW A	No, we don't have time
T – some out loud, some as spoken thoughts	My phone? My clothes?
	What's happening?
	Can I get my stuff?
	Can I call Jack?
	Should I run?
	I'm scared
	When are you going to tell me what's happening?
	Where'd you take my Dad?
	Where's my mum?
SW A	Look, if you won't come with me willingly, I can call the police and you'll be restrained and escorted out. You need to come with me, you can't stay here alone. Now get in the car.
T [getting in the car]	Who told?
SW A	Get in the car.
	[flash forward]
Waiting #2	*[we overhear the conversation between SWs A&B this time]*
SW A	Look, that's T. It wasn't that great, dad ended up in handcuffs.
T	The social workers, they act like they're the sweetest person in the world.
SW A	We can't track down the mother, and there's no other family nearby.
T	They write down everything you say, and then they repeat it.
SW A	We're gonna have to find somewhere for him tonight.
T	They whisper to each other, but you can still hear what they're saying.
SW B	Ok, I'll get on the phone.
T	You get to sit in the office for AGES

SW A	I'll leave the phoning with you then, can I? I'll get onto the paperwork *[leaves]*
SW B	*[comes over]* It won't be long now, T. I've just got a few phone calls to make. *[moving off]* As soon as we know what's happening we'll let you know, T. In the meanwhile, let me know if there's anything I can get you – another Milo?
T	Milo's pretty sweet though.
	I'd rather live on the streets than be in care.
	Fuck foster care.
	So where's my clothes?
	Where's my fucking stuff?
SW B	*[comes back with Milo.]* We'll go to Macca's later for lunch, but first I need to find somewhere for you to go tonight.
T	Am I allowed to call my mum?
SWB	No, you certainly can't call anyone, especially not your mum or dad. I've got a few more calls to make, and then we'll head to Maccas. *[leaves]*
T to self	Where's my mum? Man, I've been sitting here for ages
	It feels like a hundred year waiting list, and I'm at the bottom
The children in care devised two versions of T's First night in care: between them they'd experienced both. These were planned to be seen as a split screen, but for ease today we'll read them sequentially – the first being the one the children had seen the most – followed by the one they would prefer to see.	
Version One	
SW A	Hi, this is T.
Foster Mum (FM)	Hi T, head in here, there's a couple of other kids here
SW A	His dad was taken in handcuffs, We've told him he'll just be here for the night
FM	Yeah, ha ha
SW A	and we haven't tracked down his mum yet
T	What the fuck are you saying about my mum?
SW A	I'll leave him with you. There'll be a SW appointed. *[goes without saying goodbye to T]*
T	*[in with other kids, who move away from him as he sits.]*
Foster Kid	What's your name?
T	T
Foster Kid:	Why you here?
T	'Cos
Foster Kid	'Cos why?
T	Just 'cos *[T stays silent, crying quietly]*
Version Two	
Social Worker B	Hi Matilda, this is T
Foster Mum (FM)	Hi T, I'm Matilda
SW B	It wasn't very nice for T, he's had a difficult time today. He knows he'll be here just for a short while, while we sort something more permanent for him
FM	Hey T, are you hungry? How about I take you into meet the other children? They're really nice. I'll get you something to eat. ***[T moves off]***

Foster Kid	Hello
T	Hi
Foster Kid	What's your name?
T	T, yours?
A,B,C	*[kids introduce themselves]*
Foster Kid A	It's cool as here
T	Oh cool, what's Matilda like?
Foster Kid A	She's nice, She's a good cook. Sometimes we have takeaways - or big as roasts
T	Do you get takeaways often?
Foster kid B	Yeah sometimes -
Foster kid C	usually on the first night.
Foster kid A	Are you going to go to school near here?
T	I dunno, my school is miles away from here
Foster kid A	You should come to the local school, if it's raining your foster mum will take you
T	I'm just here for the weekend
Foster kid C	Yeah, right, more like 6 years.
Foster kid B	Did you have any time to get your things together? Took me a month to get a change of clothes
T	Na, I had to go with the Social Worker straight away
Foster kid C	That's cos the cops came, ay? Took the Social Workers 5 days to get to us [Pause]
Foster kid A	You'll get a clothing grant soon, it's like $140 once a month
Foster kid C	I get mine and it's $20 a week
Foster kid B	They'll give you a bag, with toiletries, clothes – it's real hori
Foster kid A	Why are you here?
T	Just problems at home. I want to go and stay with my nan in Tauranga, or my friend Jack…
Foster kid B	They ask where you want to go, you tell them, then they say no - cos they've already set it up
Foster kid C	They tell you you're going to go to a family member, but it's all lies
Foster kid A	No one told me how come I couldn't go to my sister's.
Foster kid B	Yeah, the caregivers need CYFs approval – "I don't like that." [Pause]
Foster kid A	Two weeks - that's all they said - chur bro, I've ended up here a year
Foster kid C	Man, I've been in here six years
Foster kid B	We're supposed to hand our phones in, but no one does
Foster kid C	Yeah, and nearly everyone gaps it at some time
Foster kid A	Yeah, out the window, out the door, and keep walking
Foster kid B	Yeah wait until the night, then you go
T asks	Why'd you gap it?
Foster kid A	I felt embarrassed being here when I arrived
Foster kid B	I wanted to be with my best friend
Foster kid C *(to B not T)*	If he gaps it, he'll walk out the door. Most of them run.

Foster kid A	Sometimes the other kids in a home are bullies, always hitting, fighting and arguing –
Foster kid C	Like the one that always said "What the fuck did you say, muppet?"
Foster kid B	And at night, sometimes all you can hear is all the kids crying
Foster kid A	Yeah, you're in here with a whole bunch of strangers
Foster kid B	Things happen and you don't know or aren't told why they are happening
Foster kid A	The foster parents, ay, they set up rules
Foster kid B	But you feel scared – you're different – they're Pakeha
Foster kid A	It's really odd getting told what to do by complete strangers, it doesn't feel right - you want to be with someone you know and trust
Foster kid C	Get over it – 'cos you'll still remember your parents.
Foster kid B	You can send letters to your parents
Foster kid A	Here, there's always someone to stick up for you
Foster kid B	Good stuff, like we see a lot of new stuff
Foster kid A	Yeah, like the PS3 with the Gold and Red controllers
Foster kid C	And showers, I'd never seen showers before
Foster kid B	It's a clean home
Foster kid C	With clean water
Foster kid A	And lots of Christmas decorations
Foster kid B	And there's always food
Foster kid C	Yeah, the potato salad is best
Foster kid A	You know, you'll think you're still at home when you wake up tomorrow morning
Foster kid C	But like, it's quiet all the time, cos no body's fighting like at home
Foster kid B	And then, tomorrow, you just get out of bed and go to school. *[Pause]*
Foster kid A	Getting to know the parents is the best part
Foster kid B	And they say "Everything's going to be okay" – and you know, they are sometimes telling the truth
Foster kid C	You'll be happy to be away from a horrible family
T says	But I want to be with my friend Jack
Foster kid A	You'll be making new friends soon – you get to do things together like building a tree hut in the rose garden
Foster kid B	It's safer here, and quieter
Both say	You'll be safe in the house
Foster kid A	Matilda, she's like a Mum
Foster kid C	You don't exactly get loved, but you feel safe
T asks	What's the worst thing that could happen to me?
Foster kid C	Getting killed
Foster kid B	That's not the worst thing, I think getting taken away from your family is worse.
T asks more questions	What are the houses like?
Foster Kid B	I didn't like one foster family at first, and so I stole stuff. But once I got with a family I liked, (shrugs)
T	Have you seen your own family?

Foster kid C	I've seen Mum - and Nan, cos she came over from Australia, but I haven't seen Dad for a year
We asked the young people what the first telephone conversation between T and his friend Jack might sound like, and they scripted up the following, built on the discussions we'd just had:	
Jack	What's happening?
T	I'm not supposed to be on the phone.
Jack	Why?
T	They took my phone off me.
Jack	Why'd they take it?
T	They said we're not allowed to contact anyone.
Jack	You still gonna come to school?
T	Nah I'm ages away, gotta go to another school.
Jack	What's it like being in CYFS?
T	It's safer, but I really wanna be with my Mum and Dad.
Jack	I heard all sorts of stuff about CYFS.
T	It's alright.
Jack	What are they like?
T	They're okay.
Jack	What's happened to your Mum and Dad?
T	I dunno
Jack	Hey maybe you could come stay at my house.
T	I asked but they said I can't stay with people who know my parents.
Jack	When can I see you next?
T	I dunno.
Jack	I hear lots of people in CYFS run away.
T	I tried that in the first place I was in but they hunted me down. But they moved me to another place. And it's cool, there's all these girls.
Jack	Oh really?
T	Not like that.
Jack	What's the food like?
T	Real good.
Jack	Do you get takeaways?
T	Yep... KFC – Kids Fattening Club ha ha, hey I gotta go, someone's coming.
We asked all the young people, what might you say to T on his first night in a foster home?	
Foster kid A	Don't feel bad, you'll get used to it. We were there a few hours and we got used to it.
Foster kid B	Catch you on the rebound
Foster kid C	Hey T, Take care, bro.
Foster kid A	Keep moving on, Stay strong
Foster kid B	Head high, Carry on
Foster kid A	Don't run away, even if you want to be near your friends or your family
Foster kid C	Yeah, Don't do anything stupid cos it will just get worse.
Foster kid A	You're lucky that you're in a house.

Foster kid B	You're lucky you're going into a different house because you're going away from your family.
Foster kid A	Being in Care can change your life - CYFs can change someone's life
Foster kid C	Just because you're in care doesn't mean you're a bad person.

So we made the play and we wanted to show it back to the children. It all got horribly confused. The managers we worked with left their positions in CYF and we weren't then able to get the children back together to show them what we had done with their stories.

We felt like we had let them down. Like we were another bunch of adults who had promised, told them something and hadn't come through.

We'd set out to make a difference and we had a script but we had no audience.

We asked if we could perform the play to the managers. But emails and phone calls lead no where.

It wasn't anyone's fault.
It's the promise though, isn't it?
The promise that if we do applied theatre we might change things.
That we can make a difference if we collect stories and speak them back to those who might not know those worlds.
It's the promise that if we catch the truth, the fiction can make others see and hear it in new powerful ways.
It was in the promise that these voices might be heard, so that they might make a difference to government policy.
It was the possibility that other kids wouldn't have to end up in care to only then tell their own versions of the same story.
It's what keeps us going in Every day Theatre.
But this work was about taking it beyond the shift for participants to talk directly to government about government policy. Shifting what actually happens to kids every day. The real every day theatre of going into care.
Balfour talks about a theatre of little changes (Balfour,.
I know I've always felt that so limiting.
That's not why we are in this is it?

References

Bird, V., Premkumar, P., Kendall, T., Whittington, C., Mitchell, J., & Kuipers, E. (2010). Early intervention services, cognitive–behavioural therapy and family intervention in early psychosis: Systematic review. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 197*, 350–356. https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.109.074526.

Bolton, G. (1979). *Towards a theory of Drama in education*. Harlow: Longman.

Heathcote, D. (2002). *Contexts for active learning: Four models to forge links between schooling and society*. Presented at the NATD conference. Available: http://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/blog-post/dorothyheathcote-four-models-for-teaching-learning/. [Accessed 18 May 2018].

Kirk, S. (2017). Horrifying outcomes for YFS kids. Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/72363207/horrifying-outcomes-for-cyf-kids-warrant-a-whole-new-model--tolley.

O'Connor, P. (2009). Unnoticed miracles. *Research in Drama Education. The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 14*(4), 583–597.

O'Connor, P., O'Connor, B., & Welsh-Morris, M. (2006). Making the everyday extraordinary: A theatre in education project to prevent child abuse, neglect and family violence. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 11*(2), 235–245.

Stanley, E. (2017). *The road to hell. State violence against New Zealand in post war NZ*. Auckland University Press: Auckland.

Stanisvlaski, K. (1936/1990). *The actor prepares*. London: Taylor Francis.

Bottom's Dream *Applied Theatre: Anything Goes but what Stays?*

Tim Prentki

Enter Puck, and Bottom with an ass's head
BOTTOM *as Pyramus*
If I were fair, fair Thisbe, I were only thine.
QUINCE O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted! Pray, masters! Fly, masters! Help!
Exeunt Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling
****
BOTTOM Why do they run away? This is a knavery of them to make me afeard.
Enter Snout
SNOUT O Bottom, thou art changed. What do I see on thee?
BOTTOM What do you see? You see an ass head of your own, do you?
Exit Snout. Enter Quince
QUINCE Bless thee, Bottom! Bless thee! Thou art translated!
(Shakespeare 2005 III. 1. 36)

The authors/editors of this book assert that 'applied theatre is inexorably connected to transformation'. While other contributors may agonise over what is and is not applied theatre, this chapter will examine the concept of transformation as it is commonly applied in theatre. Beginning with a look at some of the ways in which the trickster or shape-shifter has exploited transformation in the cause of change, it will proceed to analyse some specifically theatrical modes of transformation from the Renaissance and the twentieth century, and the challenges associated with sustaining the effects of performance beyond the moment of performance. This analysis involves a consideration of the effect of character upon actor, alongside exploration of the relationship between disguise and identity. In the liminal space of performance anything goes. But does anything stay? The last part of the chapter considers what applied theatre can learn about transformation from formal theatre. The focus is upon the applied theatre facilitator's antecedents among the fools of earlier theatre texts.

T. Prentki (✉)
Department of Performing Arts, University of Winchester, Winchester, UK
e-mail: Tim.Prentki@winchester.ac.uk

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_10

1 Osiris' Bones

If trickster stirs to life on the open road, if he embodies ambiguity, if he "steals fire" to invent new technologies, if he plays with all boundaries both inner and outer, and so on – then he must still be among us, for none of these has disappeared from the world. His functions, like the bones of Osiris, may have been scattered, but they have not been destroyed. The problem is to find where his gathered body might come back to life, or where it might already have done so (Hyde 1999, p. 11).

This chapter embarks upon the search for the body of the trickster in the belief that where s/he is to be found we are most likely to witness or participate in transformation. Lewis Hyde uses a key phrase in relation to my understanding of the transformative process, 'he plays with all boundaries both inner and outer'. Playful conditions must be created before transformation is possible and the purpose of being playful is to transgress the norms of social behaviour. In crossing a border we find ourselves in unknown territory, as the cliché has it, outside our comfort zone. In such a place our senses are exposed, our antennae more finely tuned than during the habitual business of daily living. The trickster can affect both inner and outer boundaries, giving rise to the possibility of personal transformation and/or social transformation. In other words transformation may be felt in private areas of change – confidence, assertiveness, agency – and public areas – mobilisation, autonomy, resistance.

From the moment when human societies developed language or made visual depictions of their activities, the notion of transformation has occupied a major role in their foundational myths and their understandings of how they related to their environments. For instance, Paul Radin, while studying the trickster cycle of the Winnebago of North America, uncovered the common denominators of trickster myths across that continent:

> The overwhelming majority of all so-called trickster myths in North America give an account of the creation of the earth, or at least the transforming of the world, and have a hero who is always wandering, who is always hungry, who is not guided by normal conceptions of good or evil, who is either playing tricks on people or having them played on him and who is highly sexed. Almost everywhere he has some divine traits. These vary from tribe to tribe. In some instances he is regarded as an actual deity, in others as intimately connected with deities, in still others he is at best a generalized animal or human being subject to death (Radin 1971, p. 155).

In common with trickster figures across the globe, the *Wakdjunkaga* of the Winnebago cannot be contained, either physically or morally. Domesticity never holds him for long and his amorality results in both conscious and unwitting transgression of the most sacred taboos. His identity is as ambiguous as his other qualities and is mostly determined by context and circumstance. He is both divine and human; both male and female; both time-bound and timeless. In summing up his cultural significance for the society which invented him Radin seems to suggest that he is the essence, the disembodied embodiment of transformation itself:

> The symbol which Trickster embodies is not a static one. It contains within itself the promise of differentiation, the promise of god and man. For this reason every generation occupies itself with interpreting Trickster anew. No generation understands him fully but no genera-

> tion can do without him. Each had to include him in all its theologies, in all its cosmogonies, despite the fact that it realized that he did not fit properly into any of them, for he represents not only the undifferentiated and distant past, but likewise the undifferentiated present within every individual. This constitutes his universal and persistent attraction. And so he became and remained everything to every man – god, animal, human being, hero, buffoon, he who was before good and evil, denier, affirmer, destroyer and creator. If we laugh at him, he grins at us. What happens to him happens to us (Radin 1971, pp. 168-9).

Understood in this way, the possibility of transformation is a way of engaging with material and spiritual reality, of coming to terms with the absurdity of the experience of being human; acknowledging the meaninglessness of existence while in the same instant being unable to exist without a constant struggle to find meaning. In dialectical terms, the trickster represents the moment of transformation when the eternal battle between thesis and antithesis trembles for a split-second on the brink of a synthesis. The paradoxes and contradictions of being a mortal body with a consciousness that defies the temporal are represented, sometimes scapegoated, in the trickster but never finally explained.

Similar patterns can be detected in ancient Greek mythology where the character who exhibits trickster traits is Hermes, messenger of the gods. He is associated with commerce, travel and negotiation, and is typically to be found at city gates and cross-roads – the twilight zones where boundaries are blurred and shapes can shift. As messenger he is never to be trusted, often wilfully misinterpreting instructions and misrepresenting gods to men and men to gods. Hermes comes to prominence as the precocious, mischievous child who steals Apollo's cattle. Apollo eventually catches up with him and hauls him before Zeus for trial:

> Zeus, loth to believe that his own new-born son was a thief, encouraged him to plead not guilty, but Apollo would not be put off and Hermes, at last, weakened and confessed.
>
> 'Very well, come with me', he said, 'and you may have your herd. I slaughtered only two, and those I cut up into twelve equal portions as a sacrifice to the twelve gods'.
>
> '*Twelve* gods?' asked Apollo. 'Who is the twelfth?'
>
> 'Your servant, sir,' replied Hermes modestly. 'I ate no more than my share, though I was very hungry, and duly burned the rest.' (Graves 1960, p. 64)

Hermes, like many a trickster before him, bestows divinity upon himself in an act of impudent transformation. One of the titles by which he is regularly known is Prince of Thieves, more recently attached by Hollywood to Robin Hood. The latter, an archetype of the Green Man, exploits the transformative environment of Sherwood Forest, to bring about social adjustments or transformations through his interventions. The rich enter the Forest with their wealth and leave the green space of shifting shadows without it.

Judaeo-Christian mythology exhibits the same pattern of transformation. God the Father assumes the omnipotent function of Zeus and his son, Jesus Christ, functions like the shape-shifting trickster of pagan cultures. Like Hermes before him, Christ is the commuter between divine and human worlds; hence his two soubriquets, Son of God and Son of Man. His resurrection is the ultimate trick in the repertoire of shape-shifting. Beyond the tricky triumphs of his miracles, Christ also intervenes in the lives of others. The case of Saul of Tarsus is one such intervention:

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:
And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou me?
And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks.
And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.
And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.
And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.
And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.
(Holy Bible, King James Version, 1953, Acts, p. 120)

There are a number of familiar features in this incident. Saul is on a journey at an indeterminate place between civilised communities. He is therefore in the territory, physically and metaphysically, of the trickster, the boundary-crosser. The heavenly light, turned on by the trickster, places Saul in the unfamiliar, discomforting space of transformation and leaves him at the mercy of the trickster. Those in the company of the person to be transformed are confused and astonished witnesses but they are not directly implicated in the process of transformation. Sight and insight are closely aligned, with the loss of one being a corollary to achieving the other. In this case the blindness is a temporary condition allied to that traditional accompaniment of transformation, fasting. Many societies use fasting as a core element in coming of age processes (Gill 2009, p. 16). Here a fundamental of identity, a name, is changed from Saul to Paul; itself a transitional arrangement on the path to becoming St Paul. As with many other aspects of Christianity, traditional patterns of myth and folklore are conscripted into the stories and calendar of the new religion. Paul is reticent about the detail of his transformation but clear about its other-worldly dimensions:

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.
For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:
And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.
But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,
To reveal his Son to me, that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: (Holy Bible, Galatians 1953, p. 176)

Besides the extremity of the change from persecutor to persecuted (about which psychologists might have much to say), the striking feature in terms of the tropes of transformation is the unwillingness or inability to discuss the specific act of transformation with fellow mortals. The transformed one now has a special status which cannot risk being explained away. The divine has touched the mortal through the agency of the trickster and the process of transformation defies rational explanation. Paul's previous zeal places Saul as a representative of Jewish orthodoxy; of strictness and discipline; the embodiment of the prevailing order. Yet even he is not immune to the machinations of the trickster; the agent who forever undermines the *status quo*:

> Disorder belongs to the totality of life, and the spirit of this disorder is the trickster. His function in an archaic society, or rather the function of his mythology, of the tales told about him, is to add disorder to order and so make a whole, to render possible, within the fixed bounds of what is permitted, an experience of what is not permitted (Radin 1971, p. 185).

The form and function of chaos lurks at the core of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and its attempts to explain the reality of disorder in a world made by God and in a being made in God's image. Therefore this tradition assigns to the trickster not amorality but immorality and diabolical intent. Satan is not God's messenger but his antagonist, retaining the ability to shape-shift into the serpent. Significantly, however, the trickster/serpent opens up to man(un)kind the instability, suffering and ambiguity that is our experience of life on earth; in Biblical terminology, knowledge of good and evil. The offer the serpent makes to Eve to tempt her, is the same as the one Hermes took up for himself: 'ye shall be as gods' (Holy Bible, Genesis 1953, p. 9).

The collision of Judaeo-Christian mythology with earlier pagan myths of the trickster has resulted in the imposition of a moral binary, good/evil, upon the previously transformative and amoral activities of the trickster. Consequently behaviours associated with chaos, disorder and uncertainty are now consigned to the province of the devil with transformation likely to lead to no favourable outcome for the one transformed. Writing in his autobiography Russell Means, an Oglala Lakota and leading member of the American Indian Movement views this change as indicative of different approaches to the experience of living between indigenous people and Europeans. It is, however, religion rather than ethnicity that is responsible for the divergence:

> I continued to commune with the spirits as a frequent participant in Rick Two Dog's *yuwipi* ceremonies. At one of them, the spirits said a period of chaos and confusion was coming and the *Iktomi* – a being personified by the spider, who imparts wisdom through trickery – would soon return. Every indigenous people in the world has such a teacher to show them that life is tricky. The white man, unfortunately, thinks it is the devil and refuses to consider his wisdom (Means 1995, p. 405).

This notion of the imparting of wisdom carries a powerful echo of the serpent's function in unlocking knowledge of good and evil. Wisdom is not necessarily a comfortable acquisition but without it we lack the self-awareness and worldliness to know when it is wise to play the fool. If we banish the trickster to the confines of hell and shun the opportunities for transformation he provides as evil, our lives are made safer and poorer; lacking both wisdom and danger:

> In short, trickster is a boundary-crosser. Every group has its edge, its sense of in and out, and trickster is always there, at the gates of the city and the gates of life, making sure there is commerce. He also attends the internal boundaries by which groups articulate their social life. We constantly distinguish – right and wrong, sacred and profane, clean and dirty, male and female, young and old, living and dead – and in every case trickster will cross the line and confuse the distinction. Trickster is the creative idiot, therefore, the wise fool, the gray-haired baby, the cross-dresser, the speaker of sacred profanities. Where someone's sense of honorable behavior has left him unable to act, trickster will appear to suggest an amoral action, something right/wrong that will get life going again. Trickster is the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox (Hyde 1999, p. 7).

2 Offending Shadows

The meeting of the pagan trickster with the Christian story is nowhere more vividly demonstrated than in the Mystery Play, *The Second Shepherds' Play* in the Townley Cycle which I've analysed more fully elsewhere (Prentki 2012, p. 26–30). Mak is at once the archetypal trickster, casting the shepherds under his spell to perform the mischief of sheep-stealing, and the burlesque opponent of God, stage-managing on the level of carnival the same story that God organises for the redemption of mankind. Because this is a Christian story, the anarchist-trickster functions as the scapegoat, punished by the blanket tossing, so that good order and Christian morality may prevail. However, even in this function Mak mimics and foreshadows Christ who will, as scapegoat, take away the sins of the world by performing that most dramatic of transformations, the resurrection. A common feature of medieval theatre, be it the Mystery or the Morality plays, is that the trickster/vice figure who leads man into temptation is, dramatically speaking, the most engaging character in the representation with the liveliest dialogue and the most inventive action, anticipating Milton's depiction of Satan in *Paradise Lost*. Robert Weimann anchors the Vice, the medieval impersonation of the trickster, firmly in a line of popular tradition emanating from earlier times:

> In a number of plays his [the Vice's] is the only part which cannot be doubled. He strives to make a quick rapport with the audience and was probably costumed so extravagantly (making great play with his ludicrous wooden dagger) as to have an immediate effect upon the audience, who would know how to respond to his tricks as soon as he appeared before them (Weimann 1978, p. 156).

This type of pantomime recognition where the Vice, Hermes-like, commutes between the stage and the auditorium, while privileging him in relation to the other actors, also turns him into a domesticated theatrical cliché; laughter as safety-valve for any of the potentially disturbing consequences of the trickster's actions upon human life.

He brings danger back into the role in the moment when he escapes the confines of the predictable by calling into question whether man's nature is redeemable. This is the action at the heart of *Dr. Faustus*, structured like a Morality play but inaugurating the modern preoccuptation with pyschological tragedy. The trickster,

Mephistopheles, though formally an external figure in the service of Lucifer, is only enabled to function because Faustus is willing to be transformed from human being to black magician:

FAUSTUS Did not he [Lucifer] charge thee to appear to me?
MEPHISTOPHELES No, I came now hither of mine own accord.
(Marlowe 1995, I. 3. 43–4)

Faustus' imagination is contained in the medieval schema depicted in the tradition from which he emerges. He still sees heaven and hell as binary destinations for humans after passing through the battleground of earth according to the structure of a Morality play. Mephistopheles, on the other hand, articulates the modern notion of hell, not as geographical location but as state of mind and, in doing so, recreates transformation not as physical but rather as metaphysical change: 'Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.' (I. 3. 77) Faustus' tragedy is his inability to distinguish between these two modes of transformation and so he can be bought off by a series of conjuring tricks while his own imagination/soul undergoes an irrevocable transformation. The tension between a transformation in line with the old morality and one which reflects modernity's psychological stress is maintained to the end in Faustus' closing words:

FAUSTUS Ugly hell, gape not. Come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books. Ah, Mephistopheles!
(Marlowe 1995, V. 2. 114–15)

Lucifer does not need to come. The internal trickster has already effected the final transformation. Literally and metaphorically Mephistopheles ('I, Faustus, lover of myself') has the last word. Transformation has moved from external agency to a place in the mind of the one seeking transformation.

The Athenian wood of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* feels worlds away from the sulphurous pits and eternal torments for here transformation has returned to the confines of external agency and its effects would seem to be temporary and reversible. Shakespeare draws upon traditional ingredients to present a context for transformation: the green or wild space beyond the reach of civilisation and law; night time when shapes shift and outlines are blurred; a trickster (Puck) as mischievous servant to a lord from another world; and a series of actions designed to highlight the folly of the earth-bound species. If love is considered the most powerful agent of transformation to which we are likely to be exposed, it is here revealed as arbitrary, dangerous and anarchic. To the comforting proposition that the night in the wood is a metaphor for the unstable phase that juvenile affection must pass through to gain access to maturity, one might counter that Demetrius is still enthrall to the 'love juice' on his return to court and, without it, comedy's happy ending in marriage cannot be achieved. The ironic commentary on this trope of transformation is supplied by the story of Bottom and Titania, stage-managed by the clown prince of transformation, Puck. The temporary transformation of Bottom into an ass with Titania as his lover is simultaneously the most ridiculous and the most real encoun-

ter of the play. Titania's response to Bottom on waking after the application of the juice echoes that of the young, mortal lovers:

TITANIA And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.
BOTTOM Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that.
And yet,to say truth, reason and love keep little company
nowadays – (Shakespeare 2005, III. 1. 133–37)

Bottom thus offers an inadvertent commentary upon the rest of the pairings in this play as well as on his own involuntary situation. Ironically for the character who undergoes the only physical transformation, he is the least transformed or transformable of all of them. Where others have but the slenderest grip on their identities, Bottom is constantly and irrevocably himself. This is the source of the humour in his attempt to play Pyramus. The theatre is the arena of the trickster and shape-shifter but Bottom can never escape the confines of his reality to penetrate the uncertain, twilight territory of the imagination. Like a parody of a Brechtian performance, there is no instant when the audience forgets the presence of Bottom in the role of Pyramus, either in rehearsal or performance. The same holds for his performance as the assanine lover of Titania where his plight is potentially far more dangerous since he is here a lone mortal in the kingdom of spirits and shadows. Much of the transformative power and credibility of the actor in performance derives from the way in which the other actors respond. Titania sees in Botttom the lover of her dreams. Since her quarrel with Oberon she has been 'lamenting some enforced chastity' and is now ripe for mating with the creature traditionally associated with the largest sexual organ in the animal kingdom. Whatever Bottom's resistance to Puck's transformative agency, it is temporarily futile in the face of Titania's determination to copulate with him. Whether dream or moment of madness, as theatre it is as (in) substantial as the rest of the action of this dream play. As the actor playing Puck signifies in the epilogue, the multiple transformations are finally the collective dream of the audience. Some will wake and remember nothing. Others will be haunted by stray slivers of imagination as they return to the workaday world:

PUCK (*to the audience*)
If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended:
That you have but slumbered here
While these visions did appear.
(Shakespeare 2005 V. 1. 413–16)

A regular Elizabethan term for an actor was 'shadow'(Jones 1977, p.146), acknowledging both the instability and the transformative tendencies of the profession. The relationship between actor and character is shadowy and in this dialectic which is the shadow and which the substance? The character is immortal for Puck can be performed down the generations into infinity. Yet the performance can only occur if there is a substantial, mortal actor to take on the impersonation. Does the

particular actor transform the role of Puck or is that actor transformed by playing Puck? In this play the potential of characters to undergo transformation is limited or contained by the device of the dream. Characters and audience alike can wake and resume their normal habits, dismissing any disquieting traces with a shrug as 'only a dream'. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is an exercise or theatrical play to examine the concept of transformation, revealing both potential and danger in a process which involves allowing the imagination to transgress societal norms. Shakespeare draws upon the archetype of the trickster to highlight parallels between anthropological and theatrical patterns of transformation.

With *King Lear* the emphasis, as in *Dr. Faustus*, is through internal rather than external agency. Here too the process of transformation requires a trickster, or in this case a fool, to set it in motion. The Fool facilitates Lear's painful journey from king to human being; from illusion to disillusion; from 'robes and furred gowns' to 'poor naked wretch'. An oft declared aim of applied theatre facilitation is to enable participants to discover their human potential by supporting them to break with the social barriers to their self-development. *King Lear* fits this structure while depicting the chaos and fall-out that arises when it is an absolute monarch who is the subject of this applied theatre process. The Fool as agent through which transformation works begins the process by separating Lear's self-image from the reality he must now inhabit:

FOOL That lord that counselled thee to give away thy land,
Come place him here by me; do thou for him stand.
The sweet and bitter fool will presently appear,
The one in motley here, the other found out there.
LEAR Dost thou call me fool, boy?
FOOL All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.
(Shakespeare 1997, I. 4. 137–43)

The Fool has cast himself in the mode of the facilitator who provokes the participant into a reappraisal of his situation in the hope that this will lead to personal transformation. The first phase in this process is the destabilising of the subject as he is shaken out of his regal orbit. The loss of flattering and servile responses to which he had been habituated, results in a questioning of identity since that is formed from the way others behave towards us:

LEAR Does any here know me? Why, this is not Lear.
Does Lear walk thus, speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, or his discernings are lethargied –
Ha! sleeping or waking? Sure 'tis not so. Who is it that can tell
Me who I am?
FOOL Lear's shadow. (Shakespeare 1997, I. 4. 217–22)

The Fool's answer reaches back into his ancient lineage among the tricksters in the manner of the magic mirror of 'mirror, mirror on the wall'. His characteristically

multi-valent response anticipates the layers through which Lear will have to travel to arrive at an understanding of who he is. The transformation of Lear, forming the central action of the play, is accomplished by at least three agents or, more properly by the interaction between all three. Lear's shadow is the actor performing the role in the particular moment of performance when these words are uttered. The interpretation of the actor will go some way towards determining who Lear is for the audience. Lear's shadow is also the Fool who walks behind Lear like a shadow throughout and is constantly asking him to consider who he is. In the final analysis it is only Lear himself who can effect the transformation through a confrontation between his former self and his current identity. Lear's shadow is the two dimensional figure that resembles Lear without the substance which once characterised him as king. It is the same metaphor as the one anticipated in Marlowe's *Edward II* where another monarch turned out of office records his plight:

But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?
(Marlowe 1995, V. 1. 26–7)

Shakespeare perhaps had the echo of Marlowe's lines in his ear but it takes Lear more painful experiences before he internalises the wisdom that separates function from form in hierarchical societies. In the meeting with the blind Gloucester he lays bare the mechanism by which human societies operate: authority:

LEAR	Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?
GLOUCESTER	Ay, sir.
LEAR	And the creature run from the cur – there thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office. (Shakespeare 1997, IV. 6. 150–55)

Lear's dramatic transformation from king to functionless person has revealed to him the principal impediment to social transformation: hierarchy. Societies are organised according to the jobs people do with an explicit or implicit hierarchy attaching itself to them. Identity and sense of personal worth are so intimately associated with function that even a guard dog, that is a dog with the allotted function to guard something, has greater value in the social scheme than a human being with none. The only antidote to this process of dehumanisation is the relationships we make with fellow beings that are formed on the basis of a common humanity. This is evidenced in the moment when the Duke of Cornwall's servant stabs him in order to defend Gloucester. Although the gesture can be deemed futile since the servant loses his life and Gloucester is still blinded, it is the moral fulcrum on which the play turns. It is the instant of transformation in the fortunes of those who deny common bonds of shared humanity in favour of material self-interest. Social transformation is not a matter of swapping one regime for another but of transforming the value system by which a given society is organised.

Shakespeare's preoccupation with good governance and the obstacles to achieving social transformation is at the forefront of his work whether expressed in tragic/historic or comic mode. It is allied with a concern for the opportunities and dangers that theatre offers for exploring transformation. These themes are interwoven into the text of *The Tempest* where Shakespeare returns to an analysis of governance within a context of shape-shifting theatrical magic; a meeting of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with *King Lear*. Prospero's forced removal from Milan followed his inability to perform the function of ruler, preferring that of private citizen and scholar:

PROSPERO And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed
In dignity, and for the liberal arts
Without a parallel, those being all my study –
The government I cast upon my brother
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies.
(Shakespeare 2011, I. 2. 72–77)

This transformation, though it may be seen as Prospero's attempt to be true to his nature, allows, as happened in *King Lear*, others to take on the functions of state in ways that undermine their moral integrity as humans. Antonio and Sebastian tread the path of Goneril and Regan, corrupted by power. Prospero's blessed reprieve from death gives him an opportunity on the island to replay the role of ruler, this time employing his magical skills not at the expense of rule but in its cause. Yet even here with Miranda and Caliban as his only subjects and Ariel as his servant, the strains and contradictions of authority are present. The island prior to his arrival was not *terra nullius* but the kingdom of Caliban. The exercise of power, even in this magical context, is at the expense of another.

The island conforms to the archeypal setting for transformation. It is a strange and wild place to those newly arrived where shadows, shape-shifts and visual and aural deceptions abound. While Prospero fulfils a similar function to Oberon, putting all those who enter his territory – his stage – under his spell, he is seeking a transformation which will outlast their and his time on the island. Likewise it is easy to depict transformation within the magic space of the theatre but can the playwright/facilitator support any change that can be taken out into the world where 'the rain, it raineth everyday'? Prospero has had twelve years to reflect upon human nature and to refine his magical skills but the test of his own transformation will be in the terms under which he manages his reintegration into the world. Significantly, he only risks forgiving his brother while the latter is still under his spell and he is armed in his magic robes: 'I do forgive thee,/Unnatural though thou art' (V. 1. 78–9). If there is transformation here, it resides in Prospero who may be altered by the capacity to forgive. There is no evidence of change in Antonio, nor does Prospero expect any, as his use of the word 'unnatural' demonstrates. Antonio acts against the dictates of human nature. He is, in Prospero's moral scheme, less than a man. His only remaining line in the play is a cynical comment at Caliban's expense.

Discomfortingly, in the worlds Shakespeare's stage presents this behaviour all too often falls within the pail of human action. As the Captain remarks to Edmund in *King Lear* when asked to murder the defenceless Cordelia: 'I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats./If it be man's work, I'll do't.' (V. 3. 39–40) The world is run according to function not morality and transformation only becomes a possibility at the point where a dog's no longer obeyed in office.

The magician/playwright occupies an unreal space of privilege, able to manipulate the cast in the manner of Ferdinand and Miranda's chess pieces. Only after Prospero abjures his 'rough magic' does he enter the treacherous territory of transformation. In the last analysis it is not the trickster Ariel who is the instrument of Prospero's transformation but the fool, Caliban: 'this thing of darkness/I acknowledge mine' (V. 1. 275–6). Only when Prospero is able to recognise the other in himself does he understand the eternal dialectic between reason and desire, ruler and ruled which sets a limit to authority and locates folly at the core of human enterprise. If we are to transform ourselves it must be because of, not in spite of, our foolish natures.

3 The Temptation to Do Good

Cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, writing from within the repressive and conformist state of Joseph Stalin, developed his notion of a second or parallel world of carnival derived from his analysis of Rabelais' work (Bakhtin 1984). At an historical moment when plenty of dogs were being obeyed in office Bakhtin posited that popular resistance to the dominant authority in the public, civil sphere took the form of carnival, laughter and the staging of events that mock the serious pretentions of the powerful:

> And thus these personages [the 'old authority'] come to the end of their role still serious, although their spectators have been laughing for a long time. They continue to talk with majestic tone of kings and heralds announcing eternal truths, unaware that time has turned their speeches into ridicule. Time has transformed old truth and authority into a Mardi Gras dummy, a comic monster that the laughing crowd rends to pieces in the marketplace (Bakhtin 1984, p. 213).

This is the process dramatised by Bertolt Brecht in the same historical moment in the carnival scene from *The Life of Galileo* (Brecht 1980). Social transformation is depicted as occurring when the people take up Galileo's discoveries rather than when he makes them. Although he is the instrument for a profound transformation that questioned the most sacred values of the Catholic Church, he resists personal transformation in all but the trickiest of forms, relying instead upon the starving in the marketplace and Andrea smuggling the *Discorsi* out of Italy. Like *King Lear* the play demonstrates how authority is the enemy of transformation with those in authority ultimately made fools of by the passage of time. As time-bound creatures transformation is an inescapable element of our existence but we still clutter our societies with the illusion of permanence in the form of artefacts, laws, customs,

beliefs and fantasies of 'eternal truth'. Carnival, like theatre, a transient stage where the world can be turned upside down, where, to quote Macbeth, 'nothing is but what is not', is the appropriate venue for the examination of what constitutes transformation and to explore whether it is even possible.

The encounter between authority and morality also forms the subject of Brecht's play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. He invites his audience to consider whether the intervention of morality into an authoritarian regime does any good in terms of bringing about social change. What, if any, has been the transformation? The narrative is formed from the consequences arising from two senseless acts of goodness. The first is committed by Grusha, a naïve and innocent serving girl who rescues the Governor's baby, abandoned by his mother during revolutionary violence. Her intervention transforms her at a stroke from private person to an actor in history. She is motivated by a desire to do good at whatever personal cost: 'He looks at me! He's human' (Brecht 1966, p. 137). She asserts her right to respond as a fellow human being without regard for the dictates of self-interest or hierarchy. However, the Singer's commentary makes it clear that in this world obedience to authority and self-preservation are the norm and to do otherwise is to turn the world upside down: 'Fearful is the seductive power of goodness!' (Brecht 1966, p. 139). For Grusha part of being human is to respond as a mother to the child but the narrative repeatedly asks the audience whether she is acting in the best material interests of the child or feeding her own maternal desire. Though her abduction of the baby changes her life irrevocably, it is not of itself a transformative action. The test of her transformation forms the climax of the epic when she encounters the trickster, Azdak. He has also inserted himself unwillingly into history by harbouring the fugitive Grand Duke and then engaging in a carnivalesque confession in front of the revolutionary guards, resulting in him being appointed judge: 'The judge was always a rascal! Now the rascal shall be a judge!' (Brecht 1966, p. 183). This act of transformation puts an anti-authoritarian humanist in a position of authority with potentially transformative possibilities for the body politic. It is an irony which Dario Fo exploits in the creating of *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (Fo 1980). Brecht keeps the multiple roles of the carnival judge in view by having Azdak's peasant rags clearly visible beneath the judge's robe. The actor plays Azdak playing a judge and, in the original production the actor could comment on Azdak's performance through the device of having Ernst Busch play both the Singer and Azdak. Once into his peripatetic judging Azdak operates like a facilitator of applied theatre, stage-managing re-enactments in order to achieve justice, based on the manifest requirements of need rather than the elusive notion of truth. As his notes to the play reveal, Brecht saw Azdak in a line of descent from previous theatrical fools charged with interpreting the action for the audience:

> It is essential to have an actor who can portray an utterly upright man. Azdak is utterly upright, a disappointed revolutionary posing as a human wreck, like Shakespeare's wise men who act the fool. Without this the judgement of the chalk circle would lose all its authority (Brecht 1994, p. 303).

Azdak's judgement takes the story beyond trickery into the territory of transformation and, in doing so, presents a paradox of authority for it is moral authority which he brings to his decision at the expense of the prevailing notion of authority as rank and tradition.

The authority informing the decision to award the child to Grusha does not, however, emanate solely from Azdak. He is, rather, the means whereby Grusha's transformation is facilitated. Her test is not that of the chalk circle for by then Azdak has already determined her moral, human worth from her response to him as judge; a response which accords with his own view of authority. In the midst of her diatribe against injustice and the corruption of the system, there is a telling stage direction: 'AZDAK *half gets up, starts beaming. With his little hammer he half-heartedly knocks on the table as if to get silence. As* GRUSHA's *scolding continues, he only beats time with his hammer.*' (Brecht 1966, p. 203). In *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* such transformation as is achieved is made possible by this meeting of two people who hold the moral imperative to behave as humans, to do good, above that of authority and self-interest. Even here Brecht tempers the claims of transformation by reminding the audience, both on- and off-stage, that this is just a fable. The presence of the 'framing' group of peasants on the stage doubly theatricalises the action of the folk tale. The Singer, ironically perhaps also the actor of Azdak, provides the bridge back into the 'real' world:

> And after that evening Azdak vanished and was never seen again.
> The people of Grusinia did not forget him but long remembered
> The period of his judging as a brief golden age.
> Almost an age of justice. (Brecht 1966, p. 207)

When we are dealing with social transformation, we are in the realm of hopes and dreams where 'brief' and 'almost' may be the best we can expect. Azdak's Garden is all that remains; yet what could be more appropriate than a place safeguarded for child's play?

Ken Hirschkop summarises Bakhtin's contribution to cultural politics in terms that are equally applicable to Azdak's efforts at facilitating transformation:

> It remains only to emphasise how little this historical vision has in common with the purely formal democracy on offer from the liberal state. The democracy of carnival is indeed a collective democracy, grounded in civil society, in which the abstract identity of the citizen or subject is replaced by that of one who eats, drinks, procreates and labours. Utopian in the extreme, it describes a condition in which history is directly experienced in the texture of public social life. The pleasures of carnival are not the pleasures of mere talk but those of a discourse which has rediscovered its connection to the concrete. It is, of course, a vision rather than a programme, but one which draws a remarkable contrast with the public life we have come to accept as the norm. Perhaps when aesthetics cannot find its way into social theory, it does the best it can, ceasing to ensnare itself in words, but finding a way to speak (Hirschkop and Shepherd 1989, p. 35).

Similarly when transformation struggles to find a social theory to support its interventions into the civil domain, it might discover in the oblique strategies of carnivalesque fooling an aesthetic route into collective consciousness and public discourse.

4 Facilitation Follies

My contention, following these examples from anthropology and the history of European theatre, is that a transformative process is more likely to be made possible when the facilitator of applied theatre is willing and able to play the fool. Fools offer access to worlds that are usually closed off by habit, common sense and inertia. They are the embodiment of Brecht's notion of *Verfremdung*, the making strange of the familiar: familiar social relations; familiar political discourses; familiar ways of processing our sense of reality. Michael Balfour links this nourishing of the imagination to the aesthetic of facilitation:

> The aesthetic instinct in a facilitator is about fostering the imagination of participants, not just in envisioning fictions but drawing on existing experiences and combining these with new perspectives or different ways of expression (Balfour 2016, p. 153).

This is the essence of folly; using the lived experience as the starting point for an exploration of alternative ways of being and becoming – 'Taught only by reality can/Reality be changed' (Brecht 1977, p. 34). Theatre is the most appropriate medium for such an exploration because it can start from stories grounded in the reality of life before taking us into the dream worlds of transformation. The moment of transformation is the instant when 'existing experiences' combine with the foolishly inspired audacity to imagine other ways of seeing and doing. However, to assume that these visions emanating from the dialectical interplay of the real and the imagined are necessarily progressive in relation to social change is naïve. Paulo Freire identifies a capability for creating moral societies as a defining feature of the species without attributing an automatically positive outcome to the application of ethics:

> What makes men and women ethical is their capacity to "spiritualize" the world, to make it either beautiful or ugly. Their capacity to intervene, to compare, to judge, to decide, to choose, to desist makes them capable of acts of greatness, of dignity, and, at the same time, of the unthinkable in terms of indignity (Freire 1998, p. 53).

The applied theatre space lends itself to this spiritualising process because it is an ideal site for rehearsing the kinds of moral decisions which the business of daily living so often disguises from us. It is a critical, reflective space where ethical transformations can be tried out, replayed and amended without terminal consequences. The temptations of goodness can be indulged and the results may be life-changing, terrible or both. Conflict transformation facilitator Cynthia Cohen describes her process thus:

> I felt that if this group could re-examine their visions for change and reflect on who they were in the work for social change, something powerfully transformative might emerge (Cohen 2016, p. 212).

This attitude of critical reflection transports participants into the territory of Augusto Boal's Joker which he developed originally with the Arena Theatre in São Paulo in order that a character/actor could operate both within and outside the play to highlight contradictions and frame the responses of audiences (Boal 1979). The

Joker is a version of the old trickster, commuting between stage and auditorium like Hermes between gods and men and Feste singing his epilogue. The Joker is a card within the pack, within the system of play but she enjoys the special privilege of upsetting the fixed hierarchies and values. Joel Schechter recognised this semi-detached quality where the demarcation between actor and character is blurred, as emanating from Brecht's practice: 'The Joker is less conventional clown than a Brechtian epic actor' (Schechter 1985, p. 162). The Joker's function is not to transform but to stimulate the conditions that might give rise to transformation by inviting Forum Theatre participants to act and speak in ways that are not typically available to them. Boal's intentions for the transformative power of the Theatre of the Oppressed are clear: '…the act of transforming is itself transformatory. In the act of changing our image, we are changing ourselves, and by changing ourselves in turn we change the world.' (Boal 2006, p. 62) There is much hanging on this 'in turn' and the evidence that the personal transformations of applied theatre are reflected in social transformation is, at best, slight. Nonetheless those who seek to use theatre in the cause of transformation believe that its power to induce personal changes in attitude and behaviour can herald long-term, profound shifts that might lead to a different world. Cohen articulates the effects of facilitation in such terms:

> Farhat Agbaria has helped me see how deeply the dynamics of a conflict reside within each of us, and how skilful facilitation can help people become aware of how they embody these dynamics. It can also support and challenge people to question their beliefs, narratives and values, even those they have held sacred (Cohen 2016, p. 222).

Cohen introduces another element in the complex web of transformative possibility: the challenging of values; especially those to which we subscribe automatically – common sense and the 'no-brainer'. In his study of the factors underpinning the extinction or survival of past human societies the American environmental biologist Jared Diamond also identifies the importance of processes that lead to the upsetting of fundamental notions:

> Two types of choices seem to me to have been crucial in tipping their outcomes towards success or failure: long-term planning, and willingness to reconsider core values. On reflection, we can also recognize the crucial role of these same two choices for the outcomes of our individual lives (Diamond 2005, p. 522).

From this we might conclude that, however awkward, tentative and evanescent, transformation is a key component in determining our chances of survival. In the age of globalisation this may not mean, as in the past, the survival of a specific, localised community but rather the survival of the human species as a whole. The openness and mental agility required to question long-held values and to try out new alternatives are qualities that are closely allied to the capacity for transformation. For example, two of the current macro challenges facing our world are climate change and over-population. Any effective response to either is going to call for profound changes in the way in which humans conduct their lives: the size of their families; the ways in which they move across the planet; how we keep ourselves warm. In other words, the present crisis calls for profound transformations to fundamental aspects of what we understand as human behaviour.

Changing the ways in which we see the world around us links Diamond's understanding to the theatre practices of Brecht. The 'fairy dust' of transformation causes the eyes to look anew at that which is otherwise taken for granted. Writing about his approach to facilitation Paul Murray reflects on a similar, transient insight related to workshop participants' capacity to see the world differently: '… we felt we were somehow undermining a dominant mood or way of seeing, even for a minute or two…' (Murray 2016, p. 92) As with the tricksters of 'primitive' societies, the facilitator supports an anti-authoritarian, anti-orthodox attitude to human relations that a spirit of transformation makes possible. In Murray's practice this spirit is intimately linked to playfulness; indeed arises out of it. Playfulness is generated by the facilitator in order that it spread to the participants. Objects and persons that have play in them have the ability to move and change. Play is therefore the lubricant for transformation: 'The theatre values extremely highly my abilities to explore the possibilities of being other than who I think I might be: my abilities to play, perform and transform.' (Murray 2016, p. 90) I would want to add to this remark the ability to be transformed since sustainable transformation, as opposed to the theatrical tricks of Puck or Ariel, is only achieved when the transformer opens herself up to the transformative process at moments such as Prospero's acceptance of 'this thing of darkness' or the beaming Azdak's recognition of Grusha as an active agent in the flow of history.

5 Fail Better

The woodland experience of Bottom, abandoned in the green world of shape-shifting illusions, teaches him to be wary of pinning down any meaning, still less any logic to transformative moments: 'Methought I was – and methought I had – but man is but a patched fool if he will offer to say what methought I had.' (IV. 1) Even the chance to show off through a performance of his remarkable experience, 'Bottom's Dream', gives way to an instinct to lock whatever insights were revealed away in his bosom, and to his companions he merely says: 'Not a word of me.' (IV. 2); a transformation indeed. With transformation we may understand that something profound has changed within us without being able to articulate the nature of that change even for ourselves, never mind communicating it to others.

The pan-European research project into the effects of educational drama and theatre on young people in the context of formal schooling found that the terms of its brief were too narrow to encompass the transformative effects of the theatrical process upon young people. Having responded to how drama and theatre enhanced the capacity to exploit five of the Lisbon Key Competencies, the project discovered that it needed a six on its dice, 'all this and more…':

> The No6 on our DICE incorporates the first five but adds a new dimension because educational theatre and drama is fundamentally concerned with the universal competence of what it is to be human. An increasing concern about the coherence of our society and developing democratic citizenship requires a moral compass by which to locate ourselves and each

> other in the world and to begin to re-evaluate and create new values; to imagine, envisage, a society worth living in, and living with a better sense of where we are going with deep convictions about what kind of people we want to be (DICE 2010, p. 19).

Here is transformation on a grand scale. It can probably never be achieved, any more than Bottom's dream can be confidently interpreted. Perhaps the transformative action, however, is not the achievement but the attempt, the process. Transformation is an attitude, a propensity to which neither beginning nor end can be ascribed. Being truly human is a utopian, transformative aspiration without which our lives cannot escape the habits that breed depression and despair:

> I don't believe that women and men of the world, independent of their political positions yet conscious of their dignity as men and women, will not want to reflect on the sense of foreboding that is now universal in this perverse era of neoliberal philosophy. A foreboding that one day will lead to a new rebellion where the critical word, the humanist philosophy, the commitment to solidarity, the prophetic denunciation of the negation of men and women, and the proclamation of a world worthy of human habitation will be the instruments of change and transformation (Freire 1998, p. 115).

The transformative process of becoming human is never properly accomplished, is only halted by death, and is attempted anew in each generation. Theatre offers arenas where we can try out transformations, where we can see if the ass' head fits, and where it does not we can try again. In the words of Samuel Beckett:

> All before. Nothing else ever. Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better (Knowlson 1996, p. 674).

References

Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelais and his world*. Bloomington: Indiana UP.
Balfour, M. (2016). The Art of Facilitation: 'Tain;'t what you do (it's the way that you do it). In S. Preston (Ed.), *Applied Theatre: Facilitation. Pedagogies, Practices, Resilience*. London: Bloomsbury.
Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the oppressed*. London: Pluto Press.
Boal, A. (2006). *The aesthetics of the oppressed*. London/New York: Routledge.
Brecht, B. (1980). *Life of Galileo*. London: Eyre Methuen.
Brecht, B. (1966). *Parables for the theatre*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
Brecht, B. (1994). *Collected plays: Seven*. London: Methuen.
Brecht, B. (1977). *The measures taken and other Lehrstücke*. London: Eyre Methuen.
Cohen, C. (2016). Ain't you got a right to the tree of life.': Facilitators' Intentions Toward Community Integrity and Justice. In S. Preston (Ed.), *Applied Theatre: Facilitation. Pedagogies, Practices, Resilience*. London: Bloomsbury.
Diamond, J. (2005). *Collapse*. London: Penguin.
DICE. (2010). *The DICE has been cast* (www.dramanetwork.eu).
Fo, D. (1980). *Accidental death of an anarchist*. London: Pluto Press.
Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom*. Lanham, MY: Roman & Littlefield.
Gill, S. (2009). Native Americans and their religions. In J. Neusner (Ed.), *World religions in America*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
Graves, R. (1960). *The greek myths: 1*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Hirschkop, K., & Shepherd, D. (Eds.). (1989). *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*. Manchester/New York: Manchester UP.
Hyde, L. (1999). *Trickster makes this world*. New York: North Point Press.
Jones, E. (1977). *The origins of Shakespeare*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Knowlson, J. (1996). *Damned to fame*. London: Bloomsbury.
Marlowe, C. (1995). *Doctor Faustus and other plays*. Oxford/New York: OUP.
Means, R. (1995). *Where white men fear to tread*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.
Murray, P. (2016). Send in the Clowns. In S. Preston (Ed.), *Applied Theatre: Facilitation. Pedagogies, Practices, Resilience*. London: Bloomsbury.
Prentki, T. (2012). *The fool in European theatre*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Radin, P. (1971). *The trickster*. New York: Schocken Books.
Schechter, J. (1985). *Durov's Pig*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.
Shakespeare, W. (1997). *King Lear*. London: Cengage Learning.
Shakespeare, W. (2005). *A midsummer Night's dream*. London: Penguin Books.
Shakespeare, W. (2011). *The tempest*. London: Bloomsbury.
Weimann, R. (1978). *Shakespeare and the popular tradition in the theater*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Evaluation and the Theory of Change

Helen Cahill

1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the importance of engaging with evaluation science. It argues that the applied drama field must take responsibility for ensuring that it does not inadvertently participate in its own marginalization by failing to engage in the substantial work of charting its contribution to social and personal change. A mature pedagogical field can discuss not only what it can 'promise', it can also make visible the mechanisms through which change is produced. It seeks to learn from iterative feedback loops, and it harnesses knowledge from other disciplines so as to better understand its impact, potential and limitations.

2 A Hunter-Gatherer Fossicks in Many Disciplines

I am amongst those practitioner/researchers who have explored and advocated the transformative nature of applied drama. I have researched and evolved pedagogical theory about the use of drama to engage with the impact of social discourses on health-related attitudes and behaviour in areas such as sexuality, prevention of gender-based violence, mental health, and alcohol and other drug use (Cahill 2011a, 2012). Whilst engaged in this work, I have increasingly encountered the pressure to provide the theory of change presumed in the pedagogical design, and the imperative to use quantitative measures to assess impact on behaviour. This has occurred particularly when my work has been contained within school and community

H. Cahill (✉)
Director Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education,
The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia
e-mail: h.cahill@unimelb.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_11

education programs, wherein the applied drama strategies have been part of a larger collection of participatory learning strategies. This has necessitated working across disciplines. In my case, this has included the disciplines of health promotion and prevention science, sociology of the body, poststructuralist feminist theory, and evaluation science. Whilst it is not possible to become an expert in so many fields, I have found it is useful to be a 'hunter-gatherer', collecting relevant knowledge from the surrounding abundance of disciplinary and theoretical texts. What I offer in this chapter is derived from some of the fruits of this hunter-gatherer endeavour, and should be read with these limitations in mind.

3 Moving from Tacit to Explicit

As a facilitator/teacher in the field of applied drama, I am often the both the instigator and the key witness to 'change'. I have seen from within the work instances of deep affective and cognitive engagement. I have argued that learning through drama can offer a particularly powerful experiential, embodied, and collective pedagogical modality through which to engage in the critical thinking that is necessary to recognise and interrupt the social norms that work to confine personal and social change. A collective, creative and critical engagement through drama can help participants to create and explore the imaginary within which change becomes permissible and possible (Cahill 2014a).

It has also been from this insider location that I have become aware that learning through drama may not necessarily be transformative. It can also lead to forms of replication, or to reinforcement of the disenabling social scripts that stand in the way of change. For example, improvised play may be the site of replication of racial or gendered norms, tropes and stereotypes, and critical thinking may be better invited by interrupting traditional drama practices, and borrowing systems-thinking tools derived from other disciplines to form the basis of new drama conventions (Cahill 2011b). The fictional space, often presumed to discreet and separate from the ongoing surrounding 'reality', is nonetheless permeated by social and political norms, and thus drama-based activity within must be reviewed as critically as any other methods used within an educative space (Cahill 2010).

Given that as a practitioner/researcher, I work from an embedded position, there is also the possibility that I will fail to detect some of the outcomes produced through the applied drama experience, for certainly there will be factors that are outside of my line of view. It is here that I can benefit from the rigour of an evaluating partner. However, such a partnership requires that I am able to make my method visible, so as the partner can investigate the connection between inputs and outcomes. To do this I may have to find ways to shift my knowledge from the tacit or intuitive, to the explicit. Making the shift from tacit to explicit is an endeavour which is fostered through reflective practitioner or auto-ethnographic research methods. As noted by Donald Schön, the reflective practitioner responds to the consequences and perceived implications of practice-in-action by engaging in a spiral of enquiry or a kind

of experimenting in real time (Schön 1999). As they reflect in and on action, they engage in framing, hypothesis-building, experimental design, intervention, and theory building. In doing so, they convert their knowledge from tacit to explicit. Not only does the reflective practitioner themselves benefit from this process of knowledge-building, but they can augment this benefit when they find ways to communicate this knowledge to those beyond their disciplinary field.

4 Speaking across Disciplinary Boundaries

It is one thing for an insider to applied drama practice to appraise or appreciate an intervention designed and led by peers. They may draw from a connoisseurship tradition, within which they respond to aesthetic modalities. Eisner argues that this form of qualitative response is common in appraising educative arts practice (Eisner 1985). However, an evaluator may need the dramatist to be able to step beyond their disciplinary heritage when giving an account of their work. This is because any discipline can function as a territory which operates both to hold language, thinking, social and knowledge traditions in place, and to hold outsiders at bay (Holley 2009). Thus disciplinary traditions and their associated thought and language boundaries can pose barriers to productive partnerships with those from other disciplines, and constrain the operations of evaluative partnerships. Indeed, the field of applied drama risks playing a part in its own marginalization if it speaks chiefly to insiders, particularly in relation to evaluation (Cahill and O'Connor 2011).

Holley argues the importance of 'transdisciplinary' practice whereby members of different disciplines work together in a reciprocal way to produce innovations and knowledge that would not be possible from a singular or separate base (Holley 2009). Using this logic, a transdisciplinary practice around evaluation of applied drama interventions could potentially produce a richer or more readily transferable knowledge than that which could be derived by the singular field.

5 Considering Evaluation as a Transdisciplinary Practice

Transdisciplinary practice presumes an exercise in partnership. Partnership can be an easy goal, but a difficult practice. To partner requires a mix of courage, respect, and humility. The contributing partners must each be positioned as having something to teach and something to learn. Rather than being positioned as partners, it is not uncommon for evaluators to be positioned as outsiders, those 'others' who come to measure something they may not fully understand. This 'othering' phenomenon is discussed within evaluation science. Michael Quinn Patton, recognised as a leading researcher in the field of evaluation science, himself argues that to be positioned thus leads to poor practice in evaluation (Patton 2002). Some of the limitations of traditional 'outsider' evaluation which Patton cites are the ones that the applied

drama practitioner might themselves fear. They include that tradition of positioning the evaluator as an entirely external outsider whose role it is to measure outcomes in relation to stated program goals. The evaluator then manifests as a type of assessor – who tracks a linear line of cause and effect and ends up by rating the program's degree of success or failure (Patton 2006). Patton argues that there is a need for evaluative methods which enable people to "think evaluatively" rather than simply evaluate, noting that the classic model of positing and testing a hypothesis is too simplistic when approaching evaluation of multi-causal processes (Patton 2006).

If we presume that the evaluator can become a partner in a knowledge creation venture, exciting possibilities open up. However, for such a partnership to be productive, the parties have to engage in substantial relational and communicative work. Firstly, the notion of partnership begs reciprocity, hence the teams will need to position each other as co-contributors. Secondly, the work of partnership also entails developing shared language and constructs, and thus partners will need to educate each other about their presumptions and practices. If positioning and communication is well developed, they may together be able to co-construct something that is greater than that which would be possible through singular efforts, in this accomplishing the transdisciplinarity discussed by Holley (2009).

6 Investigating the Possibility of Unintended Negative Outcomes

Given the experimental nature of much applied drama and theatre work, it is particularly important to seek evidence of impact. Providers have an ethical responsibility to ensure that their interventions do not have unintended negative effects. This knowledge can make a broader contribution, as when such knowledge is well-documented in a field, people can learn from the experiences of others, and think critically about how to avoid problematic outcomes.

Cautionary findings are not abundantly available within the literature of the applied theatre field. However, relevant knowledge might be available within the disciplinary home of those working in the area of the 'content' focus that an applied drama project addresses. In recent years bodies of longitudinal research have emerged which demonstrate that some education programs show negative impact at longitudinal follow up, despite that they were received positively by recipients and also appraised well by providers (Dishion et al. 1999; Hyunsan et al. 2005). In some projects this has been retrospectively theorized to have occurred because the participants become exposed to a 'hidden curriculum' which inadvertently worked to reinforce negative social norms or low expectations of problematized participants. Negative impact has been shown when the pedagogical methods inadvertently normalise or glamorise the behaviours which it aims to change. This has been shown for example when body image education programs fail to take a sufficiently socially critical approach to the ways in which media and cultural factors work to produce

body image distress (O'Dea 2000); and when suicide prevention or mental health education programs focus on raising awareness, rather than focusing on building coping, peer support and help-seeking skills and reducing stigma (Cross et al. 2011). An over-reliance on engagement with the personal biography or re-telling of the distress stories of the participants can also lead to negative impacts. Research investigating programs targeting responses to emergency, conflict and trauma have identified that following experiences of trauma, an over-investment in re-telling and re-living the trauma story is not helpful therapeutically, and indeed can prolong the period of distress (La Greca and Silverman 2009). It is supportive connections and engagement in meaningful activities that helps young people to recover and reinvest their energies into personal growth and social contribution (Betancourt and Khan 2008). Potentially an evaluator with expertise in considering and tracking the possibility of unanticipated negative outcomes might make a particular contribution to the artist team.

Concerns about possible negative impacts can also arise for artist/facilitators when selecting proffered material from participants. In other contexts I have explored the tensions that can arise when a theatre-maker must choose between the captivating nature of a personal story, and the possibility that the re-telling of victim biographies might lead to a pathologising of the subject or inscription of a risk identity, and an under-exposure of people's capacities, growth and strengths (Cahill 2014b). This is not to presume that the exploration of distressing stories is inherently negative – but rather to identify that applied drama and theatre outputs might better accomplish change when they evoke critical thought, and when they build both the vision and the capacity for change, rather than just an agreement that it should happen.

A strong evaluation partnership can assist project designers to consider the possible negative impacts on participants and their audiences, and remain alert about emerging misalignments between intent, method and outcomes.

7 Identifying Secondary Benefits and Unanticipated Positive Outcomes

Evaluators can also make an important contribution when they seek information about unanticipated successes in relation to secondary outcomes or unintended positive consequences. It is possible that an evaluator might do better than the artist in documenting positive impact. Additionally, in some situations, a project may fail to accomplish its primary outcomes, but accrue significant positive secondary outcomes. Secondary outcomes may result from the participatory and connective nature of the process, even if they are not evoked in relation to the topic or 'content' focus which the project has been commissioned to address. For example, a project which aims to increase the capacity of young women to negotiate for safer sexual relationships may have only a limited impact on safe sex behaviours such as

condom use, but have a strong impact on self-esteem, social competence development, and the sense of social support and connectedness derived from working with others on the challenge of personal empowerment. Connectedness and social competence are outcomes that have been well-demonstrated to be protective factors which enhance the resilience of young people and diminish the likelihood that they engage in risk behaviours, suffer mental health problems, and increase the likelihood that they attain better academically (Blum and Mmari 2005; Catalano et al. 2004; McNeely et al. 2002; Resnick et al. 1997).

An evaluator might contribute to enhancing the artist/facilitator's awareness of positive impact by collecting data about secondary outcomes. They may for instance collect data about the ways in which participation in the program contributes to enhancing protective factors and/or reducing risk factors. There are well-developed instruments for investigating whether resilience levels have increased in response to participation in the program. These measures investigate factors such as social competence, social connectedness, a sense of agency and social responsibility, a sense of purpose or hope for the future, attachment to family, community and learning, problem-solving skills, effective coping style, and a sense of self-efficacy and positive self-regard (Blum and Mmari 2005; Bond et al. 2007). Applied drama practitioners may often see first-hand signs of the program contributing towards enhancing these protective factors, and feel validated by having an independent and validated measure used to additionally document this knowledge.

8 Key Practices for Creative-Evaluative Partnerships

Given the potential for developmental evaluation to enrich the knowledge available about the impact of applied drama, I wish to suggest three key practices for those seeking to build a productive transdisciplinary partnership between applied drama practitioners and evaluators:

1. *Positioning as partners:* Positioning suggests attention to power relations. To be pedagogically positioned as co-contributors requires the presumption that each have something to offer and something to learn.
2. *Making methods visible:* To work effectively across disciplines requires that practitioners make their methods visible. Both project designers and evaluators need to find ways to clearly articulate their methodology and the epistemological premises that underpin their practices. They may work conjointly to articulate a theory of change, and to define ways in which this change might be measured.
3. *Co-constructing transdisciplinary knowledge:* A key opportunity presents for applied drama practitioners and evaluators to work together to build: i) a *content* knowledge – such as the knowledge about the health or social problem the applied drama process is harnessed to address; ii) a *context* knowledge – relating to the social, political, historical and cultural environment which surrounds the project; iii) a *pedagogical* knowledge – about the efficacy of the applied drama

strategies; and iv) a *methodological* knowledge – about the effectiveness of the data collection methods in measuring change.

In the following sections I expand on these ideas, exploring the potential of transdisciplinary partnerships in building knowledge about the use of applied drama methods to contribute to personal and social change.

1. Position the evaluator as an embedded member of the team

Evaluation is a rich and evolving discipline, and as such, there is much to be gained from conceptualising the evaluator as a partner in the business of creating and sharing knowledge, rather than as someone who rates the quality of the program impact. Evaluators are aware that is challenging to deal with the problem of complexity, particularly when evaluating interventions targeting complex social problems such as poverty, inequity, and violence (Patton 2006). Patton recommends an approach which he terms 'developmental evaluation' as one which "is designed to be congruent with and nurture developmental, emergent, innovative, and transformative processes" (2009, p. 28). Within a developmental evaluation, the evaluator is a partner, located in situ from the start. From this position the evaluator works with the project team as they clarify objectives, design and provide the intervention, and along the way collect feedback that can be fed back into the program to strengthen its effectiveness. Given the complexity of the problems that many interventions are designed to address, it is ideal if the evaluator engages with appraising the context within which the program is provided, as well as the content and methods used. If positioned as a partner from the onset, they can help the program providers to understand and respond to the needs of the target community, and to keep track of the influence that the intervention is having in the lives of the participants. If positioned as a member of an interdisciplinary team, the evaluator is not so much an external assessor as a partner in the change endeavour (Patton 2006).

A focus on context as well as content and method is important in evaluation. Given that contexts of poverty and inequity comprise part of the ecology into which interventions are targeted, any evaluation must take a realistic look at the relative power of a single intervention in the face of accrued disadvantage. When an evaluation (or an intervention) fails to account for the conditions into which the program works, it becomes difficult to assess whether the applied drama program has limited impact due to the relatively puny nature of the intervention, or whether it is the intervention itself that is not helpful. Given this, it is important that both applied drama artists and evaluators seek to understand the 'ecology' of the intervention and to appraise the interactions between the individuals, the intervention and the social, material and cultural environment.

Patton further argues that this type of 'developmental' evaluation is most appropriate when innovators are ahead of the evidence-base. This is a useful pointer, as quite commonly, applied theatre or drama interventions are called for because they hold some promise in creating new approaches to addressing old problems, and thus may in part be ahead of the evidence-base. Indeed it can be the very capacity to

innovate, or to deal with complexity in a simple and accessible manner, that is sought via the applied drama intervention.

2. Make the method visible: articulate a theory of change

It is common to ask the evaluator to present their methods for justification and scrutiny as to their rigour. However, the evaluator is supported in their endeavour when program creators also engage in efforts to 'make their method visible' through providing their theory of change. A theory of change is like a sketch of the anticipated change process. It identifies the goals and objectives, and a description of the context and starting point. It names the strategies that will be used to advance towards the desired outcomes. It provides the explanatory story or project logic that outlines why it is that the selected strategies are presumed to be capable of causing the change. It houses the theory, or the explanatory story through which the proposed strategies are presumed to generate the change. These change drivers may be linear, circular or rhizomatic. They may be singular or multiple. They will likely include a narrative about ways in which the embodied, experiential, exploratory, performative and co-constructed pedagogical process will contribute to change. Sometimes called the 'logic model', the theory of change becomes the document which describes the *inputs, outputs and outcomes.* The *inputs* may include the creative artists/facilitators, participants, spaces, and resources that are used to generate the activity. The *outputs* include the products, experiences, performances, exercises or events that are produced as part of the program activity. They may include concept maps, workshops, scripts, rehearsals, and performances. The logic model explains how and why these inputs and outputs will contribute to generating the desired *outcomes*, or changes in knowledge, attitudes, states, skills, capacities, dreams, hopes or actions. Put simply, a theory of change houses a set of presumptions about what will be done, what is going to work, and what will be accomplished. When working across disciplines, as with an evaluator, this narrative will need to be in plain language, rather than reliant on insider shorthand.

3. Co-construct the theory of change

Patton argues that the evaluator can contribute from the design phase, particularly to the articulation of the theory of change. Rather than simply being a recipient of the program logic described above, and evaluator may contribute disciplinary expertise which can help in the very conceptualisation and shaping of the applied theatre intervention. Evaluators are taught to seek learnings from the pre-existing evidence-base as part of thinking through the challenge of charting and measuring impact. Thus they may have valuable research skills and topic relevant knowledge. Patton recommends use of a shared thought exercise to help map out the theory of change which includes beginning with a focus on constructing the image of the desired change (Patton 2006). *What is it that the programmers hope to accomplish?* The program logic is then developed by working backwards from this vision of change. *What are the preceding changes that must have been in place? What are the signs likely to be that these changes have come to pass? What must have had to happen to make that happen?* This thought exercise, and the associated mapping, is

used to help sketch out the logic of change or the theory of change. As part of this process, the programmers describe the signs or indicators that they would expect to see if the program is on track. A dialogic exchange about these process and progress markers helps the evaluator to know what and when to seek knowledge about how things are working, and permits the evaluator to contribute knowledge from other evaluations.

I have written elsewhere about how I have used drama-based activities to engage participants themselves in the work of creating a theory for change (Cahill and Coffey 2015). Favouring an embodied approach, I have used freeze-frames as the modality through which people construct, show and discuss the image of the desired change. This was followed by a backwards mapping of a series of freeze frames which show the intervening happenings (or indicators) that must have had to eventuate for the ultimate change marker to have come to pass. Use of embodied and collective images of the reverse change journey can themselves be accomplished within the applied drama activity, as well as with or for evaluators. In one example, members of the key affected populations for HIV were engaged in a leadership training short course. They worked in small groups to show an image of the change that would represent that their goals had been accomplished for young gay people. They constructed an image of a gay couple, on their wedding day, being photographed in front of the church, by proud parents. This freeze frame captured the changes in law, religion, society, family and culture that would all have come to pass for this event to occur. Mid-point moments in the change trajectory captured shifts in institutional provision, such as access to non-judgmental health services, and changes in the law (Cahill and Coffey 2015). Their embodiments of these changes were useful in that they demonstrated that the desired changes will play out in the micro moments of everyday life as well as in the institutions, laws, policies, discourses and practices of society.

I use this example to highlight that applied drama methods can be used in co-construction of the logic model. Artists can potentially help to evolve the practice of developmental evaluation by demonstrating how to use drama conventions to enrich the planning, monitoring and data collection techniques of the evaluator. Thus possibilities present for applied drama experts and evaluators to enrich each other's repertoire via exchange and evolution of tools and methods.

9 A Framework to Guide Approaches to a Developmental Evaluation

Given the complexity of working towards a transdisciplinary creative-evaluative partnership, it can be useful to use a framework to conceptualise and plan the approach. I have suggested a 6-strand framework as a potential guide for those planning for a developmental evaluation. The framework highlights the importance of the project designers making visible their objectives, logic and strategies. It

identifies the opportunities for knowledge growth when evaluative activity is interthreaded into the structure of a creative intervention which is complex or emergent in design.

A framework for designing a developmental evaluation partnership between partners, providers, practitioners, and participants		***Who is involved in creating and sharing knowledge?***
1. Develop program goals and project objectives	***Identify the broader program goal and specific project objectives***	*Commissioning body, applied drama leaders, and evaluators*
Ask: WHY?	*Identify whether the applied drama project is part of a broader approach to addressing a health, learning, environment or social justice concern.*	
	Map the ways in which it will complement, extend and be informed by other projects within this program.	
	Clarify the purpose and anticipated contribution of the applied drama project.	
	Develop specific objectives for the project, in collaboration with those commissioning the work.	
2. Identify project reach	***Identify the target groups and learn from their input***	*Applied drama leaders, stakeholders, representatives of the target community, Evaluators*
Ask: WHO?	*Clarify the intended participants and audiences who comprise the target group for the intervention.*	
	Research their cultural and personal needs and interests in relation to this concern.	
	Investigate their interest, capacity and preparedness to engage via applied drama modalities.	
	Identify issues of access and equity in relation to reaching and involving the target groups.	
	Invite them to share their current solutions or strategies used to address this problem.	
3. Research the issue	***Engage in interdisciplinary knowledge-building with experts in the field of the issue or 'problem' to be addressed***	*Applied drama leaders, disciplinary knowledge leaders, Evaluators*
Ask: WHAT?	*Work with relevant disciplinary and cultural experts to learn what is known about the nature of the problem to be addressed.*	

	Research what can be learnt from those in other disciplines who have set out to foster change on this issue.	
	Identify key principles and findings to inform the artistic and pedagogical design.	
4. Design and evolve the intervention	***Explore, evolve and innovate to design the intervention***	*Applied drama leaders, Evaluators, Representatives of target community of participants / recipients*
Ask: HOW?	*Bring knowledge gained in the research phase to the devising process.*	
	Design and evolve the applied drama intervention, fashioning pedagogical strategies to serve the project objectives.	
	Work with the evaluator to further clarify the theory of change and explain how the applied drama strategies are presumed to effect change.	
	Identify the indicators that will signify that the project objectives are being advanced.	
	Identify when, where and how evaluator may feed collect data and feed it back to inform ongoing project evolution and delivery.	
	Grow the evaluation design	
	Use the program logic to inform the development of measures and methods.	
	Evaluators and artists work together to devise qualitative and/or quantitative measures to investigate the impact on participants at various stages along the way.	
5. Learn from formative evaluation	***Provide and learn***	*Applied drama leaders, Evaluators, participants, commissioning body*
Ask: NOW WHAT?	*Provide and grow the applied drama experience in its early phases.*	
	Use formative evaluation techniques to collect data from participants, recipients, providers, disciplinary experts and commissioning body.	
	Use the data to further clarify the theory of change and to inform the strategies used in the applied drama project.	

	Review the integrity of the project design to assess whether the project is doing what it states it will do.	
	Consider whether the aesthetic and pedagogical qualities are strong enough to advance the objectives.	
	Investigate impact of the work on the applied drama team– In terms of mental, social and economic impact.	
	Make changes to further evolve the project.	
6. Evaluate short and longer term impact	***Short term impact evaluation***	*Applied drama leaders, Evaluators, participants. Commissioning body*
Ask: SO WHAT?	*Monitor the project to investigate the consistency and quality of delivery.*	
	Evaluate the short-term impact of the project during and at exit from the project.	
	Seek information about any unanticipated positive or negative consequences.	
	Longer term impact evaluation	
	Collect longitudinal data to investigate the extent to which the impact lasts or changes. Seek information about any unanticipated positive or negative consequences	
	Evaluation of system-level capacity building, sustainability and ownership	
	Investigate the extent to which the project expertise was transferred to community members and stakeholders.	

10 Conclusion

It is important that the applied drama field avoid being positioned as 'program candy', a decorative delight available only for the short-term or the select few. If its claims as a pedagogy for change are to be understood and harnessed outside the field itself, it must accrue a robust body of knowledge about the contribution it can make to personal and social change. Deep and sustained transdisciplinary partnerships with evaluators and other experts can help to build this body of knowledge. The evaluators themselves can potentially assist the applied drama team to articulate their theory of change, and help them to map some of the key markers or milestones and indicators that they would expect to see if things were progressing as

hoped. A partner-evaluator can work with the artist to provide formative data to enrich an emergent design, and to evolve methods for investigating not only the primary outcomes housed in their project objectives, but also any unintended positive or negative outcomes.

To work well within an evaluation partnership, there is a need to makes one's methods visible, and to be able to describe them within a theory of change. The responsibility rests with the project designers to find a way to clearly articulate their methodology and the epistemological premises that underpin their practices.

Engagement in reciprocal knowledge exchange is particularly relevant in the field of applied drama, as commonly interventions are used to serve a wider social purpose relating to wellbeing, justice or learning. This means that the artist/facilitator who brings their aesthetic and pedagogical knowledge of drama to the commission can benefit from seeking cross-disciplinary knowledge about the issues that the intervention is to address, and context within which it will be offered. This entails using transdisciplinary approaches to build both a *content* knowledge – such as the knowledge about the health or social problem the applied drama process is harnessed to address, and a *context* knowledge – relating to the social, political, historical and cultural environment within which the project will take place.

A disciplinary field that can robustly discuss both the promise and method of change, and the probability that it can be accomplished, augments its potential to make a contribution. When this field also shares its knowledge-base with those from other disciplines, it is more likely to be recognized and harnessed by partners seeking creative interventions to address complex social problems. Strong partnerships with developmental evaluation experts can potentially augment the reach and impact of innovative work led by those within the applied drama field.

References

Betancourt, T., & Khan, K. (2008). The mental health of children affected by armed conflict: Protective processes and pathways to resilience. *International Review of Psychiatry, 20*(3), 317–328.

Blum, R., & Mmari, K.N. (2005). Risk and protective factors affecting adolescent reproductive health in developing countries. Retrieved July 3, 2017 from http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/43341/1/9241593652_eng.pdf

Bond, L., Butler, H., Thomas, L., Carlin, J., Glover, S., Bowes, G., & Patton, G. (2007). Social and school connectedness in early secondary school as predictors of late teenage substance use, mental health, and academic outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 40*(4), 357–359.

Cahill, H. (2010). Re-thinking the fiction/reality boundary: Investigating the use of drama in HIV prevention projects in Vietnam. *RIDE, 15*(2), 152–172.

Cahill, H. (2011a). Drama for deconstruction. *Youth Theatre Journal, 25*(1), 16–31.

Cahill, H. (2011b). Transdisciplinary practice: Using systems thinking tools to generate new stories about HIV. *Drama Australia (NJ), 35*, 15–33.

Cahill, H. (2012). Form and governance: Considering the drama as a 'technology of the self'. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 17*(3), 405–424.

Cahill, H. (2014a). Promoting critical thinking within the drama: Using theory to guide practice. *Applied Theatre Research, 2*(2), 151–164.
Cahill, H. (2014b). Withholding the personal story: Using theory to orient practice in applied theatre about HIV and human rights. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 19*(1), 23–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2013.872427.
Cahill, H., & Coffey, J. (2015). Positioning, participation and possibility: Using post-structural concepts for social change in Asia-Pacific youth HIV prevention. *Journal of Youth Studies, 19*(4), 1–9.
Cahill, H., & O'Connor, P. (2011). Of stances and territories: Interdisciplinary, drama and social change. *Drama Australia (NJ), 35*, 4–11.
Catalano, R. F., Haggerty, K. P., Oesterle, S., Fleming, C. B., & Hawkins, J. D. (2004). The importance of bonding to School for Healthy Development: Findings from the social development research group. *Journal of School Health, 74*(7), 252–261.
Cross, W. F., Seaburn, D., Gibbs, D., Schmeelk-Cone, K., White, A. M., & Caine, E. D. (2011). Does practice make perfect? A randomized control trial of behavioral rehearsal on suicide prevention gatekeeper skills. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 32*, 195–211.
Dishion, T. J., McCord, J., & Poulin, F. (1999). When interventions harm - peer groups and problem behaviour. *American Psychologist, 54*(9), 755–764.
Eisner, E. (1985). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs* (2nd ed.). New York: Macmillan.
Holley, K. (2009). Understanding interdisciplinary challenges and opportunities in higher education. *ASHE Higher Education Report, 35*(2), 1–131.
Hyunsan, C., Hallfors, D. D., & Sanchez, V. (2005). Evaluation of a high school peer group intervention for at-risk youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 33*(3), 363–373.
La Greca, A., & Silverman, W. (2009). Treatment and prevention of posttraumatic stress reactions in children and adolescents exposed to disasters and terrorism: What is the evidence? *Child Development Perspectives, 3*(1), 4–10.
McNeely, C. A., Nonnemaker, J. M., & Blum, R. W. (2002). Promoting school connectedness: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of adolescent health. *Journal of School Health, 72*(4), 138.
O'Dea, J. (2000). School-based interventions to prevent eating problems: First do no harm. *Eating Disorders, 8*(2), 123.
Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
Patton, M. Q. (2006). Evaluation for the way we work. *Nonprofit Quarterly, 13*(1), 28–33.
Resnick, M., Bearman, P., & Blum, R. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on adolescent health. *JAMA, 278*(1), 823–832.
Schön, D. A. (1999). The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action (1999th ed.). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Concluding Thoughts

Kelly Freebody, Michael Finneran, Michael Balfour, and Michael Anderson

We have titled these final few pages *concluding thoughts*, rather than *conclusions* as it is a more accurate representation of what we are trying to achieve in this volume. Each reader, we hope, will draw their own conclusions from the discussions presented here. These will, no doubt, depend on what brought the reader to the volume in the first place, their relationship with the practice and research of applied theatre, their preferences, their experiences, and their politics. As editors of the volume, our concluding thoughts are influenced by the reasons we chose to develop this project initially, why we chose to work with these authors, and the outcomes of the research project that the first half of this book present.

The initial study that started this book project grew out of a perceived need for greater clarity around the term 'change' for a field that relied on change-associated ideas to get its work done. Initially we imagined that we would develop a framework for understanding change in applied theatre, but as we developed the pilot study we became aware of how much discussion there is around this topic, without a clear and detailed understanding of how the terms associated with change are used by applied theatre practitioners and scholars. Our experiences, it seems, were not isolated. There has been a similar study conducted in the US (Omasta and Snyder-Young 2014).

K. Freebody (✉) · M. Anderson
The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: kelly.freebody@sydney.edu.au; michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

M. Finneran
Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
e-mail: michael.finneran@mic.ul.ie

M. Balfour
Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: m.balfour@griffith.edu.au

K. Freebody et al. (eds.), *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change*, Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 22,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78178-5_12

The research project offered us the opportunity to grasp at a micro level the concepts associated with ‘change’. This includes common concept pairings, the relationship between change, intention, values and understandings of success, and a critical exploration of the key logics drawn from this micro-analysis. Macro level theory and discussion is only useful to a field if it can find relevance and connection with the micro-and meso- level experiences of those that work, play and participate in applied theatre. This project attempted to purposefully add to a growing body of work that is attempting to do that.

The authors were invited to contribute their chapters in the second half of this volume for three key reasons. First and foremost, they are all practitioners actively engaged in doing applied theatre for social change. Secondly, they are all scholars who have recently written or presented work that has explored the concept of change in applied theatre. Finally, because they ways in which they have engaged in these things is different; they work in different spaces, and conceptualise change in different ways. Our plan was **not** to present a united narrative about change in applied theatre and how we understand it. These authors covered a broad range of concepts related to change – evaluation, relationships, politics, hope, criticism, concern, and playfulness. Understanding how these discussions to take place alongside each other reminds us that the ‘umbrella’ of applied theatre is excitingly large – with room for complementing and competing ideas and practices.

Change, transformation, effect, affect, results, outcomes, impact… so many terms are employed by practitioners, scholars, funders, planners, and participants of applied theatre to discuss what happens during and after an applied theatre event. These terms are used to make sense of why applied theatre work does, should, shouldn’t, and could happen. There is still much to be written in this area. For instance one anonymous reviewer of this manuscript noted that in these discussions of change, there had not been the question of whether the possibility of change is just as important as where change is made or evidenced. In severely under-served populations - is applied theatre work for change, regardless of the evidence it generates, better than accepting the status quo? to quote that reviewer: “What happens when the bar is that low? It means it’s easy to justify the inclusion of applied theatre as not necessarily ‘doing good’ but as better than ‘doing nothing’.[1]

There are numerous questions such as this that are yet to be explored about how we approach, value, and understand theories and processes of change in our work. However, there also conclusions that can be drawn from the research and commentary in this volume. Here are five concluding thoughts drawn from our experiences writing about understanding change:

1. Words matter. How we present ourselves, our work, our hopes, and our success now will, in the future, provide a historical context that represents what the work **is**. It’s important, we believe, to attend to the notion that words are not neutral.

[1] Thank you to the reviewer for their comments. As the review process was anonymous they cannot be appropriately cited.

They are used by societies to govern, understand, and categorise people and communities.
2. Neoliberal forces exist in our work. We can resist them, or work with them, or ignore them (although we don't suggest this), but they are here and they effect what we do. Good things have happened because of funding opportunities presented by institutions, governments and policies. However we must remain aware of the role of programs and practices in applied theatre in communicating and maintaining the representation of people as social 'problems'.
3. Context is central. Different contexts invoke different disciplinary perpectives, methodologys, constraints, opportunities and intentions in applied theatre work. Having said this, and linked to point 2 above - Neoliberalism seems to be an overarching context to much of the work (and problematisation of the work) discussed in this volume. Whether explicitly stated or implied, the concept of change in the projects and perspectives discussed in this volume, and our subsequent relationship to that change, is influenced by the global neoliberal agenda.
4. There are different ways of thinking about change. The 'change discussion' in the field right now seems quite caught up with the relationship between funding, evaluation, and the theatre work. But, as Prentki reminds us, we can talk and think about different kinds of transformation in theatre work. Let's not lose that.
5. Other fields have a lot to offer this discussion. Our work is unique, but methodologies, theoretical frameworks, evaluation practices and institutional relationships from other, particularly more established, fields can give us insight into how similar contexts, circumstances and problems have been addressed. Fishbowls are safe and warm. We are not necessarily suggesting a trip to the ocean, but we do need to bring in fresh water every now and then.

Drawing on these final two points, we would like to acknowledge that much of the work presented in this volume is cerebral; writing about documents is quite removed from the act of facilitating, performing or watching theatre. However, as some of the edited chapters in this volume remind us, drama and theatre offer something unique as a way of understanding change. The embodied, poetic, playful, work of applied theatre can and should provide us with different modes of communication, research and explanation of key concepts. It is our belief that within this space, there is a great potential for applied theatre to participate **meaningfully** and **differently** in social change agenda.

Reference

Omasta, M., & Synder-Young, D. (2014). Gaps, silences and comfort zones: Dominant paradigms in educational drama and applied theatre discourse. *Research in drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 19*(1), 1–22.