

Marginalised Youth in the App Generation: Making the case for the integration of digital technologies in Process Drama

Dr Nicola Abraham, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London.

Nicola.Abraham@cssd.ac.uk

Abstract:

This paper intends to argue that the introduction of digital technology into Process Drama is not an attempt to replace the imaginative realm of play. Instead digital technologies can aid immersion into the liminal space of a workshop. The App Generation, Generation Z, or the 'post-millennials' form a new community of young people who are digitally literate, who have grown up surrounded by technology that they have learnt to engage with as part of their development: Technology is a new instrument of play. The intention of this research is to present an argument for the effectual integration of technology into Process Drama to revive and update the approach. The intention is to engage participants in an experience that speaks to their own worlds. I will draw upon a project I undertook in a primary school with six 8-9yrs old children to further justify the needs for digital technologies in Process Drama and reflect upon the possibilities offered by this approach.

Introduction

There exists a huge discontinuity between the current and previous generations, 'a singularity – an event which changes things so fundamentally that there is absolutely no going back' (Prensky 2001:1). This singularity is the vast and rapid propagation of digital technology. Marc Prensky (2001) proposed that there exist two categories of familiarly with digital technologies: Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants. He proposes that young people, generation Z (the new millennials), or as Howard Gardner and Katie Davis (2014) suggest, The App Generation, have grown up immersed in a range of technological advances which they are constantly surrounded by in their everyday lives. Downloadable free Apps (Applications), Computer games, e-mail, the Internet, mobile phones, instant messaging, social media platforms and access to digital video, photography, design and music are just some of the advances that the current generation own, distribute and use on a daily basis. Drawing upon the work of Dr Bruce D. Perry, Prensky asserts that it is very likely that the brain structure and learning needs of young people in the App Generation (young people born from the year 2000 onwards), have changed. Listing the potential changes to learning, which may be required to adhere to the minds of young people, which have developed in the digital era, Prensky notes the following preferences:

1. Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast
2. They like to parallel process and multi-task
3. They prefer their graphics *before* their text rather than the opposite
4. They prefer random access (like hypertext)
5. They function best when networked.
6. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards

7. They prefer games to “serious” work

(Prenksy 2001:2).

A common denominator here may arguably be a series of signs that point towards the development of divergent thinkers, who prefer the perquisite of rhizomatic access to information to enable them to learn new ideas in a creative, exploratory and discursive network of thoughts rather than a linear flow of information, where connections are already made for them. In conflict with this idea is the Torrence Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT). Davis and Gardner (2014) note that in the age of the App Generation, there have been significant declines in each area of creative and divergent thinking in the following categories: areas of elaboration on ideas, fluency of idea generation, originality in unusual ideas, creative strengths of idea conveyance¹, and resistance to premature closure i.e. open-mindedness, curiosity and new experiences (ibid, 128). In this study, emphasis is placed on the decline of creativity due to engagement with life as a series of formulaic Apps², which enable the ‘user’ to interact with the world to achieve continually higher level awards to reach the desired outcome or job. In an age of increasing job uncertainty and unemployment this life App., methodology to continually ‘succeed’ in a neoliberal world may be met with disappointment and shock should the formula fail to deliver a ‘win’.

What Gardner and Davis fail to unpack is the pressure put on young people within the education system to consistently reach for such Apps to succeed. The constraints and disparity in possibilities to become social mobile as a result of succeeding in one’s education, are inhibited by more barriers than we can discuss in this article. However, it is important to note that Davis and Gardner’s argument is perhaps geared more towards the app-dependent rather than app-enabling culture of the digital age. App-dependency names digital technologies as sources of blame for decreased creativity, and perhaps alone they may inhibit particular possibilities for developing creative thinking, though, clearly, from Prensky’s observations, there is a call for opportunities to work creatively from young people who have engaged with the digital world. The importance of enabling creative thinking has been discussed at length by Sir Ken Robinson. He notes that the potential of ‘having original ideas’ (2010), is dependent on the innate ability of a person to think divergently:

Divergent thinking is...Essential capacity for creativity...Ability to see lots of possible answers to a question, lots of possible ways of interpreting a question, to think laterally...’ (ibid, 2010)

Multi-tasking and rhizomatic preferences to knowledge acquisition, as skills developed from engaging with digital technologies, lend themselves to divergent thinking. Creative thinking is thereby connected with an ability to problem solve and think critically: an essential part of understanding the world and becoming active citizens in shaping the future.

¹ This includes ‘emotional and verbal expressiveness, humorousness, unconventionality and liveliness and passion’ (Davis and Gardner, 2014:128).

² Applications.

This article aims to make the case for the complimentary, rather than supplementary, integration of digital technologies as enhancements to Cecily O'Neill's Process Drama methodology to engage young people, particularly those from deprived backgrounds, in creative processes that adhere more closely to the call of Digital Natives for more challenging and faster paced methods of learning, investigating and creating.

Outlining the urgency and need for the integration of the digital within Process Drama is important to frame the context to justify a call for this advancement. Indeed, practitioners and applied theatre companies are already adapting by utilising digital technologies as part of their practice to engage with young people. I will review current advances in the field in this area once I have noted the challenges of engaging society's most vulnerable young people through Applied Theatre strategies.

Why do we need to engage with imagination?

Between October 2008 and June 2010, I conducted a series of projects with vulnerable young people who were accessing the provisions of a children's charity based in South-East London. This research was an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded collaborative doctoral award (CDA). The intention behind this research project was to develop an understanding of what change might mean for vulnerable youth and how applied theatre practice may enable change to happen. There was an additional more specific emphasis placed on how changes that happen within workshops may be able to transition beyond the life span and temporary space of a workshop series back into the classroom and life beyond school or crisis centre setting. The project was a longitudinal study working with children and young people aged between 6-13 years old.

The young people I worked with had endured different forms of cruelty in lives. Many were the victims of ongoing social deprivation, of falling through the net of social service care for young people in need of urgent support, and were often excluded or at risk of exclusion from the education system. The family structures that we may take for granted as what John Bowlby (2008, 2010) terms 'a secure base', where children had naturally developed healthy attachments of support to their family and learnt how to be independent, were often eroded or non-existent. Children who have experienced such high levels of deprivation and insecurity often develop a behaviour of resistance, which may be more recognisable in mainstream schools as violent or disruptive behaviour. Camila Batmanghelidjh (2008) suggests that children who have experienced violence may develop maladaptive behaviours or present rejective behaviours towards others. Erika Karlsson and Michael Rönnlund (2006) have additionally noted that there is a clear relationship between externalised problems and behaviours in relation to dismissive and avoidant attachment styles in adolescents. David Misselbrook (2011) contests this connection noting that societal constructions of damaged children suggest that they are perceived as 'nothing but the consequence of trauma' (2011:393). Misselbrook argues that this is a limited view of the human condition, and calls for a more complex understanding of damaged children as products of many further factors such as neuroscience, common humanity and genetics, in order to address our 'broken society' rather than lay blame on one aspect of the lives of vulnerable young people.

The young people I worked with displayed many of the resistant and rejective behaviours outlined by Batmanghelidjh et al. The significance of noting this context is to focus on the impact these contextual circumstances had on participants' capacity to imagine, to enter the fictional liminal space of an improvisation. Participants often found the notion of entering an imaginative realm absurd, and on the occasions where they accepted a fictional scenario, they often brought their own, often conflictual, group dynamics and relationships from the 'real' world of their school or crisis centre setting, into the world of the fiction. This phenomena is similar to a concept that has been described by Augusto Boal (1995) as *Metaxis*, which he defines as follows:

When the oppressed herself, in the role of artist, creates images of her own oppressive reality, she belongs to both these worlds utterly and completely, not merely 'vicariously'. Here we see the phenomenon of *Metaxis*: the state of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different, autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image. She shares and belongs to two autonomous worlds: her reality and the image of her reality, which she herself has created (ibid: 43).

Though this practice may be effective for the creation of Forum Theatre or Legislative theatre content, it provides a 'block' that prohibits vulnerable young people as participants from distancing themselves far enough from a scenario to critically engage with the parallel offerings of a fictional world. Drama prides itself on providing escapism, a freeing of the imagination, but when it simply mirrors and, on occasion, distorts reality in a more intense and grotesque manner to cause a magnified conflict, or opportunity to further 'play out' exclusionary behaviours or rejection in group dynamics, it is perhaps more harmful than useful.

Over several months of trialling a plethora of approaches from Theatre for Development grassroots storytelling through to co-designing projects with participants, to Forum Theatre to address inequality and moments of injustice children felt within their classroom or crisis centre, nothing that was participant-centred seemed to enable participants to gain momentary respite from their group dynamics and continual rejection of others. I had hoped that the reflective nature of Participatory Theatre (PT) strategies would engage children as experts of their own worlds to begin to imagine alternative routes beyond their current experiences to more positive futures. Elizabeth Quinlan and Wendy Duggleby (2009) suggest that consultative approaches to drama that invite participants to discuss their everyday life are essential in developing responsive practice:

Participatory Theatre (PT)... is used to create new knowledge grounded in immediate experience and direct experiment. It transcends the theory/practice divide by considering not just "what is" but also "what might be" and what "can be" (Todres 2008 in Duggleby & Quinlan 2009:207).

This responsive approach offers a point of departure for participants to dream of the 'what if' that may result from imaginatively engaging with dramatic play that provides opportunities for reflection and the dreaming of alternative scenarios. The importance of imagination and the idea of dreaming or hoping for alternatives was recently echoed in Collective Encounters' conference *Rediscovering the Radical: Theatre for*

Social Change. Professor Tim Prentki and Professor John Holloway (2016) both put forward the proposition that to be radical is not to necessarily critically denounce a system of oppression, but to dream of an alternative, to play with possibilities. Both suppositions echo much Theatre for Change rhetoric, but they do not account for the difficulties of imagining alternatives, when your capacity to dream is inhibited by the stark reality of your struggle to survive everyday life.

One of the few points of departure in the project, where participants began to engage, took place in a Process Drama I facilitated. The session aimed to involve a group of 6, 8-9-year olds in a Pirate drama involving a shipwreck, survival on a desert island, and a set of carefully designed tasks which would be undertaken by each participant. Cecily O'Neill's *Process Drama* and Dorothy Heathcote's *Mantle of the Expert* are methodologies for engaging with young people. Both approaches are complimentary of an ethos of drawing upon participant experience and expertise to problem solve. They are additionally designed to enable participants to encounter a shared experience and invest in a scenario that is often vastly different from their everyday reality. Roger Wooster (2016) discusses Heathcote's approach noting that she 'had an antipathy for audience and gave primacy to the *journey* rather than the destination' (2016, 32). Importantly, Wooster continues suggesting:

Through the process of drama or TIE, the children are facilitated into contextualising the events, emotions and the relationships of what is happening in the drama construct at that moment to a more 'universal' observation of the human condition (2016, 71).

This distanced, but simultaneously involved the child as an 'expert' in role as a central character who could affect the direction of the narrative. Emphasis placed on creating a critical distance, from the often stark reality that confronted participants in their everyday life, may have provided an incentive to engage within the liminal space. Victor Turner (1982) argues that liminality 'facilitates the liberation of human capacities to cognition, affect, volition, creative etc., from the normative constraints' (1982:44 in Shepherd 2016:45). The sense of possibility inherent in Turner's reading of liminality may provide an explanation for the interest participants invested into the Process Drama.

Part of the immersion of participants into the liminal space required careful planning to avoid 'opt out' behaviours, which had often been present in previous sessions, from continuing in this workshop. The session had to begin with a sense of intrigue and excitement, which is why I introduced the group to the Process Drama by arriving at their classroom in a Captain's hat, complete with parrot, treasure map and a compass stating "You are late! Come on, hurry up, the ship is about to leave!" (Abraham, 2009). Participants ran to the workshop room, where previously they had reluctantly left their classroom to join the session without enthusiasm. Immediately aboard the ship with eye patches, binoculars, hats and their best west-country accents, the group boarded the upside table with make-shift table cloth sails and set off to seek treasure.

Once participants had encountered and survived a terrible storm, realised in the musical accompaniment to the voyage, they were set a series of tasks to complete. This involved voting for one another to take on the role of Captain and taking charge

of the rest of the crew to complete set tasks. This may appear to be a simple request, however upon previous occasions the group had exhibited violent and aggressive behaviours towards one another whenever any of the group had assumed a dominant role. This type of *initiator* behaviour is synonymous with resistant acts as a form of self-protection learnt as survival mechanisms in daily life. Taking a risk and democratically voting in a new leader was thereby a significant challenge for the group. In fact, all the tasks were designed to enable participants to readdress their dynamic challenges by working together towards shared goals through creative processes. The structure of the tasks is detailed in the table that follows:

Table 1: Tasks and Functions of the Pirates Process Drama Session

Task	Function
<p>Task 1: The task of the first Captain: Ask participants to gather materials that have washed ashore from the ship wreck. They need to construct a shelter to house everyone from tropical storms. The Captain must also encourage their crew to fetch and boil water, and find food on the island before nightfall.</p>	<p>To bring participants into the fictional realm by improvising and miming the creation of their own micro world on the island. The captain aimed to offer encouragement and take on a leadership role to guide and advise their crew.</p>
<p>Task 2: The task for the second Captain: Ask participants to take a walk in the jungle and map the area. They must recount their stories for the Captain to prove their bravery and relate their findings of any unusual creatures on the island.</p>	<p>To create shared memories of their trek through the jungle and bring back further context delving deeper into the liminal world of the island. Creating a community story of heroics, bravery, and survival together as a team to convince the Captain of their bravery. The Captain must praise their crew naming and commending their achievements.</p>
<p>Task 3: The task for the third Captain: Ask participants to choreograph a group movement piece to frighten away any potential adversaries who may also occupy the island. The leadership of the movements should be unknown so that that group appears to be working as one unit rather than following a specific leader.</p>	<p>To learn to listen, suggest, respond and honour ideas contributed by all members of the group.</p>
<p>Task 4: The task for the fourth Captain: Ask participants to construct protective outfits to ensure they are ready for battle should unknown angry creatures of adversaries attack. The crew are asked to construct outfits from the 'materials' found on the island. The crew must then demonstrate the various design decisions they have made to the Captain to approve.</p>	<p>To promote creative collaboration devising a strategy and realising an artistic vision as a collective aiming towards a common goal as a group.</p>
<p>Task 5: The task for the fifth Captain: Drawing upon skills from the crew the Captain asks participants to race across the island with a long string spanning the distance from one side to the other. Along the string the crew are asked to write and 'peg' skills needed to a good team and survive the island on one side, and challenges on the other. These are reviewed and discussed</p>	<p>To apply and reflect upon learning from the series of tasks to note core skills and challenges felt and held by participants. To collectively analyse, witness and review problem solving strategies for group work.</p>

by the Captain who reads out all suggestions given by members of the crew.	
Task 6: The task for the sixth Captain: The crew are asked to write letters home describing their adventures and writing about their fellow crew members, which are sent in a bottle out to sea. After this, the Captain instructs the crew to try to piece the ship back together in an attempt to escape the island. This is successful and the group arrive home triumphantly.	To document adventures experienced as a group on the island. To return home a new crew, with new connections, memories and evidence that as a collective, the group can work together to achieve goals within the liminal frame.

Another challenge that I identified in my reflections from previous workshops was my presence as an interfering witness in the creative offerings of the group. This may simply have been a result of asking for clarity or conducting thought-tracking exercises to enable the group to build upon their contributions. However, each interaction appeared to hinder rather than enable participants contributing further ideas to their improvisatory explorations in workshops. Using a different strategy in the teacher-in-role approach to the workshop enabled me to ‘operate *within* the dramatic art, not outside it’ (Bolton & Heathcote 1995:4). In this scenario, the facilitator enters the liminal space of the fiction as an equal, a crew member, as opposed to maintaining a supervisory or surveillance role outside of the dramatic space to sculpt the journey/action of the participants. Though this approach offered an opportunity for participants to develop autonomy and points of ‘contained’ agency, there were also clearly limits to the impact of the session.

It was clear that participants enjoyed the session, which was evident in their feedback at the end of the workshop:

‘I liked being a Captain and being a clothes designer’

‘I think Pirates was our best week because I think that we had loads of fun on the boat and we all got to be the head Pirate’

‘I liked the Pirate one as well because it was really fun with the tasks, and the Captain, and the boat, it was just really fantastic, I loved it’

‘And I liked the Pirate game because it was just like (gasp) I think that was our best week because we did loads of things and we all got a turn’

‘Last week was so good, I got to be Captain and help everybody, woop³!’

(Project Evaluation Extracts, March 2009).

However, the intention to build connections between peers was short lived beyond the temporary life span of the project. By this I refer to participants’ actions shifting the moment that they stepped over the threshold to the workshop room. Participants who had demonstrated a clear ability and willingness to engage in collaborative creative work within the liminal world they had entered then reverted back to shouting at one another, swearing and pushing their peers out of the way thereby returning

³ Exclamation.

back to previous aggressive rejectionist behaviours. The temporary nature of this session may be to blame or perhaps participants were only momentarily intrigued by a game that was created for them rather than with them. Andy Furlong (2013) notes the importance of actively involving young people in decision making processes. Drawing on Bernard Davie's manifesto, Furlong notes that these should be 'clearly tipped in the direction of young people' as a means of empowerment (2013:248) otherwise one runs the risk of introducing superficial participation. This lack of investment in sustaining performed changes in interaction may have many causes, but perhaps continued commitment, ownership and engagement could account for such an instant return to previous destructive group dynamics.

The next section aims to offer points of potentially further engagement and connection with vulnerable young people through the use of digital technologies within Process Drama though a discussion of the potential uses and offerings of digital technology in similar practices.

Current Practices Using Digital Technology with Applied Theatre

In Australia, the USA, Singapore, and the United Kingdom, applied theatre researchers and practitioners are experimenting with the fusion of drama, theatre and digital technologies. Michael Anderson, David Cameron and Paul Sutton (2014, 2012) strongly advocate for the integration of digital technology into practice noting that they hope this is a pivotal point of progression in the field. Anderson et al. suggest that engaging in new technologies is an important step towards 'engaging with participatory culture' (2012:3). Noting the priority for education to engage young people with new media literacies, Jenkins et al (2009) outlines the following elements as key points of learning:

1. Play: the capacity to experiment with one's surroundings as a form of problem solving.
2. Performance: the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery.
3. Simulation: the ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real-world processes.
4. Appropriation: the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content.
5. Multitasking: the ability to scan one's environment and shift focus as needed to salient details.
6. Distributed Cognition: the ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities.
7. Collective Intelligence: the ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal.
8. Judgement: the ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources.
9. Transmedia Navigation: the ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple media.
10. Networking: the ability to search for, synthesise, and disseminate information.

11. Negotiation: the ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms.
12. Visualisation: the ability to translate information into visual models and understand the information visual models are communicating.

(Jenkins et al. 2009 cited in Anderson et al 2014:4)

Each element of Jenkins' list appears to be compatible with Prensky's call for more interactive and digitally engaged forms of educational practice. The additional points of digital accessibility enabled by engaging with exciting and current technologies, which may appear to feel alien to a Digital Immigrant, are part of everyday life interactions and interconnectivity for Digital Natives. Embracing rather than feeling cautious about using digital technology is thereby an act that could be considered what Paulo Freire terms 'cultural synthesis'. Culture Synthesis, according to Freire, describes an intervention where 'the actors who come from "another world" to the world of the people do so not as invaders. They do not come to *teach* or to *transmit* or to *give* anything, but rather to learn, with the people, about the people's world' (Freire, 2006:180). Freire's positioning of the actor or outsider intending to embrace the culture and traditions of a people, may be comparable to the teacher aiming to engage in the world of the digital natives who are often their students. In this case the teacher is at a disadvantage as a Digital Immigrant, but can respond by offering their own investment in the everyday virtual reality of their students.

Julie Dunn, Penny Bundy and Nina Woodrow (2012, 2014) discuss a project they conducted with newly arrived refugee children. They discuss the potential of using interactive technologies i.e. an iPad and additional supporting media, as a bridge for multicultural second language learning in the classroom within a process drama methodology. The approach proved highly effective, enabling participants to develop a sense of agency and autonomy over the content created within the narrative structure through their engagement with technology. An additional advantage identified by Dunn et al. was the importance of using technology and a 'safe' fictional frame to explore the topic of social integration without retraumatising refugee children by re-imagining recent past events. Dunn et al. note: 'In this context it was imperative that we found a balance between offering a point of emotional connection and providing the protection of critical distance' (Dunn et al. 2014:14). This careful attention to planning an engaging, relevant but protected process drama, whilst also ensuring participants were connected to the scenario depicted was enabled through the use of digital technology. Participants were able to invest in the workshops, adding their own ideas to the narrative construction of the fictional world they entered.

As we observed the children using the functions of the [interactive] whiteboard and the software programme, we were struck by the power that they had over this medium, particularly when using *xtranormal*⁴. Being able to control the selection of characters and their movements, as well as the

⁴ A software programme that was free at the time of the project. It enables the user to make animated videos to share.

dialogue these characters spoke, the technology provided agency not always immediately available in other learning contexts (ibid:25-6).

In this example, it is clear that the children were able to direct the content and outcome of the session in addition to imagining new characters, which they brought to life through animation software. Evaluation data from the session illustrated an increase in vocabulary and confidence in communicating in English. The success of this project approach may be located in the investment of participants and the immediacy of responses from characters they created and interacted with on screen in the virtual liminal space, which became part of the liminal space established through the process drama in the classroom.

Susan Davis (2012, 2014) develops the idea of immediacy through the frame of liveness. Drawing upon the work of Louis Althusser, Davis unpacks recent projects undertaken with teenagers to investigate the possibilities offered by cyberformance companies who use online digital platforms to perform their work. The opportunities for live chat-based interactions through the simple creation of avatars who could interact with live performance online provided points of connections between audience and performers, blurring the lines of who was performing and how via an online anonymous platform. Developing her argument for the need to engage with an increasingly mediated culture, Davis refers to the work of Prensky (1998), and Greenfield (2003:169) noting the following observation about contemporary and new audiences:

[...] through constantly interacting with tools that respond immediately to our every action, cognitive processing itself may change. The constant drive for new, faster, more powerful, more interactive mediated products and tools creates audiences and participants who may also seek more intense, gratifying and responsive performance experiences (Davis, 2014:44).

Davis' argument may be read as cautious in her naming of increasing pressures and calls for immediacy and opportunities for instantaneous reactions to and within performances. However, a turn to immediacy is arguably part of the cultural norms driven by Digital Natives and if it exists, we must respond if we want to make meaningful connections with young people on their own terms. Prue Wales (2012, 2014) expands on this idea discussing a Digital Storytelling project with a group of 'at-risk' young people in Singapore. She defines digital storytelling referring to Skinner's (2008) notion that 'digital stories [are] narrative constructions that combine media' (Wales, 2014:68). Wales notes that the turning point in the project that saw several of the more challenging young men start to engage with the process was when they started to gain confidence using new technologies to tell the stories *they* wanted to share/invent. Wales indicates the initial findings from the project evaluation reveal 'the interrelationship between agency, engagement, confidence, skill-set and the ability to communicate a story' (ibid, 81). Referring back to Furlong, it is important to enable young people to develop agency without a superficial sense of participation. In this example, it is clear that technology sparked the interest of the group and they were able to navigate creating their own narratives to share with their peers.

Perhaps it is not only the process of playing with new technologies or known contemporary media that engages young people. It may be that the artefacts which are created as 'products' from a process drama, cyberperformance, or digital storytelling project, may create a point of continuity. By this I mean an object that is created within a liminal frame but, unlike the impact of the project that I noticed with my group of participants, the artefact is able to continue to exist beyond the lifespan of a fictional world and transition into our world. In this case virtual reality, becomes a digital artefact. The significance of 'keeping' an artefact from another time, has been discussed by Sally Mackey (2012). Mackey's article theorises her connection with artefacts she unexpectedly discovered in her loft, artefacts that documented school plays she had directed in the past. The significance of these objects is not only commemorative but affective. Mackey notes that the objects she rediscovered took on sentient properties, whereby complex emotions were felt through the reunion between Mackey and old programmes, production photos, commemorative t-shirt etc. Mackey considers Pierre Nora's suggestion that 'sites of memory' 'act as a response, antidote or resistance to the mobility or fluidity that is perceived by many as central to contemporary life' (Mackey, 2012:47-8). Liquid modernity, a theory offered by Zygmunt Bauman (2000) to describe the precarity and ever-changing, uncertain nature of everyday life provides a framework to exacerbate the significance and importance of sentient artefacts that enable the 'finder' to imagine the events they belong to anew.

Though Mackey is resistant towards the use of virtual archives, such as Facebook, which she notes are less impactful than physical objects, contemporary connections are created and memories consistently shared through digital means for the app generation. Perhaps, it could be argued that digital creations that transition from the liminal into the 'real world' could also potentially act as important sentient artefacts. These digital creations are not limited to the lifespan of a project, but can live on, be shared online and go viral to reach broad audiences creating further webs of interconnection that prolong the affective and sentient quality of digital forms. It may be that these forms are the very point departure from 'conventional process drama' that may enable the participant as expert/creator/user to carry the memory and affective impact past the current threshold of change, i.e. the doorway between the workshop and the rest of the school environment. It may also provide an important 'go to' and 'constant' in the lives of vulnerable youth who may not have had experience of a secure base, perhaps a secure artefact with a re-playable memory could bridge this important human need?

Conclusion: Where should the practice go next? Affordable technology for the field.

Throughout this article, I have discussed the potential of digital technologies as complementary tools for process drama. I have placed particular emphasis on the urgency of this combined approach to address the complex needs of vulnerable young people, suggesting that the continuation of changes that occur in participant interactions may be sustained through a 'kept' digital artefact created/used in a workshop. Additionally, the socially collaborative essence of process drama addresses concerns about the 'anti-social' digital presence that affects young people. Gardner and Davis note:

[...] experts on digital technologies have speculated that, despite their many electronic connections to one another, many young people today paradoxically have a sense of isolation (ibid, 2014:44).

This offers a point on contradiction between an early point raised by Gardner and Davis who draw upon the work of digital experts such as Cathy Davidson, Henry Jenkins, Clay Shirky and many others, who discuss the potential of digital media similarly to Prensky, noting that:

[...] the digital media hold the promise of ushering in an age of unparalleled democratic participation, mastery of diverse skills and areas of knowledge, and creative expression in various media, singularly or orchestrally (ibid, 2014:33).

This perspective offers an antidote to concerns raised by Furlong, who notes that the limits of participation often offered to young people lie in the superficiality of involvement in decision making processes that they are offered. Digital media may pave the way for more meaningful involvement of participants who can embrace digital enhancements to process drama to become more involved through a means of communication that they are familiar with as Digital Natives. However, there are further concerns raised in the special technology edition of *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, (2012) which offers concerns about the compromises made to imagination through embracing rather than resisting the inclusion of digital elements in drama based work. Arguably, this may simply be subject to the choice of app-enabling technologies over app-dependency. App-enabling technology can enhance creative thinking, realise democratic intentions for practice, and the possible routes of access made available through the inclusion of online and interactive software. This approach can continue to drive forwards the work of Dorothy Heathcote, and ensure that we remain culturally responsive to young people. If we choose to resist the inclusion of technology in our practice, we have to ask ourselves why, and in the end, we must remind ourselves who our practice is for.

Bibliography

- [1] Alrutz, Megan. *Digital Storytelling, Applied Theatre, & Youth: Performing Possibility*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
- [2] Anderson, Michael, D Cameron, and P Sutton, Editorial: Participation and creative in these brave new worlds: technology and innovation as part of the landscape, 2012. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(4), pp.469-476, in Anderson, M., Cameron, D. & Sutton, P. (Eds.) *Innovation, Technology and Converging Practices in Drama Education and Applied Theatre*, London: Routledge, 2014.
- [3] Batmanghelidjh, Camila. *Interview: Camila Batmanghelidjh, Kids Company*, 14/05/08, [online], [accessed. 15. October 2008]. Retrieved z: http://londonist.com/2008/05/interview_camil.php

- [4] Boal, Augusto. *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy*, New York: Routledge, 1995.
- [5] Bundy, Penny, Dunn, J. & Woodrow, N. Combining drama pedagogy with digital technologies to support the language learning needs of newly arrived refugee children: a classroom case study, 2012. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(4), pp.477-500 in Anderson, M., Cameron, D. & Sutton, P. (Eds.) *Innovation, Technology and Converging Practices in Drama Education and Applied Theatre*, London: Routledge, 2014.
- [6] Burr, Viv. *Social Constructionism*, East Essex: Routledge, 2003.
- [7] Davis, Katie. & Gardner, H. *The App Generation: How Today's Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy, and Imagination in a Digital World*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2014.
- [8] Davis, Susan. Liveness, mediation and immediacy – innovative technology use in process and performance, 2012, *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(4), pp.501-516 in Anderson, M., Cameron, D. & Sutton, P. (Eds.) *Innovation, Technology and Converging Practices in Drama Education and Applied Theatre*, London: Routledge, 2014.
- [9] Duggleby, Wendy. & Quinlan, E. "Breaking the Fourth Wall": Activating Hope through Participatory Theatre with Family Caregivers, 2009. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 4(4), pp.207-219.
- [10] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2006.
- [11] Furlong, Andy. *Youth Studies: An Introduction*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2013.
- [12] Holloway, John. *Now is the Moment to Learn Hope*, paper presented to the Collective Encounters and LIPA conference Rediscovering the Radical: Theatre for Social Change, Liverpool, 1st-3rd September 2016, [online] 2016, [accessed 11. September 2016]. Retrieved z: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xM22npAvJgU>
- [13] Karlsson, Erica. & Rönnlund, M. The relation between dimensions of attachment and internalizing or externalizing problems during adolescence, 2006. *J Genet Psychol.*, 167(1), pp.47-63.
- [14] Mackey, Sally Of lofts, evidence and mobile times: the school play as a site of memory, 2012. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(1), pp.35-52.
- [15] Misselbrook, David. What is it with kids these days? 2011. *J R Soc. Med.* 104, pp.392-393.
- [16] Prensky, Marc. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, *On the Horizon*, [online]. 2001, Vol. 9, no.5, pp.1-6, [accessed 11. September 2016] Retrieved z: <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>
- [17] Prentki, Tim. *Jokering Apart: The Social Performance of Folly*, paper presented to the Collective Encounters and LIPA conference Rediscovering the Radical: Theatre for Social Change, Liverpool, 1st-3rd September 2016, [online] 2016, [accessed 11. September 2016]. Retrieved z: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnRbQsRB9RE>
- [18] Shepherd, Simon. *The Cambridge Introduce to Performance Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

- [19] The RSA. *Ken Robinson: Changing Educational Paradigms*, [online] 2010, [accessed 17. September 2016] Retrieved z: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCbdS4hSa0s>
- [20] Todres, Les. (2008) "Being with that": The relevance of embodied understanding for practice, *Qualitative Health Research*, 18(11), pp.1566-1573.
- [21] Wales, Pru. Telling tales in and out of school: youth performativities with digital storytelling, 2012. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 17(4), pp.469-476 in Anderson, M., Cameron, D. & Sutton, P. (Eds.) *Innovation, Technology and Converging Practices in Drama Education and Applied Theatre*, London: Routledge, 2014.