

**A Theatre of Applied Performativity: Play and the
aesthetics of the Scripted Performance Workshop in
Peer-facilitated Relationships and Sex Education.**

David Evans

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Declaration of Authorship:

I, David Evans, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: _____ Date: 14/01/2021

Abstract

Originally grounded in psycho-social theory, this thesis theorises the performative practices manifest in a body of work within the field of classroom-based relationships and sex education. The interventions originated in the University of Exeter during the 1990s, operating under the aegis of 'Apause'.

The thesis focuses on how the interventions manifest as the 'action matter' of classroom workshops and argues that the incumbent theory base and discourse falls short of representing the subjects' experiences and transformative processes. The three projects investigated - 'Apause Peers', 'Get-WISE' and 'RAP' - are facilitated by other, slightly older students, dubbed 'peer-facilitators', and play, as intrinsic to these events, has been hitherto unacknowledged.

Deploying pedagogical, presentational and theatrical conventions, classroom action is highly participatory. Published evaluations establish Apause as uniquely effective at enabling young people to have greater control in their relationships and reduce their exposure to sexual health risks. Data is presented primarily as transcriptions of the action matter. By adopting post-structuralist practices as the means of analysing the interventions and juxtaposing these sensibilities with psycho-social constructs, an increasingly integrative model emerges. Groups of parameters are organised into two reciprocating frameworks - one *regulative*, one *constitutive*. The regulative framework is inscribed within the workshops' scripted guidelines, codifying cultural, psycho-social and health prerogatives. The second framework comprises aesthetic parameters. *Liminality*, the *collapsing of binaries* and *autopoiesis* combine as play to effect *durable transformations*. These define the

transformative interactions constituted within the time and spatially bounded liminal event.

Having rubricised the nature and function of these frameworks, the wilfully ambiguous character of play threatens to confound and destabilize these parameters. Despite, or perhaps because of, these paradoxes, it is argued the Scripted Performance Workshop, is an enculturating event, achieving efficacy, utility and durability through the sanctioning of play.

Acknowledgments

My involvement with Apause spans a period well in excess of twenty-five years, during which privileged time I have inhabited multiple roles and enjoyed creative engagements with dozens of collaborators. This is an inadequate attempt at acknowledging all those friends and colleagues. All those individuals, without whose belief in the importance of young peoples' right to self-determination, passionate commitment to their wellbeing, intellectual investment, sense of adventure and huge sense of fun, none of this would have been possible.

Dr John Tripp

As a consultant paediatrician and senior lecturer in the University of Exeter Department of Child Health, John Tripp was the originator, motive force and project director of Apause. He has tirelessly chased research funding, appointed research fellows, slaved away on statistical analyses, written publications and championed the worth of Apause in the lives of young people. Most astonishingly of all, he has placed an unshakeable faith in the work and ideas of other people. Much of the original design of Apause was counterintuitive, but he put his trust in his remarkable team of Dr Alex Mellanby, Fran Phelps and colleagues. He was the supervisor and Department of Health research grant holder of my first attempt at a PhD in medical science which gave rise to the Get-WISE Project. When it became evident that it was the aesthetics of the classroom action that really fired me and my PhD in medical science 'misfired', John never gave up on me. He has continued to support me and advocate my work in every conceivable way, perhaps most importantly by giving me paid leave to concentrate on this thesis. I cannot thank him enough for his generosity.

Professor Osita Okagbue

As a theatre practitioner and board director of Imùlè Theatre, a theatre consultant to Get-WISE and my supervisor on this thesis, Osita Okagbue has been a colleague of mine for nearly thirty years. He is a treasured friend and mentor, helping me to maintain my footing and sanity as I have attempted to straddle the worlds of public health and cross-cultural theatre. Most life-affirmingly, over the years Osita has often teasingly revealed and touched upon my identifying scars, those tender marks gained in the fierce embraces and loving contests of my childhood and adolescence in Nigeria.

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As a colleague in Imùlè Theatre and with her pioneering work in the fields of playtherapy, dramatherapy and neuro dramatic play, Sue Jennings' has had a profound influence on my practice. Sue was joint supervisor to my infelicitous PhD and a consultant on the RAP Project. She brought an unsettlingly fresh world of theoretical insights, practical applications, and creativity to Apause. Thank you Sue, I hope we can work together again soon.

Teachers, health professionals, theatre practitioners and peer-facilitators

Without the goodwill, faith and professional collaboration of dozens of teachers, Apause and this thesis would have been impossible. They have trained alongside me, facilitated with me in the classroom, helped to develop resources, recruited peers, implemented evaluations, timetabled and co-ordinated hundreds of sessions and engaged with parents, senior managers and health authorities to keep Apause a functional research project and public health

intervention. Foremost amongst all of these teachers is my friend and colleague, Ian Potts who provided me with rehearsal spaces, fearless and talented peers and as much drama curriculum time as I needed. Moreover, he advocated Get-WISE in his school, securing invaluable timetabled periods for the development and evaluation of the project. And, as if all that were not enough, he provided the term 'Scripted Performance Workshop' which was subsequently adopted as the name for the Aopause methodology and appears in the title of this thesis.

I owe a debt of gratitude to those hundreds of dedicated nurses and health professionals who collaborated on programme development, training and facilitation and all those public health commissioners who helped establish Aopause in around one hundred and eighty schools across England, Wales and Eire. However, particular mentions should go to John Rees (Aopause outreach co-ordinator), Carol Marriott (Devon Area Co-ordinator), Rosina Kellman, Dr Penny Tearle, Adele Griffiths, Gail Teasdale (Hull City Council) , Mary Evans (Public Health Wales), Tim Hull (North Essex) Ian Tearle (Devon Public Health Commissioner) and Dr Carlota Riera Claret of Universitatària del Bages (FUB), Manresa.

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I am profoundly grateful to those thousands of peer-facilitators who have somehow made Aopause a living and transformative phenomenon in the lives of in excess of one hundred and fifty thousand adolescents.

No words will ever encompass my gratitude to, and love for, the late Melissa Leigh. Years before I theorised play as a transformative function of Apause, Melissa was play's divine manifestation.

All Apause peer-facilitators have contributed in some way to this thesis and it seems unfair to single out individuals, but I could never forgive myself for not mentioning Jasmin Mitchell, Daniel Pryce, John Pryce, Francesca Holland and Elsie Greenshields for their work on RAP.

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Dr Doug Kirby and Professor Marion Howard

From its earliest beginnings, the late and great Dr Doug Kirby of ETR Associates was a wonderful friend, collaborator and champion of Apause.

Professor Marion Howard and her team from Emory University School of Medicine developed the original *Postponing Sexual Involvement Educational Series* (PSI) and in so doing gave Apause its genesis.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge my partner, Kim Hicks, who, for the past seven years, has graciously endured my agonistic ruminations, helped me unravel some of my most intractable prose and, even in my darkest hours, never failed to rekindle my faith in the work. Thank you, Kim.

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Abbreviations

CSE	Comprehensive Sex Education
DoH	Department of Health
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LBGTQ+	Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Gay, Transexual, Queer, Plus
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
PSI.....	Postponing Sexual Involvement
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
SEF	Sex Education Forum
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SPW	Scripted Performance Workshop
SRE	Sex and Relationships Education
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TAP	Theatre of Applied Performativity
TfD	Theatre for Development
THE	Theatre in Health Education
TIE	Theatre in Education
TPC	Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
USA	United States of America

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Introduction

Apause Peers and play – the secret agent

This thesis is concerned with play. Specifically, it is an investigation into the function of play within a behaviourally effective, school-based relationships and sex and education (RSE) programme - Adding Power and Understanding to Sex Education (A PAUSE). Conceptualized as a public health intervention, from its earliest investigations into participatory learning in 1990, the 'A PAUSE Programme' in various configurations had been running in the UK until March 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic brought all UK schools to a standstill. The programme originated in the University of Exeter, Department of Child Health and was foremost amongst a variety of investigations into how participatory methods facilitated by peer educators (slightly older young people of similar health and/or social status) could enable adolescents to achieve better control in their health related behaviours.

The original A PAUSE programme was not delivered exclusively by peer educators. Adult-facilitated sessions were considered essential for imparting necessary information around adolescent development, sexual health and access to health services. Nevertheless, it was claimed by the research team that the most salient components of the programme were the highly performative, peer-delivered sessions (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). The focus of this thesis is on the peer-facilitated components of Apause.

Apause has a well-articulated and implemented basis in psycho-social theory, but despite the evident fun and pleasure participants experience during both adult and peer-led sessions, hitherto the phenomena of play and playfulness

have never been theorised and accorded status as components critical to the effective implementation of A PAUSE classroom action. Central to this thesis is the question, “How can the play elements of classroom action, re-framed in terms of aesthetics, complement and challenge our understandings of transformational processes as theorised by psycho-social theory and cognitive neuroscience?” I will advance the novel argument that it is primarily the transformative interactions characteristic of play and playfulness which are constitutive of the changes in knowledge, beliefs and behaviours which are attributed to A PAUSE (Mellanby *et al.*, 1995; Mellanby, 1997; Mellanby *et al.*, 2001; Blenkinsop, 2004).

It will be demonstrated that changes are potentiated through classroom events manifest as ‘performatives’ or ‘performativity’, as first articulated by the language philosopher John Langshaw Austin (Austin, 1962). The execution of these classroom performatives constitute a unique form of event. By viewing the A PAUSE event as a specialist field of activity regulated through scripting processes and bounded in time and space, the event is framed as ‘a theatre’ of a distinct kind of action matter, the ‘theatre of A PAUSE’, hence the title of this thesis – ‘A Theatre of Applied Performativity’ (TAP). A literature review reveals why TAP, both in its theorization and execution, does not fall comfortably within the existing rubrics of applied theatre, Theatre for Development (TfD), or conventional classroom pedagogies, although it will be shown where certain socially engaged practices have qualities in common with A PAUSE.

In 1995 the Department of Child Health announced to the national media the publication of its unique set of findings (Mellanby *et al.*, 1995). By including a large, peer-facilitated component and classroom sessions co-delivered by a

teacher (Ms. Fran Phelps) and a clinician (Dr Alex Mellanby), Aopause had defied the orthodoxies of school-based, health education being delivered almost exclusively by teachers. Hitherto, there had been no results published by any UK study which demonstrated a school-based intervention impacting on the sexual risk-taking behaviours of young people (Mellanby, Phelps and Tripp, 1992). For reasons that will be discussed in Chapter 3, the apparent incapacity of interventions to generate robust data evidencing impact on health behaviours continues, to the present day, to be the key finding of reviews of school-based RSE in the UK (Jones *et al.*, 2009; Oakley *et al.*, 1995; Ofsted, 2013; Stewart *et al.*, 2021).

Between 1961 and 1963 the developmental social psychologist Albert Bandura ran a famous series of laboratory investigations dubbed generically the 'Bobo doll experiment' (Bandura, Ross and Ross, 1961). Bandura demonstrated that human behaviour is not constructed exclusively according to the principles of operant conditioning in response to positive or negative feedback as propounded by psychologist Burrhus F Skinner (Skinner, 1938). Rather, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) – later to be refined as Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) - anatomised the processes of *observational* learning (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1986). Here subjects observe actions prior to replicating them, the processes being further enhanced if the behaviours are modelled by actors perceived by the subjects to be of social significance to them. By the 1990s an increasing body of evidence supported the assertion that the majority, if not all, effective interventions in adolescent sexual health had been derived from Bandura's theories (Kirby, 1994). Following their review of the literature and their own published findings, by 1997 Tripp, Mellanby and

Phelps had articulated a programme theory for A PAUSE which underpins all three of the interventions investigated in this thesis.

Figure 1 A pause programme theory of change (Mellanby 1997, p.36)

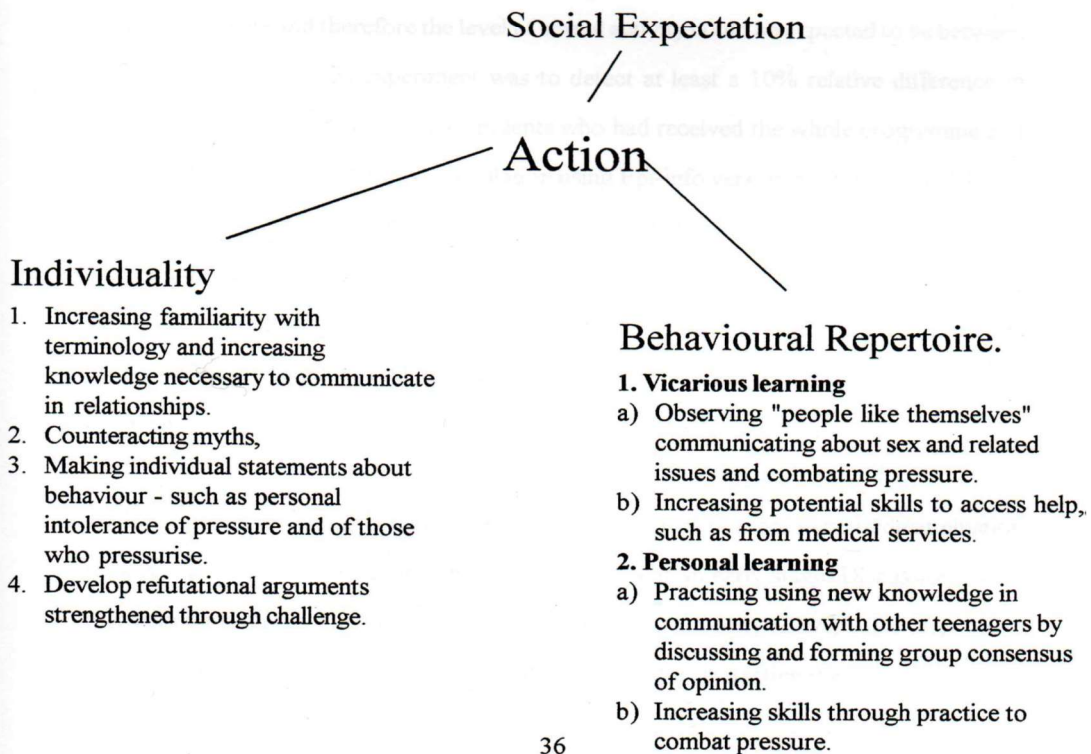
Collaborative Goals:

A working theoretical model for the A PAUSE project

Based on Social Learning, Social Inoculation, Social Norms theories.
Including other theories of learning related to attention by varied activity, promoting students' interest and genuine enjoyment of the programme

Creating an environment to support and maintain the aims of the project by assisting groups of teenagers, teachers and parents to state that:

- a) good relationships include good communication, expression of emotion and respect for others wishes and will not inevitably include sexual intercourse,
- b) non-sexually active young teenagers are the "norm",
- c) sexual pressure in relationships is unacceptable and promote an expectance that such pressure would be combated,
- d) sexual activity without contraception is unacceptable for young teenagers,
- e) respect and tolerance should be shown for people and their opinions providing these do not put others at risk.



Increasing concerns during the 1990s about escalating rates of pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) amongst UK teenagers resulted in further research funding and commissions, thus propelling an expansion of A PAUSE into service mode. The Department of Health (DoH) provided the largest grant.

The *older* peers delivering A PAUSE enabled *young* teenagers to share in understandings of pressures from a partner to have sexual intercourse, particularly in the social context of powerful peer and media influences. Critically, they modelled and facilitated the practicing of behaviours which, it was argued, enabled the learners to resist those pressures. Essentially it promoted *assertiveness skills*.

Dr John Tripp, a paediatrician and the A PAUSE founder and manager, was keen to further investigate a peer-led approach aimed at providing *older* adolescents with *negotiation skills* to exercise greater control in their increasingly complex sexual and relational health interactions – including with sexual health care providers. Accordingly Get-WISE, another peer-facilitated project, was piloted (Evans *et al.*, 1998), and further funded by the DoH. Similarly, RAP was funded by the DoH as a peer-led pilot project having the same health aims, but with the proviso that the participating young people should be excluded from mainstream education (Evans *et al.*, 2009). I was to become the research lead on the latter two projects and lead trainer for A PAUSE Peers. In 2006 the programme was spun out of the university and rebranded the ‘A pause Programme’ under the aegis of the Health Behaviour Group (HBG) charity.

Figure 2 Apause Timeline

1982 – 1988

Activity: Investigations in adolescent relationships and sexual behaviour

Personnel: Dr John Tripp (JT) - senior researcher; Tony Hinks - post-graduate research student; Dr Hazel Curtis -research fellow & MD student

1990 – 1995

Activity: Development of A PAUSE, trial and publication of results

Personnel: JT-senior researcher/supervisor; Dr Alex Mellanby (AM) - research fellow & MD student supervised by JT; Fran Phelps - research fellow and M.Ed. student; David Evans (DE) -external peer trainer

1995 – 2002

Activity: A PAUSE in service mode to approximately 30 Devon Schools

Personnel: JT-senior researcher and programme manager, AM academic consultant, John Rees (JR) area manager, latterly with DE & Carol Marriott as trainers then area managers, Catherine Kay (CK) - research fellow, trainer, assistant statistician

1997 – 1999

Activity: Get-Wise first cycle

Personnel: JT - supervisor, DE – project lead, Dr Osita Okagbue- theatre consultant

1999 – 2005

Activity: National roll-out of Apause in full-service mode commissioned by Regional Health Authorities, Local Educational Authorities, City Councils (peaking at around 180 schools)

Personnel: JT A PAUSE manager; JR - outreach manager; DE - Lead peer trainer; Catherine Kay - research fellow, trainer, assistant statistician

2000 – 2004

Activity: Dept. of Health Grant to:

- a) trial A PAUSE Peers in a large conurbation - Manchester, Salford and Trafford (MST)
- b) develop/trial a peer programme addressing negotiation (Get-WISE second cycle)
- c) develop/pilot a peer programme for non-mainstream students (RAP)

Personnel: JT A PAUSE manager; JR - MST project manager; CK, DE - Get-WISE second cycle research lead/manager; Fiona Macbeth – RAP research lead/manager; Dr Sue Jennings – RAP and Get-WISE supervisor; Dr Alice Welbourne – RAP supervisor (2001 – 2004); DE – RAP research lead/manager, Sandy Akerman – associate researcher

2006 – present

Activity: a) Spin-out of A PAUSE from Exeter University, re-brand to 'Apause' with formation of Health Behaviour Group charity to continue Apause in service mode.

b)Get-WISE third cycle, in service mode until 2015

c)RAP Further investigations with grants from Paul Hamlyn Foundation (2005), Northcote Trust (2015-2019), Rayne Foundation (2015-2019),

d) Apause Peers adapted for 30 + urban schools in Malawi

e)Collaborations on period poverty projects in Kenya, Scotland and England

Personnel: JT Chair of Trustees; DE – Chief Executive Officer; The charity runs part-time ancillary staff, collaborators, volunteers, trainers, consultants and peer educators

The 'A pause Programme' is the umbrella term for all three peer-facilitated RSE¹ projects investigated in this thesis. The three interventions are referred to as: 'A pause Peers', 'Get-WISE', and 'RAP' (Respect and Protect).

Commissioned by health and education authorities serving regions as diverse as Devon, North Essex, Newham, Sandwell, the Republic of Ireland, Powys in Wales and Hull, between 70% and 100% of learners aged 13-14 years participated in role-plays and short scenarios in thousands of classrooms. These vignettes were included, ostensibly, to afford the learners practise in the assertiveness, negotiation and refutational skills necessary to demonstrate that they could avoid being pressurised into participating in unwanted sexual activity. My role, as theatre practitioner and educator within the main A Pause Peers programme, was to ensure these role-plays were enacted in a consensual and non-coercive manner.

Without reference to any theory of play, and despite the perceived medical and social gravity of adolescent sexual health at the time, I intuited that this exceptionally high level of somewhat prescriptive participation was only likely to be achieved if the learners and peer-educators alike experienced the event as essentially playful. More candidly, the only way I, personally, could achieve the necessary continuity was to enshrine fun and play in the training exercises and trainers' manuals.

In reviewing the literature covering those forms of applied theatre, TfD and socially engaged practices contemporaneous to the development of A pause, I

¹ Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is the terminology currently favoured in government documents and guidelines because, it is argued, it gives primary importance to *Relationships* as the context within which *Sex* is just one component. For more than twenty-five years the subject area has been referred to as 'SRE' – Sex and Relationships Education.

could find no interventions which explicitly stated that it was their programme goal to engage every participant in one or more role-plays. In Apause, the facilitation of such a level of participation was entrusted to other students, not a company of visiting actors, achieving an important distinguishing feature of Apause. It established the principle that the power to take control of their lives was not invested in, or bestowed upon the participants by outsiders, but rather constructed from within and between the interactions generated by young people who attended their own schools and/or lived in their own communities.

This thesis explores those points of greatest playful ambiguity, the oscillation between character and actor, the *representation* of a theatrical fiction and the *presentation* of a social reality. These, combined with the sheer sense of fun and engagement, characterise a particular *kind* of play. This kind of play, it is argued, is an instance of *performativity*, and through its playing of the action matter, novel interactions and performance forms become manifest. Sometimes these occurrences embrace established theatrical conventions, sometimes not, but the action is framed as a 'Theatre of Applied Performativity' (TAP). Perhaps, it may be argued that, at that time, applied theatre and many socially engaged practices took themselves too seriously. By contrast, in applying a play imperative to the performative, Apause events were 'seriously non-serious'.

The formalised structures of the peer sessions were encoded in their 'Peer Scripts', but this thesis will demonstrate that the training and classroom performances themselves, in their moments of most intense participation, were manifestations of play. Enactive improvisations, spontaneous peer-educator-with-learner interactions, small group tasks, class discussions and games constitute the forms of play which characterise an approach which aims to

inculcate power in the adolescents, putting them at the centre of their learning experiences – hence the programme name ‘Adding Power and Understanding to Sex Education’.

What is play?

The famous Dutch historian, Johann Huizinga, in his seminal work *Homo Ludens* defined play as:

[...] a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is “different” from “ordinary” life (Huizinga, 1949, p. 28)

More recently, biologist Gordon Burghardt has suggested five criteria that an animal behaviour must satisfy to qualify as play. These ‘rules’ were beautifully described in a two part BBC documentary series *Animals at Play*.

The behaviour is something that the animal engages in voluntarily [...] the reward is the activity itself - in other words, it’s not for an obvious goal such as mating or eating [...] it may occur much earlier in the animals’ life than normally we would see the serious version of that behaviour - such as in play fighting [...] the behaviour is repeated over and over again; the animal has to be pretty healthy, in a safe, relaxed state.

(Perowne and Whitley, 2019)

Burghardt’s work, alongside that of other researchers, has revealed that animals from a startling diversity of taxonomic groups, including certain octopuses, fish, frogs, lizards and birds, exhibit play behaviours (Burghardt, 2014). Although the two definitions provided by Huizinga and Burghardt do not precisely correspond they, nonetheless, share striking commonalities. Most notably the voluntary nature of play, the sense that it has its own purpose with

no obvious extrinsic goals, the activity being set aside from the quotidian, privileged both in time and space, and that the organism is experiencing some sort of positive affective state.

The anthropologist and long-time researcher of play, Phillips Stevens Jr, argues that the universality of play combined with its heterogeneity speaks to both the 'slow burn' of its adaptive function on an evolutionary time scale, and to the more immediate function in terms of how an individual develops in the course of their lifecycle in relationship with their environment. As a corollary to this bipartite dynamic, both Stevens and Burghardt have observed that the neuroscience of play, having the potential to bridge between socio-cultural events and their synaptic and chemical effects within the individual, is a field of study which is both overdue and burgeoning (Burghardt, 2014; Stevens, 2016; Stevens, 2020). Play, for humans, then, is a field of study which demands an examination of phenomena having both socio-cultural and biological origins. Moreover, in the interweaving action of play itself, the strands sometimes maintain their integrity whilst at times are contingent and reciprocal.

Privilege and play – a brief autobiography

What follows is a brief account of the abundance of 'privilege' in my life, in both the socio-cultural and biological senses. Within that privilege, extraordinary freedoms have allowed me to indulge in an unusual diversity of play forms. 'Privilege' refers broadly, but not exclusively, to a phenomenological state - the subject's perception of being in control or having agency. In his articulation of a general theory of play as self-realisation, Thomas Henricks describes privilege thus:

Sometimes, we seem to be in charge or control of the element we are dealing with (a position I call privilege), at other times, we experience the opposite condition (subordination). (Henricks, 2014)

This autobiographical approach more meaningfully situates my own practice of performance making with young people within the broader context of applied theatre and performance.

Born in Nigeria in 1957, as the white son of an English mother and a Welsh father, I have been immersed in, and reminded of my privilege. Had it not been for the exceptional privileges afforded to my mother, the likelihood is we would both have died during childbirth. A knowledge of my privilege and sense of exceptionalism has always operated in my life. Although a normative state in my creative processes, privilege has also been a source of habitual and, at times, debilitating reticence.

My father served as a teacher, lecturer and administrator, working for twenty-one years, first for Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service and then the Nigerian Government. He was posted to educational institutions situated in some of the most significant centres of the Yoruba³ cultural landscape. These urban settlements, including Abeokuta, Ife, Oshogbo, Ondo and Akure, despite deleterious colonial influences, all had rich histories with thriving indigenous customs. Such places provided the food, friendships, music, crafts, clothing, trees, rivers, animals, safe compounds and the wider cultural context in which I played and was home-educated by my mother.

³ Yoruba is a language spoken in West Africa, mainly in Nigeria. The number of speakers of Yoruba in Nigeria alone is estimated at 45 million, excluding non-Yorubas who speak the language.

Amidst the usual games of fighting, climbing, hiding, *ludo* and *ayo*⁴, I developed a penchant for exhibitionism. During the act of urination, my Nigerian friends became aware of my 'uncut' penis. We developed a secretive ritual arising from my willingness to engage in comparative examinations with my friends' circumcised counterparts. The risky and illicit nature of these exchanges, alongside the accompanying excitement and laughter, not only made me the willing centre of attention, but meant we learned the thrill of being complicit and agentic in an activity of which adult authority figures were both ignorant and would almost certainly disapprove. Such illicit forms of play, assertions of children's power in a system in which they are subordinate to adults, is what the anthropologist Brian Sutton-Smith has referred to as their 'hidden transcripts' (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 116). Sutton-Smith develops Nancy King's observations of illicit play in the classroom in which children doodle, pass notes, mock and satirise teachers and at which the more academically engaged are covert and avoid getting caught, whilst their academically disenfranchised peers use it overtly to disrupt the adult hegemony (King, 1987).

On reaching the age of seven, in an attempt to engender in me and my two siblings something of a British identity, my parents decided my mother should take the three of us back to England by boat. We boarded a small ship owned by the Elder Dempster Line which ran a service along the West African coast between the ports of Lagos and Liverpool. The gang plank swung with a thrilling liminality between dry land and the rusted safety rails of the *Accra* and I remember waving goodbye to my father as he stood miniaturized, leaning

⁴ A game of strategy played throughout West Africa using, hard grey seeds which are rapidly distributed in cups or "houses" carved into a heavy wooden block. One variation involves the players defending their own starting set of eight houses, whilst trying to invade and gain houses off their opponent's eight, another we called "Twos and Threes" in which you gained two or three seeds by filling up pots to those numbers.

against the giant leg of a dockside crane. As he drew on his cigarette and scanned the hundreds of passengers' faces, I realised I could not be seen or heard by him. An officer in crisp white uniform escorted me to a Victorian style playroom, then left me alone with a tired rocking horse and a squat, joyless wooden slide. Today, my recall of that desultory playroom is sepia tinted and marks the first consciousness of my separation from the trees, colour and easy playfulness of my Nigerian home - a viscerally deadening encounter with the sterilizing effect of play as prescribed by adults.

As my father was posted around cultural centres of Yorubaland, my emergent adolescence was split between Devon in England and Nigeria. On becoming a boarder in Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Crediton I only visited Nigeria during holidays. I returned to Queen Elizabeth's Community College in 1992 to observe the first ever cohort of Apause Peers in action.

At the age of fifteen I returned to Ibadan, but Nigeria no longer felt like a place I could play. I had become an English adolescent. My world had gone to monochrome and the affective register of my senses had been dialled down. I knew colours and sensations only as cognitions. I later understood this was mild 'clinical depression' and like Sutton-Smith, I equated it with the absence of play.

The opposite of play, in these terms, is not a present reality or work, it is vacillation, or worse, depression. To play is to act out and be wilful, as if one is assured of one's prospects.[...] [It] involves a willingness, even if a fantasy, to believe in the play venture itself. (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 198)

Although a science student at school, I also took part in residential drama workshops and several large scale, school theatre productions. St Catherine's College, Oxford, offered me a conditional place to read natural sciences, but too

exclusive an emersion in scientific epistemologies had mired my final year of 'A' Levels in depression. I turned away from a science career and successfully auditioned at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School (BOVTS).

The three years acting course instilled in me a belief in my efficacy as a performer and afforded me a realisation of how acting could change one's state of being. It was generally understood that the two most influential figures at the BOVTS, the Principal, Nat Brenner, and our visionary of acting technique, Rudi Shelley, tended towards a pragmatic notion of the place of acting and theatre in the world. Acting was a trade that could be learned through the repetitious rehearsal and presentation of very short, professionally directed and technically well executed scenes from classical dramatic texts. The scrutiny and feedback notes that accompanied these exercises was a ritual that usually involved the whole school - staff and students alike. The 'crits' on our technique from Nat Brenner, and particularly Rudi Shelley, were evisceratingly funny.

Taking a script and making it live as a theatrical event was a craft. Psychological 'truth' was of little concern. It was considered implausible that, as teenage actors, we would understand and convey the emotional depths of a Shakespearian or Brechtian leading character - neither was a paying adult audience interested in our ingenuous apprehensions. Our work was to enunciate the words with intelligence, clarity and variety, and use stylised gestures without distracting mannerisms and idiosyncrasies which might attract attention to the personality and neuroses of the actor. Hence, audience members would be more at liberty to engage with their own personal meanings within the theatrical event. I suspect this philosophy reflected our tutors' Jewish sensibility of Judaism as a practical religion in which the *doing* of the behaviour

or the ritual is the act of faith and not the 'correctness' of thought or adherence to dogma (Brook, 1991). On the upside, we never felt personally attacked; it was our technique that was under the microscope, not us as individuals. Under this pedagogy, the processes of theatre making could be deconstructed, the various tricks, conventions and mechanisms could be laid bare for analysis, and intensively rehearsed to a point where the performer and the audience were absorbed in the event's 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002).

My acting course, then, was intense both in its practical demands and exclusivity, further contributing to my sense of privilege. By 1980, I had the tools, the voice and self-belief to ply my trade as a 'classically' trained actor. Despite a promising start, including nine months in the Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company, another voice, an alternative self perhaps, persistently hijacked my thoughts. The imposter with the question, "Yes, but does it change anything?" eventually undermined my actor's sense of purpose.

By 1984 my aspirations and emotional bonds to a career in 'mainstream' theatre were finally severed. Between 1984 and 1988 I studied science and science education at Exeter University with a view to a career in primary education. My teacher's training led to my discovery of the liberatory pedagogies of Paulo Freire and John Holt, both of whom anatomize the damaging effects on the learner of a hegemonic and adult-centred pedagogy (Freire and Ramos, 1972; Holt, 1982; Holt, 1983). Disillusioned by their accounts of dysfunctional education systems, I took additional modules in multi-cultural education and visual arts.

My first year as a primary teacher was disappointing. For four years we had been trained in a child-centred pedagogy (Plowden, 1967) but by 1988 the

National Curriculum with Standard Attainment Targets and testing was beginning to irreversibly denude the primary educational landscape. Depression visited me again and I quit primary teaching with a view to returning to some form of theatre practice.

Play, transformation and theatre making

Despite a lack of relevant training, I was deemed qualified and suitable for a post as the drama teacher in St Luke's High School, Exeter, educating children aged twelve to sixteen years. The school served a catchment of almost exclusively white families with parents being either skilled or semi-skilled workers and living in city wards known for social deprivation and violence. The unusual middle-school system in Exeter meant students stayed for an extra year in primary school and arrived in their secondary schools aged twelve. This arrangement did not serve them well, as they had had no subject specialist teaching before the age of twelve and I believe were bored with their generalist class teachers. Due to a variety of influences, including both socio-demographic factors and inappropriate educational provision, on starting secondary school they were at best unruly and generally ill-equipped for academic rigour.

Both my students and I were uninspired by the work of Gavin Bolton, (Bolton, 1979) discovering prolonged class discussions to be a fertile breeding ground for the hidden transcripts of subversion as described by King (1987). I was exhausted by my efforts to emulate Dorothy Heathcote for any more than two hours of contact time per day, although her 'mantle of the expert' technique has always proved invaluable in developing agency in participants (Wagner, 1976). The very practical drama and theatre making insights shared by John O'Toole were excellent at offering structures and concepts for older and more able

General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) students to work with growing autonomy, and were helpful in guiding my own teaching processes with younger learners (O'Toole, 1988). By contrast, I was galvanised by the work of Augusto Boal (Boal, 1979). His ideological and methodological integration with a Freirian pedagogy put me on a much more comfortable footing with my students and myself. I could not, however, identify with educational drama as a vehicle for earnest engagement with wider social and historical issues or personal 'improvement'. The social issues the students and I needed to engage with walked straight through the door at the beginning of every lesson. Despite my efforts, they were not, however, inclined to engage for any length of time in the dry deliberations of Forum Theatre. They told me they needed some fun and to do acting. Like me, they understood theatre and acting as play. In accordance with Burghardt and Huizinga, when it comes to play "The reward is the activity itself." For these young people, to instrumentalise it for the purpose of their personal and social education was a betrayal of the play ethos.

So, with their collaboration, a curriculum emerged. I resolved to tool them up with the skills of acting and making theatre. In exchange for their cooperation, my students trained me as their drama teacher. There was an urgent need for everything we did to be immediately engaging and playful. I devoured the book *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre* by Keith Johnstone (1979), trawling it for exercises that would instantly appeal and entertain. Nearly everything was improvised, any scripts we did write were short, 'sketchy' and contingent. I introduced something of the formality of my BOVTS actor's training. They presented 'mini-scenes' lasting less than a minute. I told them the exact techniques I was going to judge them on and the grading criteria. In what might,

to the more liberally inclined practitioner, have appeared to be a hierarchical and unhealthy competitive environment, they seemed happy to be involved in the explicit, disputatious and often hilarious game of acting for grades. I treated them as actors and only ever criticized their technique – not them as people. I was privileged to be given the privacy to develop my own methods. The freedom afforded me by the senior management team was rewarded when the visiting external moderator for GCSE drama corroborated the stellar final grades I awarded my students. Inevitably, I was somewhat sheepish about disclosing my outcome orientated and illicit approach to surviving classroom drama. In the company of ‘proper’ drama teachers and applied theatre practitioners, I felt an imposter, but in retrospect I realise I had allowed myself to be led by my students’ desire to create fun and was following in Huizinga’s (1949) ludic tradition of play as *agon*, or contest.

As part of the school’s environmental awareness week, I developed a project exploring the theatrical potential of a Yoruba creation myth. I brought to the school a multi-cultural group of young actors and artists, including a young, London born, Yoruba performer - Olu Taiwo (now Dr Taiwo, Senior Lecturer in Performance Studies at the University of Winchester). We applied our skills in visual arts, movement, dance, martial arts, singing, drumming and *ádirẹ*⁵. Rehearsals were predominantly play orientated movement workshops and improvisations which gave rise to script making processes. The myth was performed in the round with a cast of thirty-plus participating simultaneously as

⁵ **Adire** (Yoruba: tie and dye) textile is the indigo-dyed cloth made in southwestern Nigeria by Yoruba women, using a variety of resist-dyeing techniques.[..] Abeokuta is considered to be the capital of adire making in Nigeria, however some suggest that the large cities of Ibadan and Osogbo (Yorubaland) are more important in Adire making because Adire dyeing began in Abeokuta when Egba women from Ibadan returned with this knowledge. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adire_\(textile_art\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adire_(textile_art))

spectators and a chorus. The episodic nature of the narrative was performed through dramatic vignettes which invited spontaneous interactions. These were interspersed with whole company set pieces involving choral speaking, dancing and singing with a percussive soundscape and accompaniment. Everything, from costume to set was an invocation of a Yoruba festival and constructed with the children.

Astonishingly, the students, who culturally could not have been further removed from the myth, quickly and unquestioningly became celebrants within the traditional Yoruba belief system known as 'Olódùmarèism⁶ (Idowu, 1962, p. 204). This was a performance they 'owned' and when cast members could not attend a rehearsal or a show, without deferring to me, they would re-allocate the parts amongst themselves. Now I saw how performance could bring about change. The play theoretician, Thomas S. Henricks, encapsulates my emergent understanding thus:

Play, I - like some others – argue, is a fundamental way creatures make coherent their possibilities for acting in the world.

(Henricks, 2014)

Set against a background of social disadvantage and low academic expectations, the young people had developed a sense of agency. Full houses of families and friends were co-celebrants of their achievement. On reflection, my impulse to create an earlier, more playful, protean world was not merely an atavistic pre-occupation with my lost childhood. Rather, it expressed an intuition

⁶ 'For the purpose of a descriptive label, we would like to suggest such a startling thing as "Diffused Monotheism": this has the advantage of showing that the religion is monotheism, though it is monotheism in which the good Deity delegates certain portions of His authority to certain divine functionaries who work as they are commissioned by Him. For a proper name we unhesitatingly say that there can be none other but "Olódùmarèism".' Idowu, E. B. (1962) *Olodumare : God in Yoruba belief*. [S.I.] : Longman, 1962 (1977).

that play, whilst primordial in its biological origins and, it is speculated, connects us to the entire physical universe (Noe, 2014; Graeber, 2014) is also the genesis of novel socio-cultural developments. My belief was that a playful engagement with the theme of humankind's destructive dominion over our natural world, presented certain redemptive potentialities. This view is corroborated by Henricks in his summary of the classical play theorists from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (Spencer, 1873; Groos, 1898; Groos, 1916; Patrick, 1916; Lazarus, 1883; Hall, 1906)

Taken as a whole, these classic explanations claim that play not only illustrates individuals' connections to their animal heritage but also connotes their distinctive abilities as a species. In other words, play links us to what has gone before (and to our basic frameworks for acting-in-the-world) at the same time that it frees us from the grip of instinct and manufactures new possibilities of living.

(Henricks, 2014)

The collaboration resulted in the establishment of a multi-cultural performance company, called 'Imùlè'⁷. We were dedicated to the exploration of performance making processes which might, in the first instance, effect personal empowerment and possibly reveal mechanisms of subsequent social change. We needed a playful performance form which encompassed and moved between a variety of different performance idioms, putting the performers, their ethnic sensibilities and their affective responses at the centre of the process.

⁷ "Imùlè" is the Yoruba name given to a covenant or pact. It literally translates as "Drinking together from the earth" and describes a ritual act, performed before an earth divinity. The covenant commits its performers to reciprocal obligations, typically extending to the carrying out of a collective enterprise with the utmost integrity. Critically, the Imùlè ritual must be performed and honoured by all the participants if they are to benefit from the binding force of the covenant. Whilst the enterprise is sanctioned by the divinity, failure to execute it with integrity places the wellbeing of the transgressor in serious jeopardy.

Imùlè was an intensely practical engagement with the processes of performance making. None of the company had a degree in drama, far less any theory of TfD or Applied Theatre. Working in schools, Imùlè developed a practice of performing in the round highly interactive storytelling events of West African myths using drumming, dance and poetry, with songs in Welsh, Yoruba, Igbo and Creole. Dialogue could be in Yoruba, English and Creole. These early morning performances only lasted around twenty-five minutes and the rest of the day was dedicated to workshops which culminated in large performances, often with casts in excess of eighty, in which the whole story was retold using all the conventions encountered at the beginning of the day. This practice of prioritising play, pleasure and the creation of a performance event of a certain beauty over the earnest engagement with identified social issues and the seeking of solutions, would seem to exclude my practice and the work of Imùlè from qualifying as TfD or applied theatre contemporary to the time. It will be argued, nevertheless, there is a kind of theatre making in which the transformative potential of Austin's performativity is coterminous with play and playfulness.

Adolescent sexual health – the medical context

The epidemiological foundations of this thesis were being laid forty years ago, running concurrently with my own genesis as a drama teacher and practitioner. In 1981 Dr John Tripp, initiated a series of research projects designed to investigate relationships between the social contexts, sexual behaviours, and medical implications in the lives of British teenagers. As a member of the National Children's Committee and its Devon Local Authority satellite committee, Dr Tripp had argued against prioritising issues such as drinking,

smoking, diet and exercise, postulating these only contributed to long term health outcomes and represented little immediate impact on young people and their perceptions of health and wellbeing. Of much more interest to him as a paediatrician and apparent immediate concern to his patients were their sexual relationships, what contribution the relationships made to the pleasure and quality of their lives, what risks they were taking and how these were reflected in incidences of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), teenage pregnancies and their sequelae.

Qualitative exploratory work in local schools by Tony Hinks, a postgraduate education student from Exeter University, suggested there was little differentiation between patterns of sexual behaviour and socio-economic background - teenage sexual activity was a norm whatever the family background and parental circumstances (Hinks, 1982). He postulated that young people from more disadvantaged settings had similar behavioural models as their peers of more advantaged social status, the main difference being that the more aspirational young people managed their risks better and when things went wrong were more likely to seek medical help, including emergency contraception. Social impediments, coupled with compromised educational expectation, compounded to render disadvantaged young people less likely to exercise agency when faced with sexual risks and their consequences. An important corollary of such a finding was that there was limited public health value in creating interventions which 'targeted' groups of young people deemed to be particularly 'disadvantaged' or 'at-risk' (a strategy that was being promulgated at the time) since although they may contribute *proportionately* more to the STI and pregnancy statistics, in terms of *absolute numbers* they

accounted for significantly less pregnancies and STIs than their more advantaged peers. For public health impact and reduction in social inequality, Tripp believed *all* young people needed and should be entitled to effective sex education.

Following an upsurge in rates of STIs and teenage pregnancies, the Devon Health Authority awarded a grant to Tripp to carry out further research. Joint publications by Dr Hazel Curtis, Tripp and colleagues provided evidence of some of the social influences and deleterious consequences associated with early sexual involvement (Curtis, Lawrence and Tripp, 1988).

By 1989 there was widespread public alarm about STIs, HIV/AIDS and rocketing teenage pregnancies. A generous grant from the Southwest Regional Health Authority from their allocation of national funds relating to HIV/AIDS, enabled Dr Tripp to appoint two full-time research fellows in 1990 - Mrs Fran Phelps, a senior science teacher and Dr Alex Mellanby, a practicing GP with a background in psychiatry. In his MD thesis Mellanby describes his task:

[...] examine the literature for evidence of effective methods [...] devise the principles, theoretical basis and medical content for an intervention predicted to result in behaviour change. To evaluate the experiment I [...] devised new methods to detect changes in beliefs, knowledge and sexual behaviour. .(Mellanby, 1997, p. 6)

The intervention was dubbed 'A PAUSE' - hereafter referred to as the 'A pause Programme'. Rooted in Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1997) and drawing on related theories foregrounding social influences mediated through cognitive control (Baric and Harrison, 1977; McGuire, 1964; Ajzen and Madden, 1986) Mellanby was clear that the success

of any such intervention was the collaborative involvement of the learners in participatory learning.

In 1990 the research team visited three sex education interventions in America which claimed to have resulted in healthier sexual behaviours; additionally, they were very kindly given two days consultation with the late Dr Doug Kirby – a world renowned researcher in effective sex education. It was evident from the literature that the imparting of information alone was not an effective means of changing adolescents' risk taking behaviours (Kirby, 1984; Kirby, 1994; Mellanby, Phelps and Tripp, 1992). Two of the US programmes visited had major peer delivered component, and chasing the lead of an article by Donald Reid (Reid, 1982) the most applicable to the Exeter setting was being run from Emory Grade Hospital in Atlanta (Howard and McCabe, 1990). Whilst part of the Atlanta programme comprised medical information delivered in a formal and somewhat constrained manner by nurses who were left to carry out their task largely unsupported by the schools, Mellanby writes:

The peer programme, in contrast, was dynamic and exciting. Despite pupils being arranged in rows of fixed desks (and a number of adult observers) the older teenagers managed to get widespread student involvement in role play and exercises. (Mellanby, 1997, p. 26)

Around 1991, on seeing a video presented to the Exeter research team by Professor Marion Howard, the originator of the Atlanta project, I was fascinated to see the peer educators in action. They were clearly performing a privileged social function which they took seriously. Successful in engaging the learners in role-plays, what gave it a distinctive aesthetic was that everyone was having a lot of fun. There was laughter and a 'toing-and-froing' of 'in' jokes and

comments between the peer educators and learners – jokes which often operated below the social radars of the adult observers - which I have subsequently come to recognise in terms of their ‘hidden transcripts’ (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 116). Despite the physical formality of the rows of desks, they were all evidently playing within a social occasion for their own pleasure and the learners were co-constructors of the performed event. Alongside my drama teaching experience, this powerfully resonated with my experiences of some of the Yoruba theatre of my childhood, where the audience clearly came to the event with the expectation of participating noisily through laughter, commentary, the forming of judgements with the shouting of advice to characters and adding their voices to characters’ catch phrases.

The schools charged with the education of the Atlanta target population reflected the normalisation of physical danger and challenges faced by the students in their social environment. In the particular school visited by the team, as a precaution against bringing in knives and guns, on entering the premises the children passed through metal detectors and security guards patrolled the corridors. The Atlanta students were predominantly African-American with the remainder being Hispanic, with less than 5% white American. By creating a highly participatory performance event, perhaps it is not a coincidence that the Atlanta students embraced play as an aesthetic imperative redolent of those performances I had experienced in Nigeria. A similar aesthetic is described by Paul Heritage who provides a life-affirming account of the work of Guti Fraga with his *Nos do morro* theatre based in a *favela* of Rio de Janeiro (Heritage, 1998). Guti’s cast of young actors were highly skilled improvisers and bore striking commonalities with Okagbue’s accounts of actors in indigenous African

theatres and performances (Okagbue, 2007). Performance making in these cultural contexts does not originate in the European tradition of the actor/spectator binary sanctioned through the authority of the playwright and theatre director.

Whilst Howard's peers integrated an array of collaborative and participatory activities, the Apause team adjudged their interrogation of dramatized case-studies, the learners' role-plays and enactive simulations to be essential to the success of the UK project.

In 1991, as the director of Imùlè, I had been contracted as a consultant to develop training exercises designed to maximise the success of the more performative elements of the peer programme. This entailed contributing to the improvement of the peer-leaders' all-round presentational, classroom management and communication skills. My main focus, however, was on those exercises which required enough 'razzmatazz' (Mellanby, 1997, p. 60) to first present the role-plays and then 'stage manage' the classroom event such that, ideally, all of the learners in turn joined the peer-leaders and themselves participated in the role-plays in front of their classmates.

Adolescent sexual health – the social and educational context

It appeared there was little denying the multiple negative social impacts associated with early sexual debut and teenage pregnancy, providing an urgent context to the publication of the Apause study. Hence, among other positive effects, it was judged that the single most important finding and programme outcome was that a statistically significant proportion of the intervention participants, by the age of sixteen, were less likely to have experienced sexual intercourse than their counterparts in the comparison groups.

The gravity of the social context for sexually active young teenagers during the 1980s and 1990s was evidenced by a growing body of studies demonstrating pregnant teenagers both in the USA and Britain confronted a multitude of problems. For brevity I quote Steven Schinke *et al*'s encapsulation of their challenges.

[...]Babies born to teenagers fare less well than the offspring of mothers aged 20 and older with higher rates of mortality, prematurity, low birth weight [and] congenital defects [...] teenage parents are more likely to hold jobs with low prestige, to express greater job dissatisfaction, and to earn lower incomes than their peers who are not parents.(Schinke, Gilchrist and Blythe, 1980)

Furthermore, as Mellanby noted,

Sexual activity for young teenagers is usually unplanned, unprotected, often unwanted and on the increase. (Curtis, Lawrence and Tripp, 1988; Mellanby *et al.*, 1992; Johnson *et al.*, 1994).

It appeared then, as it does at present, that despite the prevalence of sexual activity, reaching agreements on critical issues in teenage relationships such as degrees of intimacy, clarity of consent and use of contraception are inhibited by lack of effective communication (Stone and Ingham, 2002; Whittington, 2018b; Coleman, 2001; Breakwell and Fife-Schaw, 1992).

Mellanby noted that patterns of adolescent sexual behaviour similar to those in Britain were found in the United States and other parts of the world (Mellanby, 1997, p. 10; ACSF, 1992). To summarise, in Britain at the time there was growing concern in public health surrounding the increase in rates of STIs, including HIV/AIDS, and the high rates of teenage pregnancies. As was reported by the Social Exclusion Unit, these clinical consequences of early

teenage sexual activity were also strongly associated with young people's exclusion from education and fulfilling adult lives (SEU, 1999) (PHLs, 2000).

Following their review of the literature and during the development of the Apause Programme, Tripp, Mellanby and Phelps had little reason to conclude that, even with adaptations, existing RSE curricula in the UK had the potential to be behaviourally effective (Mellanby, Phelps and Tripp, 1992). They failed to introduce to the classroom the necessary psycho-social interactions likely to result in a durable repertoire of novel beliefs, behavioural decisions and actions. Noteworthy, however, is the number of times then, and more recently, reviews have suggested that health promotion programmes in general (not exclusively sex education in classroom settings) which include a peer education component, have yielded promising results (Forsyth *et al.*, 2018).

In their 1995 review of the literature, professor of sociology Ann Oakley and her University College, London colleagues reported the paucity of well-designed and robustly evaluated interventions in the UK. (Oakley *et al.*, 1995)

Whilst there was, and continues to be, growing evidence of the existence of behaviourally effective programmes in the USA (Kirby, Laris and Roller, 2007; Picot *et al.*, 2012; Kirby, 1994; Chin *et al.*, 2012), amongst academics considered 'conservative' it still remains a matter worth contesting as to whether the more liberal 'Comprehensive Sex Education' (CSE) programmes in the USA and globally have actually achieved the health gains that are being claimed (Ericksen and Weed, 2019; Girma and Paton, 2015).

UK teenagers' relationships were, and remain, characterised by a relative paucity of interactional competencies resulting in risky behaviours. Moreover,

school SRE provision was inadequate to the task of inculcating the necessary communication skills. However, more recent studies provide evidence that teenage pregnancy is not, inevitably, causative of long-term social exclusion (Duncan, Edwards and Alexander, 2010; Rutherford, 2012). Rather, it is argued that teenage pregnancy as a public health crisis in the UK, was a construction arising from moralising discourses amongst educated, liberal-left reformers preoccupied with ‘front-loading’ access to education. Rather than investing in appropriate support and services for ‘working-class’ teenage mothers with adequate opportunities to re-enter education, the Blair government implemented an educational strategy privileging a more ‘middle-class’ trajectory. Aimed at increasing the proportion of young people who achieved professional qualifications in their early to mid-twenties before ‘settling down’ to start a family, it is suggested the policy had the perverse effect of perpetuating the social exclusion of teenage parents.

The provision of SRE in schools, then and now

Despite Relationships and Sex Education finally achieving mandatory status in the UK National Curriculum starting in September 2020, an ambivalence and general apprehension towards teaching sex education has continued to be reflected in school policy and classroom practice since the 1990s to this day (Stewart *et al.*, 2021; Ofsted, 2013). Undoubtedly, there have been schools, teachers and resources which have impacted positively on the lives of individual young people. The life work of the late Hilary Dixon and her book, amongst others, *Taught not caught: strategies for sex education* (Dixon, 1989), deserves acknowledgement, alongside her contribution to the SHARE programme to be discussed. Nevertheless, numerous reviews of the quality of sex education

provision in UK schools over the last three decades and analyses of more formally implemented and evaluated school-based interventions have led researchers to conclude that there is little evidence to suggest, on a population basis, conventional classroom-situated learning (with or without a peer-led component) has a positive impact on the sexual health and behaviours of young people. (Stewart *et al.*, 2021; Forsyth *et al.*, 2018)

Back in 2006 I characterised the political debate surrounding school-based sex education as adversarial, with major confrontations over legislation passed in 1986, 1988, 1993, and 1999/2000 (Lewis and Knijn, 2001). Essentially, the field has been divided into two camps, a traditionalist position that claims sex education in schools is too explicit, does not emphasise marriage and family values and promotes all the negative aspects of early sexual involvement. The other camp accepts the changing sexual cultures and behaviours of young people, enshrines liberal values in their classroom practices whilst believing availability of 'good protection' to be the most appropriate public health provision (Evans and Tripp, 2006). A pause is not exclusively allied to either camp, it reinforces values often regarded as conservative, including using peer-education to develop skills to postpone intercourse and avoid risk-taking behaviours, whilst deploying health professionals to promote contraception and local services.

With the election of Tony Blair and his New Labour Government in 1997, the Social Exclusion Unit was quickly formed, and in 1999 the Teenage Pregnancy Report was presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister. Blair writes in the foreword:

Britain has the worst record on teenage pregnancies in Europe. [...] Teenage mothers are less likely to finish their education, less likely to find a good job, and more likely to end up both as single parents and bringing up their children in poverty. (SEU, 1999).

Following the Teenage Pregnancy Report, it seemed reasonable to hope that SRE would quickly become mandatory and, just as critically, based in evidence and best practice. This was not to be the case, as Simon Blake, Chief Executive of the Brook Charity⁸, laments in his account of the Labour Party's vacillation on making SRE a part of the statutory Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. As Blake states, it got side-lined, 'when PSHE got caught up in the political horse trading that took place in the pre-election wash up of parliamentary business in 2010' (Blake, 2013).

Alongside the longstanding sheer inconsistency and 'patchiness' of high quality teaching of RSE in UK, the main limitation has remained one of pedagogy (Ofsted, 2013). Intuitively, most teachers adhere to the notion of giving their charges the opportunity to make 'informed choices', the implication being that if relevant information is transmitted in a sufficiently compelling manner, the students will be equipped and free to make healthful choices. There are numerous studies to show that this faith in the transmission of information as a means of influencing health behaviours is ill-founded (Kirby, 1994; Kirby *et al.*, 1994; Kirby, 1995; Kirby, 2007; Picot *et al.*, 2012; Wight and Dixon, 2004). Running, ostensibly as a counter-rhetoric to this transmission model of knowledge acquisition, lies another ideological article of faith, namely the central role assigned to highly cognitive, verbal and reflective language

⁸ '**Brook** is the only national **charity** to offer both clinical sexual health services and education and wellbeing services for young people.' <https://www.brook.org.uk>

processes. Blake summarised this binary in the introduction of the 2011 Brook Report - *Sex Education Fit for the 21st Century – We need it now.*

The curriculum focuses on the pure mechanics of reproduction[...] Discussing people's decisions and reactions to situations that include themes such as consent, sexuality and unplanned pregnancy can encourage reflective thinking and decision-making. (Blake, 2011)

Previously serving as a long-time team member of the Sex Education Forum⁹ (SEF), before rising to become its director from 1999 to 2002, Blake commanded considerable influence in the thinking about what constituted good practice in SRE at the time. Whilst the SEF is not to blame for the slowness of successive governments in making SRE statutory, I believe this promulgation of the virtue of good class discussion has served as a severe impediment to the recognition and development of practices which put children in the central and empowered role of actors, participating in playful and exploratory processes and performing in a range of successful behavioural strategies and tactics. Puzzlingly, and equally deleterious, to the emergence of child-centred RSE, to this day the SEF has interdicted any serious discourse which recognised peer-led sex education as having the potential to be uniquely effective. In contrast, Sarah Blenkinsop of the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER), who led on the independent evaluation of Apause in over one hundred schools, reports positive feedback from teachers, students and regional

⁹ The self-proclaimed national authority on sex education - "Established in 1987, the Sex Education Forum is a group of partners working together to achieve quality relationships and sex education (RSE) for all children and young people. Our membership for schools and other educators serves to connect organisations and individuals with the latest practice, research and policy information." The SEF has recently been constituted as a charity <https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/about/what-we-do>

Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators (TPCs) responsible for local roll-out of Apause.

The most effective aspect of the programme was considered to be the peer element, mentioned by ten TPCs, eight national representatives and two of the local programme coordinators. Typical comments included, '*The principle of peer education is a good one*' and '*the peer element has always been one of the pioneering elements*'. (Blenkinsop, 2004, p. 12)

Initiated about five years after Apause published its results (Mellanby *et al.*, 1995) but running concurrently with Apause in roll-out mode, were two well-researched, university-based and rigorously evaluated SRE programmes. Conceived as trials of public health interventions designed to address the multiple health and social challenges associated with teenage sexual behaviour, they were both set in the 'level playing field' of schools. Both RIPPLE (University College, London) and SHARE (University of Glasgow) received sufficient funding for their development and evaluation using randomised control trials (RCT).

In the wake of Oakley's study (1995) highlighting the dearth of well-designed and evaluated SRE, the RIPPLE programme was reported as being peer-led and participatory. Following a promising feasibility study (Stephenson *et al.*, 1998) UCL conducted a stratified, cluster RCT. The peer training was not based on any psycho-social theory and whilst it (the training) was designed and facilitated by adult professionals, the content of the three, one-hour sessions would appear to have been developed by the young people.

These involved games and small group work, discussions, brainstorming, role-playing and demonstrating how to use a

condom. The approach emphasises development of skills for sexual negotiation, as well as knowledge about pregnancy, contraception, STIs, and the use of sexual health and contraceptive services. The organization, content and delivery of the intervention was standardised as far as possible across the experimental schools.(Stephenson *et al.*, 2003)

The quotation above itemises a mind-boggling array of classroom methods, knowledge content and relationships skills to be inculcated in just three hours of contact time. Based on my experiences with Apause peer interventions, it seems implausible that within that crammed curriculum there would have been more than twenty minutes of games and role-play, hence one might speculate that RIPPLE probably failed to involve 70%-80% of learners in role-plays. In Apause Peers which comprised four hours of contact time compared with RIPPLE's three hours, it required one whole, hour-long session dedicated to achieving that level of role-play participation. Accordingly, both our qualitative and quantitative evaluations of Apause evidence a high level of recall of the role-play session, (Phelps *et al.*, 1994, Blenkinsop *et al.*, 2004) but no equivalent recall of participation in role-plays is documented in either the quantitative or qualitative reports from RIPPLE. In reporting the intervention design of RIPPLE the authors (Stephenson *et al.*, 2003; Stephenson *et al.*, 2004) explained there was no explicit application of Social Learning Theory and presumably the principle of enactive mastery (Bandura, 1997, p. 80). Hence the relative lack of priority attached to role-plays and investigating them in their process evaluations.

RIPPLE, when combining girls and boys scores, reported that the programme did not achieve statistically significant overall behavioural effect. Despite these findings, I personally was struck by the statement, 'By age sixteen, significantly

fewer girls reported intercourse in the peer-led arm than in the control arm ...'(Stephenson *et al.*, 2004). The team interpreted the results thus:

Peer-led sex education was effective in some ways, but broader strategies are needed to improve young people's sexual health. The role of single-sex sessions should be investigated further. (Ibid.)

The long term effects of RIPPLE continued to be disappointing, merely showing there *may* have been fewer teenage births in the intervention arm, all other measures of sexual and relational health and behaviours showed no difference between the intervention arm and the control (Stephenson *et al.*, 2008).

The Glasgow-based SHARE Programme, following a rigorous review of the literature and based in established psycho-social theory, most notably Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) was designed, from the outset, to be delivered by well-trained teachers (Wight and Abraham, 2000; Abraham, Sheeran and Wight, 1998).

The SHARE intervention (Sexual Health and Relationships: Safe, Happy and Responsible) is a five day teacher training programme plus a 20 session pack: [...] It is intended to reduce unsafe sexual behaviours, reduce unwanted pregnancies, and improve the quality of sexual relationships.. (Wight *et al.*, 2002)

During a visit by Daniel Wight to the Aopause team which admired the rigour of Wight's work, John Tripp urged Wight that without a peer-led component there would be insufficient psycho-social influence and traction necessary to bring about durable behavioural change (Evans and Tripp, 2006). SHARE was an excellent teacher-led programme, but as the title of Wight's summary paper - *Limits of teacher delivered sex education: interim behavioural outcomes from*

randomised trial - suggests, this was as good as it got in terms of what can be achieved in a teacher-facilitated pedagogy (Wight *et al.*, 2002). Although the intervention group reported higher levels of satisfaction with their SRE and less regret of first sexual intercourse with most recent partner, the evaluation was unable to detect any reduction in risk-taking behaviour.

To summarise, thus far, school-based sex and relationships education in the UK since before the inception of Apause to the present day has been haphazard, an ideological battlefield, and largely unsuccessful as a context for achieving public health improvements (Stewart *et al.*, 2021). At present in the UK there are no classroom-based interventions with rigorous design and evaluations comparable to Apause, RIPPLE or SHARE. There is still a powerful conservative lobby, representing a variety of religious communities, who find themselves unlikely allies with those who promote the virtues of individualism and the rights of the family to live without the interference of the 'nanny state'.

Despite the UK in 1992 signing up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the conservative camp argues forcibly that there should be little or no sex education in schools. Whilst at the other end of the spectrum there is a well organised body of sex education zealots who are championing an inclusive and ever-expanding RSE curriculum. To date, the RSE curriculum includes LBGTQ+ rights, family values and structures, pornography, the impact of social media, bullying, child exploitation and on-line protection, domestic violence, mental health issues, period poverty and female genital mutilation. These are in addition to the more established themes of physical and emotional pubertal development, reproduction, sexual pleasure, STIs, contraception, and all the nuances and behavioural challenges of how to

develop safe, fulfilling and respectful relationships. After ten years plus of Conservative austerity policies, a recent member of SEF staff intimated to me that schools do not have sufficient funds to train or resource their RSE teachers to meet the requirements of the impending statutory RSE curriculum. Nevertheless, the SEF and the PSHE Association and other national charities, including Brook, would seem to collude with a neo-liberal, free-for-all when it comes to the promotion and/or selling of their own and other's 'approved' RSE training and resources, of which few, if any, have undergone any rigorous evaluation. Even if they had, the likelihood is that consistent with even the most systematically developed theory-driven interventions, by excluding a peer-education component (far less the processes of play and playfulness), they would have fallen well short of their espoused health benefits.

The reader may have been struck by the number of themes and topics which seem to frame RSE and adolescence within a problematising discourse. Ironically perhaps, rather than the fulfilment and celebration of young people's emergent agency, sexualities, identities and rights, it is this perceived threat to their well-being and the need to 'protect' them from the vagaries of the 21st century's socio-cultural trends and digital media influences that has been the dominant discourse compelling the Conservative Government to make RSE statutory. In anticipation, then, of RSE's statutory status, over recent years there has been a plethora of commercially produced resources and training packages coming on to the schools market. Additionally, the larger charities operating in the area, often organised as a bidding cartel, attract ringfenced pots of government funding to research and develop 'free' or subsidized training and

resources which address specific, high profile areas of concern such as child exploitation and online protection.

An increasing number of the RSE resources offer a range of participatory and practical learning activities. Many conform to recent guidance from the SEF and the PSHE Association both in terms of curriculum development processes and curricular content. Theories which seem to be popular in influencing the development of these resources and training, although not always explicitly acknowledged, include: John Bowlby's Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1979), distancing and projective methods (Landy, 1986; Jennings, 1995b; Jennings, 1995a), resilience and self-esteem, with some acknowledgement of neuroscience. The following: Jigsaw¹⁰, Thrive,¹¹ and Outside the Box¹² are representative of this new wave of training, evaluation and resource programmes and are endorsed by either the Sex Education Forum, the PSHE Association or both.

Of these resources for secondary education I have found none which recognise or enshrine the exploration of, and participation in, physical games, play, role-play and performance processes as a central component of their curricula. Many of the theoretical concepts and pedagogic techniques can be traced to highly individualistically orientated practices of counselling, therapy, psychotherapy, youth work, resilience and self-esteem training. None use a peer-facilitated pedagogy. Bandura's theories and Icek Ajzen's theory of

10 Jigsaw – Appears to have a theory based in an amalgam of notions of mindfulness, attachment and resilience and promotes group/class discussion
<https://www.jigsawpshe.com/>

11 Thrive - is, "Based on established neuroscience, attachment theory and child development" and promotes group/class discussion <https://www.thriveapproach.com/>

12 Outside the Box - Uses a range of distancing/projective techniques, and principles drawn from attachment theory and promotes group/class discussion
<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/training/calendar/outside-box-2-day-facilitator-training-londonb>

planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2002) are not acknowledged, despite such theories being recognised in the literature as being necessary to behaviourally effective programmes.

Government funded courses on how to implement the new statutory RSE curriculum are run by the PSHE Association. Subject leads are advised to conduct surveys and focus groups to assess the needs of parent and students; decide on how best to meet the specific socio-cultural needs of their own school community; evaluate their existing curricular provision; and then either design their own resources or pick and mix from the expanding range of commercially available resources and match them to the mandatory curricular framework. They are advised to avoid the wholesale implementation of one 'comprehensive' package. All the classroom activities and interactions facilitated by these resources are adjuncts or preparatory stages on the route towards the ultimate goal of class discussion and opportunities for highly cognitive, individualized reflection and the formulation of personal values and intentions. Such practices promote readily identifiable outcome measures or *effects* which expedite mandatory RSE - a national curriculum which lends itself to accountability without achieving much by way of *affect* or transformation.

These structural constraints, which militate against opportunities for high percentages of learners to participate in role-play and play-based interactions, whilst antithetical to Apause practices and future developments of TAP, are the same pedagogies that render much of theatre-in-health-education (THE) and applied theatre practices behaviourally ineffective.

Applied theatre practices – affect and effect

Based in the University of Manchester, James Thompson, Professor of Applied and Social Theatre, develops an important distinction between processes of ‘affect’ and ‘effect’ within the function of theatre making. Consistent with Thompson’s thesis in *Performance affects: applied theatre and the end of effect* (Thompson, 2009) I will use ‘effect’ to imply cognitive processes and predicted, observable outcomes, phenomena which lend themselves to calibrations within quantifiably empirical parameters. ‘Affect’, by contrast, I will use when referring to experiences or apprehensions which are concerned with a subject’s interior and feeling world, those unexpected, chance processes which are less predictable and may emerge through the serendipitous, less formalised interactions characteristic of playful and creative contexts. Following Thompson’s argument, ‘affect’, then, falls under the general rubric of aesthetics. The central endeavour of this thesis, then, is to identify a relationship between aesthetics, play and transformation; to refine a framework for the analysis of the aesthetics of play; and demonstrate how transformation is potentiated within the parameters of such a framework.

Discourses surrounding sex and sexualities are socio-culturally sanctioned. They are staged in politicized and increasingly contested arenas encompassing the ethics around themes of sex, gender, disability, race, class, caste and power (Srinivasan, 2021, p. xiii). It follows that the RSE classroom is itself such a site of perturbation. It is often characterized as being riven with embarrassment and awkwardness where facilitators, teachers and learners alike encounter feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability (Whittington, 2018a; Whittington, 2018b). In short, the classroom context has the potential to

overwhelm. The challenge, therefore, of creating a privileged space in which playful interactions can thrive, creating a certain kind of 'beauty', requires a sensibility towards, and the judicious enlistment of pedagogic, performative and aesthetic conventions. Thompson (2009) builds a compelling argument for the possibility of an applied theatre which has the potential to achieve *effects* without constantly drawing on, foregrounding and restoring the behaviour and trauma of those health issues the intervention is designed to attenuate. Rather, Thompson makes a case for performance which, in the first instance, achieves *affects* - in other words, creates beauty.

Beauty creates both the capacity for being affected (it 'aestheticises') and an openness to a call from beyond one's body, but it does so within a framework of pleasure and therefore the feeling of responsibility is less likely to overwhelm.

(Thompson, 2009, p. 171)

This thesis will frame Apause as an applied and socially engaged practice which privileges affect and a playful aesthetic, not as an incidental phenomenon, but as a function central to its capacity to bring about change both within the individual subject and extending a reach of ethical and political influence into the wider community. It will be argued that the manifestation of a play aesthetic has enabled Apause to generate evaluative evidence suggestive of both affect and effect where other interventions have failed.

The Apause team was reviewing the literature and investigating promising practices for school-based sexual health interventions during the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the time, it appeared there were no published studies of theatre practices within classroom or school settings where the intervention design and evaluation methodology were capable of evidencing the practice as an effective

method of influencing health behaviours (Mellanby, Phelps and Tripp, 1992). The aphorism, 'Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence' is, I believe, pertinent in this context. It seems implausible to me that there was not a single theatre practice which impacted on the health behaviours of its participants. Rather, it is much more likely that the theatre practitioners went on apace plying their trade, probably underfunded, and almost definitely with insufficient cash and expertise to implement the kinds of rigorous evaluations, such as controlled trials, necessary for them to be reported in the medical and health education literature as 'behaviourally effective'.

In discussing the aesthetics of audience participation, Anthony Jackson, Emeritus Professor of Educational Theatre, University of Manchester, considers Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre,(Boal, 1979; Boal, 1992), reminding us that despite its ubiquity, the efficacy and generalisability of the technique is far from being established.

... the technique [...] has been utilised within prisons as part of rehabilitation programmes, in rural Nigeria to provoke debates about AIDS prevention or drug abuse, and across India to promote literacy. The number of applications has been almost endless, even if the universal efficacy of the method has still to be proved. (Jackson, 2007, p. 136)

The public health context and funding of the Apause investigation obliged the team to adhere to the established medical and ethical practice of designing interventions based on the evidence of what has proved effective in previous related studies. It is defensible, then, that the team should have judged the deployment of theatrical techniques merely as a *component* capable of making an, albeit unique, contribution to a potentially effective programme rather than

constituting the overall programme methodology. That said, the practice of structuring into the workshop experiences, facilitated by adults and peer-educators alike, multiple opportunities for the learners to engage in fun and play-type activities in which their own spontaneous and performed interactions constituted the material action of their transformation was considered essential. It just was never acknowledged as theatre. A review of theatre in education (TIE), applied theatre and TfD being practised at the time suggests that Apause and its theatre of applied performativity (TAP) would have been judged as falling outside that particular realm of socially engaged practices.

Of the theatre practices that were being deployed around the late 1980s into the 1990s, the one which bore closest similarity to Apause was being run in New York – The NiteStar Programme. Founded in 1987 by Dr Cydelle Berlin (a specialist in adolescent sexuality and development) NiteStar draws on the work of Bandura which:

[...] posits that people learn how to behave, and how to change their behaviour, by watching other people.

(Brodzinski, 2010, p. 70)

Emma Brodzinski provides a valuable account of the theoretical underpinnings and practices of the NiteStar Programme, many of which will be seen to resonate with the methods in the Apause Peers Programme. Most obvious is the use of peer educators who, although slightly older, reflect the cultural and linguistic nuances, ethnicities and spectrum of sexual orientations of the target populations.

Despite NiteStar's clear intention to give participants practice in novel behaviours, it appears they demurred from having any moralising or value-

based agenda which would involve making judgements or the giving of advice, preferring to describe theatre as:

... an effective way in which to start a conversation among young people about issues relating to health and sexuality which they hope will translate into informed practices.(Ibid. p.73)

I have situated this thesis and the analysis of the Aopause methods within a broadly post-structuralist practice with due acknowledgement of the language philosopher Austin. Through such a post-structuralist lens, then, to describe the work of NiteStar as a means of starting a 'conversation' in the hope of it being 'translated' into 'informed' practices is somewhat disingenuous – although arguably a political necessity. Everything that Brodzinski describes about the work of NiteStar is redolent with the transformative immediacy of Austin's performatives. In her work *The Transformative Power of Performance – A New Aesthetics*, the celebrated German theatre historian and theorist Erika Fischer-Lichte, summarises the phenomenon of the performative and goes on to situate it in the context of performance theatre.

Performative utterances are self-referential and constitutive in so far as they bring forth the social reality they are referring to. Austin formulated a theory that, while new to language philosophy, had been intuitively known and practiced by speakers of all languages. Speech entails a transformative power.(Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 9)

But the highly participatory nature of the NiteStar applied theatre practice and their claims of achieving '...significant change in both sexual behaviour and negotiation behaviour for safe-sex practices' (Brodzinski, 2010, p. 76) suggests there is transformation of a more social immediacy than the somewhat distanced, protracted and cognitive effects suggested by its adherents.

Programmes designed along Kirby's lines, based in psycho-social theories, run the risk of having little by way of aesthetic appeal. The issues surrounding the nuanced relationship between effect, affect, ethics and aesthetics, as intimated by Thompson (2009), Jackson (2007), Veronica Baxter and Katharine Low, are multi-faceted and far-reaching and will form themes to be visited in this thesis (Baxter and Low, 2017). It is worth noting, however, that this preoccupation with avoiding deploying theatre as a direct means of correcting socially unacceptable or inadvisable behaviour may reflect a liberal, Eurocentric priority placed on individual choice and freedom over collective responsibility. As Osita Okagbue, Professor of Theatre and Performance, Goldsmiths, University of London, argues, no such compunction hampers the purpose of many traditional African theatre forms.

African peoples perform not just to entertain themselves, but they do so to also impact on their world – to question, understand, challenge, and ultimately order and reorder their world. They use the theatre to celebrate and affirm what is good and also to censor, admonish, and hopefully correct behaviours perceived not to be good. (Igweonu and Okagbue, 2013, p. 10)

What were the contemporary applied theatre practices?

In their controlled study of a Theatre in AIDS Education programme performed by Catch Theatre Company in youth club settings, Lawrence Elliott *et al*, report that they could find no evidence of behaviour change (Elliott *et al.*, 1996). The theatre experience was based around a single continuous performance event of a narrative theatre production interspersed with Forum Theatre type workshops with a maximum of five participants coming into the actual scenes and performing. The duration of the event was around ninety minutes. The authors'

concluded, 'This study does not support the view that theatre in AIDS education has a significant impact on HIV knowledge, attitudes and risk' (Ibid.).

Elliott claims that the programmes from both arms of their investigation conform to Kirby's findings as to the characteristics of what is behaviourally effective in SRE. Not a single effective intervention in Kirby's study they cited (Kirby, 1994) comprised less than six, one-hour sessions. Nonetheless, Elliot concluded that an intervention of just ninety minutes would be sufficient to establish whether or not a theatre-based intervention could be effective.

I cite this study as an example of the typically under-powered, under-resourced and pseudo-scientific evaluations of potentially effective interventions in either peer-led or theatre-based or combined practices which has led researchers to be dismissive of their potential effectiveness. Elliott's account of the theatre-based intervention suggests it was strong on aesthetics and was powerfully affective. As was evidenced in the responses during follow-up focus groups.

Most of those in the theatre focus groups were also keen to stress how much they enjoyed the play, finding it 'fun, entertaining, relaxing and enjoyable', whilst most in the health education focus groups said that the event was 'boring and too long'. (Elliott *et al.*, 1996)

Again, in terms of behaviours, the qualitative element of the study revealed positive findings.

In the present study, over half those in the theatre and health education groups said they would change their behaviour as a result of attending the events. More of the theatre group, however, reported an actual change in behaviour 2 months after attending the play compared with those in the health education group. (Ibid.)

It strikes one as curious, not to say perverse, that Elliot should have foregrounded the quantitative findings, which were methodologically weak and statistically underpowered, over the qualitative data which comprised three separate focus group sessions for each arm of the study.

In order to more fully situate and theorise the performance practices of Apause in the context of other contemporaneous practices, an account of applied theatre and theatre in health education during the 1980s and 1990s will appear in the Chapter 3. Jackson (2007) paints a valuable picture of the variety of approaches adopted by theatre in education (TIE) but signals a trend towards adopting the kinds of classroom drama used by teachers. Unlike Apause Peers which involves no theatrical production and is always situated in classrooms of between twenty and thirty-five students, it seems that, for economic considerations as much as aesthetic, these theatre events took place in larger spaces such as school halls or gymnasias and accommodated the whole, or parts of, just one year group at a time in order to facilitate increasing levels of audience participation.

[..] many companies during the late 1980s and into the 1990s moved themselves closer to the pedagogic practices of classroom drama as advocated by Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton and others. In part this was a response to the perceived need to ensure a degree of *critical* distance, an opportunity to reflect *within* the programme. [...] so many TIE teams experimented with techniques equivalent to teacher-in-role. (Jackson, 2007, p. 151)

As Jackson observes, and is evidenced by Elliott's study, issues of programme roll-out, fidelity and economics, in tandem with the increasing influences of neo-liberalism on the UK educational and health economies demanded evidence of

impact. These pressures were expressed through the preferring of a finished product over process, the measurable transmission of knowledge and attitudes, and numbers of young people attending performances; in short, the foregrounding of these *effects* over the discovery of potential performance *affects*. Inquiries into such *affects* might have provided insights as to the subjective experiences of participants, the proportion who were actually involved as actors in role-plays or simulations and how such engagement might influence subsequent relationships. This incremental slide of TIE and TfD into more commercially viable, large scale events and away from the smaller, more intimate and culturally specific workshop formats which have greater potential to effect change, is also reported by Christopher Joseph Odhiambo as characteristic of TfD in Kenya (Joseph, 2016) and is echoed by Chijioke Uwah and Patrick Ebewo in South Africa (Uwah and Ebewo, 2013).

Around the late 1980s and 1990s in Africa the idea of applied theatre was predated by an established practice of TfD. Hence, although the two programmes, Ge-WISE and RAP, owe much of their ideology and practice to the TfD principles outlined by Okagbue, (Okagbue, 1998; Evans *et al.*, 1998; Evans, Akerman and Tripp, 2009) at the time when the Aopause programme was being developed in 1990-91, the research team found little evidence that practices based purely in applied theatre were having any impact on health behaviours. Again, this paucity of evidence suggesting the efficacy of theatre in HIV/AIDS education in Africa is reported by Uwah and Ebewo (2013). All three of the Aopause programmes interrogated deploy facilitation techniques redolent of Boal and British TIE practices. In contrast to those practices, however, all three of the Aopause Peer interventions place markedly less emphasis on story,

fictional characters and facilitators remaining in role. Rather, greater importance is attached to the facilitators remaining 'themselves', fulfilling their social function of being peers to the learners, ensuring the learners have a lot of fun being playful about role-plays. Aesthetic distance, as propounded by Jackson, and its paucity in Apause is not theorised as deleterious when the whole programme logos and aesthetic is based around prioritizing play over health messages. This view would seem to be endorsed by Jackson.

[...] I want to pose against each other two contrasting notions: that of the 'targets of the outcome culture' against that of the 'playful culture'. And I will argue that it is often the ludic qualities – the 'playfulness' – of the drama (an integral part of the aesthetic experience) that impact upon audiences and participants far more than the overtly serious, message driven elements.(Jackson, 2007, p. 198)

Situating Apause within the field of applied theatre

Although an analysis of Apause Peers is here used to anatomise TAP, the original research team never conceived it as theatre. That said, under the aegis of the Apause Programme were two applications of performance practice which, from their inception were, indeed, acknowledged as 'theatre' - namely Get-WISE and RAP. As well as borrowing from TfD and TIE, these interventions also drew heavily on practices from the fields of drama therapy and play therapy (Jennings, 1995a; Landy, 1986; Landy, 1993). Following Jennings (Jennings, 2011) and the thinking of Stephenson, Burghardt, Sutton-Smith and Henricks, all researchers of play, this thesis integrates new findings in the field of neuro-cognitive science and the function of play during the developmental window of adolescence (Blakemore, 2018).

The research questions

At the time of their development, the psycho-social theoretical underpinnings of all three peer interventions were explicit. Herein dubbed the programmes' *regulative framework*. This thesis identifies six psycho-social parameters common to all three interventions and organises them into a generic framework suitable for analyses in the hypothetico-deductive tradition. This *regulative framework* might best be understood as corresponding to Thompson's (2009) programme *effects*. However, an equally important set of parameters is required to explain how the workshops are actually encountered by participants as an aesthetic experience, or Thompson's *affects*. Hence the *constitutive framework* comprises a set aesthetic parameters which facilitate the primary analytical processes of this thesis, an investigation of the aesthetics of Apause classroom action. Qualitative analyses triangulated with quantitative findings form the basis of an examination of participants' performative interactions. Play and playfulness emerge as being integral to the aestheticity of Apause and it is proposed that their transformative functions are achieved not only *within* the *constitutive framework* of the event, but also through destabilising and re-defining its aesthetic parameters.

The thesis, then, proposes a model which unifies performance aesthetics, performativity and play. It goes on to ask how such an integration might potentiate a fourth, defining aesthetic parameter of TAP, that of *durable transformation*. The interplay of these two opposing but complementary frameworks, the regulative and the constitutive, manifests as a particular kind of event – a Theatre of Applied Performativity. This thesis explores and theorises the proposition that the Scripted Performance Workshop is a specific instance

of TAP. Moreover, as a script-based and peer-facilitated practice, the SPW distinguishes itself from other applied theatre practices both in its aesthetics and how the processes of transformation are theorised and evidenced.

Subsequent chapters

Chapter 2 is organised to afford the reader an appreciation of the unique challenges of psycho-social and neuro-cognitive development experienced by middle adolescents, hence a provision of the original Apause theoretical framework. The function of play and playfulness is theorised, integrated as a framework and deployed in an analysis of Apause. Further analyses demonstrate how play is experienced in TAP and its specific manifestation as the SPW method.

What follows in Chapter 3 is an account of how Apause theory and roll-out methods are situated within a relevant selection of applied and socially engaged theatre practices. Although many of these practices contain theoretical and practical elements similar to Apause, none simultaneously integrate psycho-social theory with a play theory and aesthetic. Furthermore, in the specific field of school-based sex education, none deploy relatively unskilled peer educators directly from their own schools and communities. Whilst it will be shown how careful framing, characterisation and narrative contrive to maintain aesthetic distance, it will be argued that such conventional aesthetics may conspire to deny the learners the experience of playful empowerment and transformative interactions characteristic of TAP.

Chapter 4 describes the educational and health contexts and affords insights as to the implementation, logistics and evaluation of Apause.

Chapter 5 analyses the specific case of Apause Peers, identifying key moments from the transcripts which illuminate the dynamics of play, establishing why this practice was used as a template for emergent practices. Qualitative and quantitative findings will be cross-referenced and appraised.

Get-WISE is a TfD investigation of negotiation skills. Chapter 6 reveals novel insights encountered during the development of Get-WISE. Exploring the limits of verbal idioms as a means of promoting adolescent interactional competencies, transcripts are used to interrogate its successes and shortcomings. An evaluation of qualitative and quantitative findings is presented.

Chapter 7 examines the unique case of RAP, a programme for young people excluded from mainstream education. It explores the maturation of a methodology which integrates the peer-to-peer dynamic with play as the key factor promoting agency. A qualitative evaluation of programme affects goes on to suggest the transformative processes of TAP do not automatically imply adherence to scripted rubrics.

The Discussion and Conclusion chapter summarises finding, shortcomings and opportunities. Theoretical principles of TAP will be aligned with other models of social action and learning. Once linked to the specifics of the SPW application, TAP is situated as a means of both analysing and generating novel applied theatre practices with compelling evidence of its capacity to harness the transformative power of play as performativity. It anticipates the possibility of future applications of the SPW.

Chapter 2 – Adolescent development and play

Rationale

In the Introduction I posited that, as a practice, TAP did not conform to the contemporary rubrics of applied theatre and TfD. This thesis postulates that processes of play and playfulness experienced by *all* participants constitute the main transformative elements of Apause and thus distinguish it from the main body of applied practices.

This chapter starts by establishing an understanding of the uniqueness of adolescence, on the basis of which I will elucidate the original Apause theoretical underpinnings. I will proceed to develop an argument for integrating the, hitherto unacknowledged, function of play within the Apause practice. By the end of the chapter I hope that the reader will be persuaded that TAP provides a meaningful theoretical model and lens with which to assess other applied theatre and performance practices and situate Apause within the broader field.

My approach then will be to start with a focus on the subjects themselves – adolescents. I will try to build a picture of the growing understanding of how they apprehend themselves within their social worlds, how they construct their identities and build their agency in pursuance of status, respect and autonomy (Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018). I will attempt to address two related questions: First, what particular function does play have for adolescents? Second, what kinds of play are at stake in performance-based interventions? In reference to those emergent understandings, I will theorise why so many health and behaviour focused interventions appear to have been unsuccessful, while others have generated a more robust evidence base of impact – both in terms

of classroom practice and evaluation methods. Finally, within that critique of adolescent focused interventions in general, I will go on to create a theoretical model for TAP, and situate the SPW, alongside, without necessarily conforming to, the principles of other comparable interventions which could fall under the general rubric of applied theatre and socially engaged performance practices.

Defining adolescence

Cultures across the millennia have been perplexed by adolescents. Adults' anxieties have, with few exceptions, been expressed in descriptions of adolescent behaviour in pathological and antisocial terms. Possibly the earliest written accounts are of words spoken by Socrates (469 – 399 BCE).

The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in the place of exercise. (Socrates 469-399)

About a hundred years later, Aristotle described youth in the following terms:

The young are [...] ready to carry any meaningful desire they may have formed into action [...] They are changeful, too, and fickle in their desires, which are as transitory as they are vehement; [...] they are then extremely fond of social intercourse and have not yet learned to judge their friends, or indeed anything else, by the rule of expediency. (Aristotle, Circa 300 BCE; Grimaldi, 1988)

As the prominent cognitive neuroscientist Sarah-Jane Blakemore, amongst other scholars, has illustrated, adolescent-like behaviour is observable in many animal species, including wombats who turn into, “ ... absolute - can I swear? – little shits” (Wahlquist, 2016). Blakemore directs our attention to dramatic literature nearly two thousand years after Aristotle in which Shakespeare

provides sympathetic depictions of adolescents in *Romeo and Juliet*, and more comedic stereotypes in *The Winter's Tale* as bemoans the Shepherd.

I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting. (Shakespeare, 1611)

A century later Jean-Jacques Rousseau's account of adolescence shows no great advances in insight or empathy for the person transitioning out of childhood.

A change in humour, frequent anger, a mind in constant agitation makes the child almost unmanageable. His feverishness turns him into a lion. He disregards his guide; he no longer wishes to be governed. (Rousseau, 1762)

From the Yoruba belief system of Olódùmarèism, the divinity Èṣù has "the office of trying men's sincerity and putting their religion to the proof" (Idowu, 1962, p. 80). Èṣù is regarded with profound respect and reverence, and his ultimate power to alter the fate of an individual is dangerously coupled with his extraordinarily adolescent-like character.

From all accounts he is not only a bewilderingly versatile character but also extremely capricious. [...] "The indulgent child of heaven; He whose greatness is manifest all over the place; the hurrying, sudden one; He who breaks into fragments and cannot be gathered together!" (Ibid, p.85).

I am particularly enamoured of a metaphysics which elevates the adolescent prankster to the status divine examiner, suggesting a measure of a society being the degree of respect it confers upon its adolescents -thus determining the fate and durability of the society's health and wellbeing. As Professor Susan

Sawyer writes in *The Lancet*, how adolescence is defined is both complex and important in the formulations of health policy and provisions.

Adolescence is the phase of life stretching between childhood and adulthood. [...]. Earlier puberty has accelerated the onset of adolescence in nearly all populations [...] In parallel, delayed timing of role transitions, including completion of education, marriage, and parenthood, continue to shift popular perceptions of when adulthood begins [...] unprecedented social forces, including marketing and digital media, are affecting health and wellbeing across these years. (Sawyer *et al.*, 2018)

Established principles underpinning A pause

The originator of the *Postponing Sexual Involvement Educational Series* (PSI) was Professor Marion Howard, a psychologist working within the Department of Gynaecology and Obstetrics at Emory University and clinical director of the Teen Services Programme at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, USA. Following the visit by John Tripp and Alex Mellanby to observe her Atlanta project in 1990, she kindly gave the Exeter team permission to adapt her scripts for the first matched control study in the Exeter area. In 2014 I contacted Howard explaining I was writing my PhD as an investigation into the performance phenomena of the peer programme. I was interested in how she had set about devising her programme. Below is an excerpt from her email of 25th September 2014.

Starting out we looked to Piaget and his understanding of child growth and development for guidance. In particular we were influenced by the notion that as youth moved from concrete operational thinking to a formal operational mode, programmes needed to foster this transition while recognizing that youth are not yet fully capable of reasoning in the same manner as adults and

the absorption and application of knowledge may differ significantly. (Howard, 2014)

The full email can be found in the Appendices, but it suffices to say that Howard has read widely and had integrated the work of scholars from a diversity of research traditions including Kohlberg (1976), Gerbner (1976) and Bandura (1977, 1986). What is significant here is that she started by reviewing the literature on the nature of teenagers and adolescent development itself, thus putting a psycho-social understanding of teenagers and their lives at the centre of the study as opposed to adults' perceptions of their pathologies or a range of aesthetic considerations contingent on creating theatre. One of Howard's most important conclusions was that at the ages of 13 – 14 years, most of the participants would be transitioning between Piaget's stage of *concrete operations* to *formal operations mode* (Piaget, Inhelder and Weaver, 1969). This is significant insofar as it recognises that whereas the *adult* brain might be capable of forming judgements through processing facts, assessing risk, leading to the visualisation and planning of their behaviour through reflection and discussion, such abstract cognitive processes might *not* be achievable by the *adolescent* brain. This assessment of adolescent cognitive processes is given further credence through the work of Lawrence Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1976) in his study mapping the stages of moral development over the human lifespan. Moreover, the notion that adolescence as a distinct and transitory phase of mammalian development is evidenced by the work of contemporary cognitive neuroscientists studying the patterns of brain development using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanning techniques and is beautifully illustrated by Blakemore in her book *Inventing Ourselves: The secret life of the teenage brain*, to which I will be returning (Blakemore, 2018).

By reviewing the works of Bandura and George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986), Howard and her colleagues assimilated a model which postulated that the processes through which teenagers arrive at their identities, perceptions of social norms and behaviours are primarily constructed through the actual performance of their social interactions and influenced by, and often drawing on, models derived through their exposure to the dominant media forms – at that time almost exclusively TV. In her paper of 1990 (Howard and McCabe, 1990), Howard acknowledges the programme design was also influenced by Social Inoculation Theory (McGuire, 1964). Howard, then, developed her programme on the understanding that the processes of constructing novel behaviours were underpinned by certain principles. Equally apparent in Berlin's NiteStar programme, these principles posited that the modelled behaviour must attract and hold the attention of the observer, usually by a role model with whom the observer can identify. The behaviour needs to be personally and socially rewarding and, through practise, a degree of mastery achievable.

Howard did not deny the young people opportunities to engage with and assimilate biological, developmental, psycho-social and medical information - the most detailed elements of the knowledge components of the school-based programme were delivered in six separate sessions by trained health professionals in addition to ongoing liaison with, and support from, the Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta (Howard, 1991). Rather, such verbally couched *explicit* understandings, moral codes and behaviours were of secondary importance compared with the highly participatory and socially referenced framework in which they were *implicitly* embedded in the peer-led component.

In her paper of 1990 Howard made it clear, both from her own research and that of Kirby and Ellickson, that the transference and acquisition of knowledge had no measurable impact on the risk-taking behaviours of teenagers (Kirby, 1984; Ellickson and Robyn, 1987; Howard, 1988). The young learners were encouraged to make their own personal judgements and behavioural choices, but to understand them from the standpoint of actors more fully cognisant of their capacity to perform such actions and the affects of such actions within their intimate relationships and on the perceptions of their peers.

Howard analysed day-to-day processes of adolescent socialisation, identified some of the most influential factors and then restructured and restored them as presentations of salient fragments of those same interactions within a peer-facilitated classroom. Not overly qualified or particularly interested in the making of theatrical events, Howard did not create elaborate stories, preferring brief but socially relevant vignettes. Characters were depicted as people of no great complexity. Rather they were more akin to sketches or cartoons, drawing attention to a small number of instantly recognisable stereotypical adolescent traits, for example, a girl who agrees to have unprotected sex because she believes it will not happen very often and thinks it will help her keep her boyfriend. Alongside the academic rigour Howard applied to this aspect of her research, she and her team were able to reference their academic findings against their first-hand experience of young people.

Some of our notions were rooted in theory and some came as a result of our clinical experience in serving over 1,000 sexually active adolescents age 16 and younger each year in our family planning clinic. (Howard 2014)

In their paper, Howard and McCabe explain that they carried out a random sample survey of more than 1000 sexually active girls aged sixteen or younger (Howard and McCabe, 1990). The questionnaire contained nearly two dozen items thought to be of interest to the girls. Out of this choice of items, 'teenage girls were most likely to indicate that they wanted more information on "how to say 'no"' without hurting the other person's feelings (84%)' (Ibid.). It is noteworthy that Howard surveyed over a thousand teenage girls to identify their needs *before* even *starting* to develop her peer programme - contrasting markedly with the statistically meaningless forty participants surveyed by Elliott (Elliott *et al.*, 1996).

By working collaboratively with young people and understanding their experiences and needs, Howard developed a peer-led intervention in which all their key philosophical principles, psycho-social underpinnings and classroom practices were encoded in a written format or manual, which for clarity and consistency with our Aopause nomenclature, I will refer to as 'scripts'.

Howard's (PSI) was designed to meet 'the needs of many young people, as well as those of the parents and the community' and her programme philosophy constitutes many of the key assumptions and psycho-social elements of all the Aopause investigations and programmes which were to follow. In brief, Howard posits that people in middle adolescence do not fully understand the implications of their actions, they experience pressure from peers and the media to do things they do not want to do, they need awareness and skills to be able to resist pressure to become sexually involved, with support and practise in learning how to resist this pressure. They respond most favourably to programmes promoting postponement of sexual intercourse when the

information about how and why to say “no” comes from peers slightly older than themselves. (Howard and McCabe, 1990)

That Howard was aware of the challenges faced by the young black people from her community is evidenced in this excerpt from her address in 1991 to the *Conference on Strengths and Potentials of Adolescence*.

[...] poverty and racism are both pervasive and invasive in our society. These social ills place additional burdens on such youth when it comes to handling almost any aspect of their lives. [...]

[...] young people needed to be given information about their bodies and care of their reproductive capacity. [...] the kind of information currently being given young people, although necessary, was not sufficient. [We] decided [...] to give young people skills to support their potential for better use of such information. [...] such skills needed to take into account [...] that there is something inherently different about being an adolescent. (Howard, 1991)

A more complete text of this address may be found in Appendix 2 where Howard presents an understanding of how adolescents are engaged in a very immediate process of constructing their identities and notions of self.

She sensed how they actively experimented with and negotiated their behaviours, moral codes, and sexual identities whilst referencing them to their peers and wider socio-cultural norms. She then went on to integrate these understandings and harness the processes with a highly participatory and performative intervention led by slightly older peer educators. It may be argued that this, in itself, is sufficient explanation as to the classroom processes and enduring effects of her intervention. But this thesis posits that there is one more

phenomenon critically important to enduring transformations in adolescents which neither Howard, Mellanby nor contemporary scholars in the field of health interventions, including applied theatre in health interventions, have attempted to elucidate sufficiently. That phenomenon is play.

Even when play was so evident in the video clip of Howard's programme and in numerous video records of Apause and Get-WISE, it was generally interpreted as incidental. It was perceived by teachers and reported by evaluators as a kind of inconsequential by-product or collateral damage of an event which, due to the limitations of the presentational skills of the peers, could be consigned to being an inevitable, minor aberration contingent on any such participatory event facilitated by young people (Blenkinsop, 2004, p. iv). It appears Howard placed faith in the regulative structures of the peer scripts, trained her peer educators in presentational skills and anticipated a certain amount of fun, with somewhat illicit and unaccounted for interactions - the hidden transcripts that constituted the performative classroom action. Not reported as theatre or play, nor authentically reproducible in adult-learner interactions, those specifically peer-to-peer interactions, were constitutive of the transformative imperative of their work.

This thesis, then, will attempt to interrogate selected accounts of the action matter of the peer-led components the Apause Programme which are illustrative of the play element. In addition to the psycho-social, child-centred and empowerment constructs which underpinned Howard's work and the Apause Programme, this thesis will consider some contemporary understandings of play. It will attempt to show how such notions may be cross-referenced with recent breakthroughs in neuro-cognitive science and how a nascent taxonomy

of play may contribute to a greater understanding of play as an affective, aesthetic and transformative agent within Apause and other socially engaged performance practices.

A novel interpretation of intervention theory and methods

Increasingly, adolescence is being understood as a sensitive stage of development encompassing a reciprocal interplay between the development of the individual and cultural norms (Blakemore and Mills, 2014; Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018; Blakemore, 2018; Blakemore, 2019). Entry into adolescence is defined in biological terms, namely the onset of puberty, but its completion is judged against socio-cultural criteria. The specific age range that the Apause interventions are concerned with corresponds to middle adolescence:

Middle adolescence is defined as a period after the initial stages of pubertal maturation have begun but before young people have fully adjusted to the rapid developments in their bodies and before they have been accorded full adult status by society. In developed nations such as the United States, the middle adolescent period refers roughly to the ages of 13 or 14 to 17, or grades 7 or 8 to 11. (Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018)

It is important to note these ages because they would define both the learners and peer-educators as 'middle adolescents'. In English schools the ages would span Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 (Years 12 and 13 being often referred to as the 'sixth form'). The rather bland definitions fall spectacularly short of describing the range and complexity of the physiological, psychological and social transformations that adolescents experience; moreover, these domains of change overlap and influence each other. All three of the interventions being investigated in this thesis are addressing the dynamics of sexual and relational health with a particular focus on how the engagement in participatory practices

might engender some enduring change in the learners. Where it is relevant I will draw on some understandings of broadly biological functions, such as a consideration of the trans-species, evolutionary function of adolescence and play. At times a tighter focus on more specifically physiological processes such as the influence on behaviour of testosterone or opioids and the neurological phenomena that characterise adolescence will be appropriate, but the primary focus will be on processes normally recognised as falling into the psychological, sociological and cultural domains of development and transformation.

Neuro-cognitive development, mentalizing and social scripts

As Howard has argued, adolescents are typically – although not exclusively – egocentric; they are deeply immersed in the ‘here and now’, how they are behaving, thinking and feeling ‘in the moment’. This is counter-balanced however with the emergence of the novel neuro-cognitive process of ‘mentalizing’ in which adolescents become increasingly preoccupied and adept at creating mental constructs of how other people are thinking and feeling, how their own actions are seen and interpreted by others, with a particularly intense prioritizing on how their behaviours are perceived by their peers and how the peers will react to those behaviours. Although Blakemore is by no means the originator of the concept or term ‘mentalizing’, she provides a comprehensive and comprehensible account of the phenomenon and its social and neuro-cognitive basis (Blakemore, 2018, p. 99). Indeed, Professor Peter Fonagy, a pioneer in the field of mental health care, posits that the concept of mentalizing is at the centre of, or common to, all therapies and has been going on as a practice since before Freud (Fonagy, 2020). This assertion I take to imply that the processes of mentalizing have been universally culturally recognised and

valued for millennia. One only has to consider the strategies of guile and psychological deception deployed in activities as diverse as hunting, warfare, chess, verbal jokes and pranks (not to mention all forms of theatre and performance making) to conclude that success in mentalizing is powerfully allied to the dynamics of acquiring (and losing) social status, self-efficacy and the enculturation of the individual.

Howard is aligned with psychologists, anthropologists, biologists and neuroscientists from Piaget and Kohlberg, Bandura to Sutton-Smith, Burghardt to Blakemore in recognising that the adolescent brain is undergoing critical transitioning processes from the limitations of its set of childhood capabilities to the identifiably adult functions of abstract thought, including mentalizing. However, more recent work has identified perhaps some even more specific characteristics of adolescent cognitive development which are pertinent to our understandings of how peer-led and performance-based practices might occupy a unique niche in adolescent health interventions.

In their paper, *Why Interventions to Influence Adolescent Behavior Often Fail but Could Succeed*, David Yeager *et al* cite multiple studies which suggest a primary motive force for middle adolescents is an overriding imperative for them to earn respect and status from their peers (Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018). Whilst implicitly recognising the processes of mentalizing, Yeager argues that programmes designed around opportunities to observe, learn and practice specific protective health behaviours have little intrinsic and adaptive value to the adolescent in terms of keeping them safe from threats to their health and wellbeing. They make their case by combining developmental theories from psychology and neuroscience and citing three promising interventions. They

argue that more *comprehensive* programmes, which *do not* target any specific behaviour or health threat but rather attempt to raise the subjects' sense of personal value, agency, social status and respect from peers, adults and their community at large are successful in enabling the subjects to avoid a range of unspecified risky behaviours in their quest to attain those personally valued and socially sanctioned goals. Yeager and colleagues posit that adolescence is experienced by the subjects as a period of intense sensitivity to respect and social status and that those interventions which overtly prescribe protective behaviours are received by adolescents as suggesting they have a lack of understanding, judgement and autonomy. Furthermore, such behaviourally targeted projects, extending to educational institutions and practices at large, imply and manifest a lack of respect for the participating adolescents. This is particularly evident in their dealings with academically under-achieving, lower socio-economic, non-white and other vulnerable groups.

Apause – an 'outcomes culture' or a 'playful culture'?

Such a persuasive and far-reaching argument would seem to starkly contradict the theory and methods to be found in Howard's work and the incumbent understandings of Apause Peers, as both peer programmes unequivocally identify risky behaviours and offer practice in alternative tactics. How, then, are these apparently didactic practices experienced in such a way as to preserve and even enhance the participants' feelings of being respected and having self-efficacy? In short, the learners experience the Apause workshops as being playful – the whole intervention, adult and peer-led components alike, in its endeavour to enable learners to build their self-efficacy and be co-constructors of their learning experience, is reliant on them participating in what Anthony

Jackson has termed a 'playful culture' in contrast to a 'targets and outcomes culture'(Jackson, 2007, p. 198).

So, whilst Apause is ostensibly framed within a 'targets and outcomes culture', justifying its health funding in terms of evaluations designed to demonstrate its effect on explicit behavioural and inferred health outcomes, the classroom practices themselves and action matter of the events are manifestations of what Anthony Jackson terms a 'playful culture'.

In characterising the Apause Programme in the Greenwood Lecture 2007, Tripp described it as:

... a 'Gold Standard, Black Box approach'. Gold standard because we had tried to meet every one of Doug Kirby's criteria. Black box because we had no mechanism in our [initial] planned control trial to unpick which components were achieving what, or indeed whether some achieved anything. (Tripp, 2007)

Whilst recognising young people often practised risky sexual behaviours based on poor understanding and erroneous beliefs, an effective programme probably needed to correct such beliefs whilst at the same time not explicitly prescribing the necessary protective behaviours. In accordance with his training in psychiatry, it was preferable to Mellanby that such cognitive processes leading to behaviour change should be arrived at collaboratively (Clark, 1974; Marks, 1979). Interestingly, during his exploratory visits to the classroom to discuss risk-taking behaviours with teenagers and drawing on his psychotherapeutic practices, it became immediately apparent that such methods which closely focused on and developed the responses of individual students were inappropriate.

[...] any prolonged interaction with one student to the exclusion of others, even when those others were engaged in tasks, would gradually deteriorate as the rest of the class needed attention to restore discipline and quiet. [...] These observations suggested that medical skills, either one to one, in groups, or employing psychotherapeutic methods, were unlikely to be effective. (Mellanby, 1997, p. 23)

Mellanby and Phelps went on to successfully design and co-deliver the six, one hour sessions that comprised the adult-led component of the Apause intervention, all of which were underpinned by the working theoretical model of 'Collaborative Goals' (Mellanby, 1997, p. 36) which was itself a broad re-iteration, if more explicit articulation, of Howard's PSI model. The adult sessions were highly collaborative, performative (including interactive storytelling of medical vignettes, simulations and role-plays) and fun.

Most of the lessons were fun, with considerable laughter, one or two were not fun at all. In one lesson I was greeted by an incoming projectile, which when caught, turned out to be a pencil sharpener in the shape of a monkey with a large erect penis! [...] even this group became more amenable after the second lesson. (Ibid, p.81)

In order to gain an insight as to Alex Mellanby's classroom practice, I offer this anecdote. I was working with the lead school nurse from Exeter (Jenny White) who had been tasked with the observation of Mellanby and Fran Phelps delivering some sessions. This was part of developing a training programme suitable for inducting local health professionals and teachers. With evident affection, Jenny described Alex's performance as 'chaotic'. He was constantly being diverted from the original lesson plan/script in reaction to the students' responses and lines of enquiry, making it difficult, at times, to track the action

against the written instructions in the script. His time-keeping was equally precarious, with Fran intermittently having to politely bring him back on track and re-frame the schedule. I asked what the atmosphere was like and Jenny said, (I paraphrase) "Very relaxed, sometimes it seemed the students were in charge, they laughed a lot, shared jokes and Alex seemed happy to join in. He didn't mind appearing a bit of a 'dork' or a 'boff' and to be the butt of the joke". Most lessons finished with a scramble to reach the end and some were not completed.

It would appear that Alex, whilst fully cognisant of his practice of ceding power to the students in a fun and playful way, at no point in his academic publications judged it appropriate to describe the strategy and classroom interactions in terms of play. This, I think, proved to be an eventual shortcoming in terms of how we defended the Apause methodology against mounting criticisms of it being didactic, prescriptive and following a 'medical' as opposed to 'educational' model. Most, if not all, of these objections could have been re-framed and more successfully addressed had we been able to emphasise the volitional and 'playful culture' in which the programme was conceived and became manifest. Perhaps, as Tripp intimated in his 2007 Greenwood Lecture, they felt unqualified and ill-equipped, using largely quantitative evaluative instruments, to attempt an analysis of the playfully transformative nature of the classroom interactions that occurred in the 'black box'.

This apparent reluctance to shed light on and reveal the contents of the black box did, however, have a legitimate rationale. Mellanby did not endorse the widespread practice of asking his students to reflect on and articulate what they had learnt at the end of each session, neither did he attempt using the interim

assessments during the programme to quantify, in any detail, changes in knowledge, attitude or behaviour. The acquisition of knowledge and change of attitudes, it had been shown, is not predictive of behaviour change (Kirby, 1984; Mellanby, Phelps and Tripp, 1992), so even if such gains had been made, they would not be indicative of any subsequent change of behaviour. Perhaps more importantly, Mellanby and Tripp were concerned that the procedures involved in trying to measure changes would, in their implementation, interfere with the process of change itself. From a performative perspective, it would seem to them, as it does to me, the experience of being asked to reflect on and articulate, immediately after a performance, its impact, (as is common practice nowadays both with small scale theatre and classroom teaching) is an annoyingly invasive procedure. Moreover, it is a procedure which can bring a false conclusion or premature 'closure' to an affective and potentially protractive transformation.

Arguing from a more theoretical basis, Mellanby drew on the work of the social psychologist Leon Festinger and his theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Mellanby was aware that the Apause programme, particularly the peer-led components, could set in motion or 'induce' processes in the subjects which could lead to subsequent changes in population behaviour relative to the comparison groups, but that those behaviours were not exactly alterations of pre-existing behaviours. Children who had not experienced sexual debut at the beginning of the intervention would still be far less likely to have experienced it at the end than their comparators. Rather, it was a change in a predicted trajectory of behavioural trends. Hence it was the programme aim that proportionately *more* children from the intervention arm would *still not* have had

sex compared with the matched control arm. One might argue that the intention of the programme was actually to *prevent* a change in behaviour because the onset of sexual activity and sexual intercourse represents the nexus of a complex and expanding behavioural repertoire. Mellanby theorised that if these (non) changes – conservative responses - were being induced, then the concomitant understandings, attitudes and normative beliefs would be redefined to accommodate the behaviours in order to ‘resolve the incongruities perceived in themselves’ (Bangert-Drowns, 1988) - implying the behavioural shifts or transformations precede their cognitive counterparts. ‘Thus individuals induced to alter behaviour will alter their attitude to match that behaviour’ (Mellanby, 1997, pp. 68,69).

One could surmise that once the behavioural shifts had started but had not yet been cognitively ascribed by the subjects to the intervention, and then their attention was brought to those shifts as being part of an adult-designed programme, they might experience the discomfort of cognitive-dissonance and revert back to the original trajectory (Festinger, 1957). Such an invasive interrogation carried too much of a risk of undoing the very behaviours the programme was designed to change, and evaluation was confined to process - assessment of taking part in activities, adherence to ground rules and enjoyment.

An interim measure of predicted prevalence of sexual activity was included at this point. If behaviour is related to social expectations as identified in Social Norms Theory (Baric and Harrison, 1977), then a teenager over-estimating peer group sexual activity would be more likely to initiate first intercourse than one with correct beliefs.

Given the already complex nature of evaluation design, and the existing theoretical framework deemed adequate to the task of explaining programme effect, it is perhaps understandable that the originating research team did not consider it appropriate to theorise the classroom practice in terms of play and performativity. Nevertheless, I think Mellanby intuited that a phenomenon was occurring in the classroom events which, in the moment of their performative utterance and behavioural execution, was simultaneously inducing a change in the individual addressor, their addressee(s) and the social environment in which it was framed. That these performative interactions were manifest as play, it will be argued, is typical of how middle adolescents, 'staged' under certain privileged conditions, go about the construction of their socializing processes.

The rhetorics of play

In his book *The Ambiguity of Play*, the developmental psychologist Brian Sutton-Smith opens with a cautionary note:

[...] since about 1800 in Western society, intellectuals of various kinds have talked more or less systematically and more or less scientifically about play and have discovered they have immense problems conceptualizing it. (Sutton-Smith, 2009, p. 6)

Having scoped the sheer variety of kinds of play, players, playthings and games, and demonstrated how ambiguity would seem to be central to all forms of play phenomena, Sutton-Smith argues for a distinction to be made between the *rhetorics* that underpin or give rise to more formalised play theories and the detail of those theories themselves. The great achievement and utility of his work is to equip researchers and practitioners with a rich taxonomy of play, enabling them to better realise how deeply imbued with rhetorics our notions of play are, whilst simultaneously exposing the paucity of consistent, systematic

evidence which would support any overriding or transcendent theory of play. It is neither the purpose of this thesis to arrive at a novel theory of play, nor to exclusively subscribe to, or endorse any specific existing one. Rather my aim is to demonstrate that by applying selected rhetorics and play theories in the analysis of the action matter of the classroom events, it might be possible to infer or hypothesise how the dynamics of play constitute a particular kind of aesthetic and how such an aesthetic might be catalytic of durable transformations.

The public and private transcripts of adolescent play

In describing the work of King (1982), Sutton-Smith draws attention to the notion of public and private transcripts. As is argued by Yeager and colleagues, whilst children and adolescent are subordinate within adult hegemonic structures they nevertheless strive to earn privilege, status and autonomy, most typically as referenced against their own peer groups. The social milieu in which such status is achieved occurs predominantly within the interactions of the play culture of their sub-groups. Such interactions can be private, somewhat secretive and operate outside the realm of adult hegemony and Sutton-Smith refers to these as the children's or adolescents' *private transcripts*. As researchers have shown, these transcripts are underpinned by imperatives of gaining social status – falling within Sutton-Smith's rhetorics of *power*. Running alongside their private transcripts are young people's *public transcripts*. These are more concordant with the adult, hegemonic and public transcripts as described by Sutton-Smith in his rhetoric of *progress*. This dynamic of public and private transcripts is redolent of descriptions provided by Erving Goffman in his dramaturgical approach to analysing human interactions (Goffman, 1959).

Originating in the enlightenment movement and giving itself further scientific credence through the theory of evolution, the rhetoric of progress claims for itself a positivist epistemology and is most clearly the rhetoric used in disciplines of biology, psychology and education. Seen as an evolutionary and biological phenomenon, the key functions of play are identified within the processes of adaptation, growth and socialization. Thus far, within the rhetoric of this thesis, the function of play and fun with young people would logically be situated in understandings derived from theories that have arisen from the rhetoric of progress. I will not demur from drawing attention to and justifying many of my practices, analyses and conclusions from those fields. Most of the public rhetoric and all of the published academic accounts of Apause to date are framed within the empirical assumptions and disciplines of social psychology and behavioural science. Hence, a well-worn public rhetoric of Apause has been that we use fun experiences to enable young people to engage in the observation and practice of novel behaviours which they will then deploy in their everyday lives. That is the incumbent public rhetoric of adult academics associated with Apause and is the public transcript of the classroom action. But this thesis posits that there are also private transcripts at stake which may provide greater insight as to the transformative potential of the classroom interactions.

The adult public transcript is to make children progress, the adult private transcript is to deny their sexual and aggressive impulses; the child public transcript is to be successful as family members and schoolchildren; and their private or hidden transcript is their play life, in which they can express both their special identity and their resentment at being a captive population.(Sutton-Smith, 2009, p. 123)

Ambiguities will be seen to characterise much of the theoretical analyses within this thesis and foregrounded will be a recurrent tension and/or oscillation between public and private transcripts. Of the seven rhetorics of play anatomised by Sutton-Smith, the rhetoric of progress will be situated predominantly as the explicitly public transcript and this will be formulated in terms of the six regulative parameters of play (to be discussed shortly) as codified within the peer scripts or classroom manuals.

Where this thesis diverges from the progress rhetoric of the origins of A pause is that it seeks to identify additional processes and interactions largely unaccounted for in the scientific discourse to date, but which become more apparent once the playfulness of the classroom action is framed within an alternative or additional rhetoric. This approach allows for the possibility that one rhetoric does not necessarily disprove or displace another and indeed may enhance it. However, in so doing, the process may also introduce a further layer of ambiguity. Notwithstanding the sheer slipperiness of play and its resistance to analysis, the purpose of the thesis will be to make the case for play, in all its unresolved complexities, as a critically transformative phenomenon within the performative dynamics of the Scripted Performance Workshop. This thesis offers, at best, some novel ways of examining the action matter of the workshops. Whilst it tentatively postulates how the dynamics of play might be instrumental in bringing about change, it does not set out to be a full-blown treatise on play. I am heeding the warning of Sutton-Smith, that being confused in the plethora of play theories ‘... they set us in pursuit of false expectations and false grandiosity’ (Sutton-Smith, 2009, p. 9). Hence, in this chapter, rather than give a comprehensive account of Sutton-Smith’s seven rhetorics of play, I will

selectively draw on his rhetorics and theories from other investigators in the field in order to illustrate and anticipate how they will be used thematically in subsequent chapters.

Adolescent play, sensitivity and experience-expectant plasticity

It is pertinent to ask if adolescents might have a particular relationship with play. On the individual and neurological level, is there anything happening within the developing brains of adolescents which might privilege or create a particular urgency to their play? In her account of adolescence, Blakemore provides a scientific basis to the unique nature of the cognitive processes of brain development during that critical period of human (and mammalian) development (Blakemore, 2018). Blakemore explains that the brain's capacity to adapt to changing environmental cues, its *plasticity*, never stops, despite the brain's *development* levelling off at some point. She further posits that there are two different types of plasticity. *Experience-dependent plasticity* is the brain's ability to adapt to new information and underlies its capacity to learn at *any* age. By contrast, *experience-expectant plasticity* describes a preparedness in the brain to respond to stimuli *during development* – that is up to the end of adolescence (around the early to mid-twenties) when brain development levels off. This form of plasticity implies a 'sensitive period', for example, the period when a two to four-year-old child is especially receptive to the sound of their own language. Once that period has passed it will be much more difficult for a child to hear certain nuances of a new language. Indeed tests have shown that after that age there may be specific sounds peculiar to a language which are no longer discernible to individuals who have not been exposed to those particular stimuli during the sensitive period of experience-expectant plasticity (ibid. p.91).

Blakemore makes a compelling case that similar processes of experience-expectant plasticity are triggered once a child enters adolescence.

The anthropologist, Victor Turner, credits the ethnologist and folklorist, Arnold van Gennep, with introducing and expanding our understanding of his term 'rites of passage'(Turner, 1988 p.25; Van Gennep, 1960). Having looked at a wide variety of ritual forms, Van Gennep posited a three-phase structure in ritual action: the *pre-liminal*, *liminal* and *post-liminal*. He developed the notion that life is a series of passages from one phase to another and that each phase, was marked by a ritual. Critical to this thesis is the liminal phase. A *limen* is a threshold but used in this context to describe a space or state of being 'betwixt and between' or set apart. As Turner explains:

Rituals *separated* specified members or a group from everyday life, placed *them in a limbo* that was not any place they were in before and not yet any place they would be in, then *returned* them, changed, in some way, to mundane life.(Turner, 1988 p.25)

It is postulated here that adolescence itself is a stage which is experienced as a prolonged period of liminality and evidence from the field of cognitive neuroscience points to adolescence as a period of greatly increased activity in those parts of the brain responsible for social awareness. As discussed above, mentalizing describes the brain's capacity to understand other people's mental states. It would seem that the process of developing this cognitive strategy becomes activated during adolescence. Hence, mentalizing how one's actions appear to other people is an important process which begins to occur most prominently during adolescence. Accordingly, processes which facilitate anticipating, understanding and making meaning of one's own affective and cognitive responses would fall into the category of experience-expectant

plasticity. Blakemore describes a wide range of behaviours characteristic of adolescence which include strongly identifying with other individuals and groups (including imitative behaviours), developing a heightened awareness of moral issues and fair play, risk taking, and seeking novel altered mental states (e.g. through taking drugs and participating in extreme sports). These intensely experienced social interactions operate as part of a reciprocal and causative relationship with specific neuro-cognitive processes which have been described as the construction of 'social scripts'. Blakemore, explains:

A social script is a series of actions and outcomes that are common to a particular situation, so that when you next encounter the situation, you know what to expect (Blakemore, 2018, p. 126).

The construction of social scripts is described by Blakemore as a 'neuro-cognitive strategy' but for adolescents the process is different from adults because so much of what adolescents experience is for the first time and there are relatively few, if any, memories of sexual and relational encounters and negotiations. Such processes of thinking about self in novel situations and how one's self and actions are interpreted by others, occur primarily in the dorso-medial prefrontal cortex through the stimulation of new synaptic pathways, or 'synaptogenesis', in that part of the brain. This contrasts with the adult brain. Similar social and cognitive processes of mentalizing would seem to occur more in the temporal regions of the adult brain, an area of the brain associated with the organization and recall of past experiences or memories. This may go some way towards explaining why so often actions of adolescents have a certain immediate urgency, since they need to actively construct or enact many social interactions in the 'here and now', in order to actively realise them prior to retaining them as social scripts and re-evaluating and making meaning of them.

While Blakemore does not make a specific case for the importance of play-based phenomena, it is suggested here that play takes on multiple novel functions during the sensitive period when a young person transitions between the onset of puberty and their autonomous adult identity. Critically, they are involved with issues of earning respect and status within their peer group and wider social networks. Increases in testosterone in both adolescent boys and girls result in an intensification of status games and the participation in sports, competitive activities and contests of social ranking where the inclusion or exclusion within a subgroup may be at stake (Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018). Such agonistic socializing processes within the adult world, according to Huizinga, receive wide cultural endorsement, but when adolescents are subordinate within an adult hegemony and excluded from the adult realms of freedom and autonomy (as they typically are in contemporary western societies) these processes continue as expressions of their secret transcripts. Hence, the behaviours of young people during their middle adolescence are particularly sensitive to and influenced by their observations of others like them and are prone to be governed by their perceptions of social norms. In short, these pressures often result in adolescents behaving in ways that they would not necessarily actively choose to, rather, they find themselves socially compelled or constrained to act against their better judgment. These can involve, amongst other risk-taking behaviours, being drawn into sexual practices they are not necessarily happy about. However, in the absence of appropriately functional social scripts, or explicit and widely accepted pro-social normative beliefs, the prospect of discussing or negotiating alternatives to penetrative sex is so fraught with awkwardness that embarrassing, unprotected, unsatisfactory, and/or coercive sexual encounters may emerge as the new norm (Whittington,

2018b, p. 164; Whittington, 2018a). It is suggested here that play may afford opportunities for adolescents to explore multiple novel social actions, contexts and responses in the subjunctive mood – playing with and testing the viability of social scripts in the knowledge that the activity is play and does not carry the same risks as doing it ‘for real’.

So, while the public transcript of the Apause Peers workshops might appear to be one of taking personal responsibility and learning protective behaviours, thereby according with a rhetoric of progress, those playful, spontaneous, unanticipated interactions which are not systematised or codified in the peer manuals, might best be understood in terms of their private transcripts and be manifestations of Sutton-Smith’s power rhetoric. Once this form of play is interpreted through the lens of a rhetoric of power, it is arguable that Mellanby was actively colluding with, or promoting, the learners’ private transcripts of power. He enticed them into a game in which they agreed to set aside their public transcripts of being subordinate learners in the presence of a medical expert who transmits knowledge, and instead play in a game in which young people enjoy the ‘privilege’ of educating the adult. ‘Privilege’ in this context concurs with Henrick’s (2014) notion of privilege in which the subject perceives themselves to be in control of certain elements of the matter in which they are engaged. In their playfulness they were co-constructing an event imbued with the social immediacy of performativity, scoring status points amongst themselves by making jokes at the expense of the authority figure. It is in this sense of seeding and situating transformations at the very point where formal educational practices and theatrical conventions, such as the enunciation of authored lines and the scripting of anticipated responses, begin to *fail*, that this

thesis resonates with the aesthetic Sara Jane Bailes' articulates in her book *Performance Theatre and the Poetics of Failure* (Bailes, 2011).

Theorising the dualism between playfulness and play

Albeit acknowledging they may not be always distinct phenomena or discreet categories, but rather there are points of overlap, oscillation and cross-referencing between them, Sutton-Smith (2009) identifies an important dualism between *playfulness* and *play*. Play can be sometimes defined in terms of the content or form it takes, for example, such forms as children's games, festivals, sports and adult games. For the sake of this thesis, and consistent with Sutton-Smith taxonomic convention, I take play to include theatrical productions and, by the same token, the public transcripts enshrined within the manuals used in SPWs are manifest as forms of play. Typically, although not exclusively, play events are well organised, formally structured entities within a human culture and are undertaken with considerable earnestness. By contrast *playfulness* is defined more in terms of an attitude or disposition of 'frolicsomeness, lightheartedness and wit' (ibid.p.147). This distinction is by no means immutable, since play is usually thought to contain the playful. Nevertheless, playfulness is often idealized in terms of the innocence of children's play, whereas adults' play is the serious participation in recreational activities such as sports or public performances of theatre or music. Accordingly, these terms become assimilated into rhetorics of dualisms between the adult and child, work and play, the serious versus frivolous, the innocent versus the corrupted. Sutton-Smith goes on to suggest that a more helpful distinction might be to theorise the state of playfulness as *metaplay*, by this he refers to the kind of playing in which the subject consciously plays with the *form* of play. In so doing

the *playful* player manipulates the normal structures, conventions and expectations of play itself. Playfulness or metaplay, then, characteristically takes the form of paradox, parody, nonsense and ridiculousness. The playful plays with the frames of play. As Susan Stewart's studies of nonsense illustrate, the playful indulges in tricks, pranks, verbal jokes, exaggerations, reversals in role and status, manipulations of time and space and general disruptions of the formal structures of play and quotidian expectations (Stewart, 1978).

It seems reasonable to speculate here, that there may be a neuro-cognitive basis to the striking similarity between descriptions of the playful and the state of liminality used to characterise adolescence. Such are the extraordinary pressures of expectation and social tensions encountered by adolescents as they strive for personal identities, social status, competencies and autonomy, that play and playfulness may serve the biologically adaptive function of regulating emotion and stress. This view is intimated by the biologist Gordon Burghardt.

This intriguing, and somewhat unexpected idea, will perhaps lead to a more nuanced deployment of the play criterion that play is initiated in low stress situations. While this remains true for chronic or severe stress, the role of play in relieving or addressing mild stress (including boredom) and providing resiliency for dealing with stressful events one encounters, may become more prominent.(Burghardt, 2014, p. 95)

Notwithstanding the persistent challenge in studies of animal play when it comes to demonstrating unequivocally the adaptive value of play, the weight of evidence points to a multiplicity of examples in which play behaviours in younger animals improve their chances of survival, socialization and

reproduction on reaching adulthood. One of the critical difficulties of invoking the progress rhetoric as proof of the adaptive value of play is that of matching the details of precocious play behaviour in infants and adolescents to their counterpart in adult 'real' behaviour, that is to say, what appears to be being practised as play or a piece of playful behaviour in the ludic or liminal context does not necessarily materialize in that same form in the quotidian (Ibid. p.94).

Much more plausible, and the most enduring explanation of the function of play in this thesis, is the suggestion that play and playful interactions generate a superfluity of stimuli and responses, many of which, maybe the majority, are ultimately redundant (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 222). These result in neuromuscular, cognitive, affective and protean behavioural responses which once coded neurologically, through synaptogenesis, facilitate the process of mentalizing and the development of social scripts. Such social scripts may be reactivated in conjunction with subsequent play or quotidian environmental stimuli and materialized as adaptive novel behaviours. When referring to the characteristically repetitive nature of play in the BBC documentary *Animals at Play*, the evolutionary biologist Dr Isabel Behncke remarked, "Neurones that fire together, wire together. Therefore as an action is repeated that connection is strengthened"(Perowne and Whitley, 2019).

Burghardt's proposition that, in conjunction with potentiating novel behaviours, one of the key adaptive functions of play in young animals, including humans, is likely to prove to be the regulation of stress, is particularly relevant in the classroom context of RSE where awkwardness can be deleterious to the learning culture. This proposed function of play in the development of coping strategies is echoed by Michele Capurso and Chiara Pazzagli. Their exhaustive

review of the literature shows that despite play and coping being widely acknowledged as essential elements within the rhetorics and theorising of child development, somewhat frustratingly they conclude that in creating observational instruments to gauge children's coping skills, researchers rarely include play as one of the skills and even when it is, it is classified as an avoidant or distracting activity (Capurso and Pazzagli, 2016). This strongly suggests that despite developmental psychologists having a vigorous rhetoric for the importance of play, the making and quantifying of observations which go on to demonstrate its function as a creative means of generating coping responses remains an elusive and under-developed research practice.

One of the assumptions underpinning my thesis is that young people, during the sensitive phase of middle adolescence, are frequently engaged in social environments that demand the accelerated development of novel coping strategies. The oppressive weight of cultural taboos, the general 'awkwardness', the protective function of private transcripts which surround their emergent sexual identities all combine to make any public presentation or enactments of sexual negotiations, no matter how symbolically represented, an emotionally charged and stressful experience. Under such conditions, it is suggested here that the performative response within the formally structured *play* of the Scripted Performance Workshop as facilitated by peer-educators, is almost inevitably going to materialize as various tropes of *playfulness* or as Sutton-Smith terms it 'metaplay'.

Returning to reconsider her important work in her book entitled *Nonsense*, Stewart invites the reader to engage in a discourse as to the character of playfulness. A basis common to all the examples of nonsense she presents is

the underlying message, "This is Play" (Stewart, 1978, p. 199). I take this to imply that participants engaged in any game, or an occurrence culturally designated as one of the multifarious play-type events, are cognisant of its character as play and of its regulative structures. They understand the event is play and that they are players and playing within its regulative structures. Simultaneously, co-players and spectators are also co-participants who are complicit in this shared understanding. Overt *playfulness*, however, in such regulated contexts, is an attitude of mind which may, of necessity, be suppressed as a function of the earnest endeavour characteristic of such formalised events. Nevertheless, playfulness, as a mindset, has a latent presence and can erupt and take the form of asides, private jokes or remarks, fun, humorous, disruptive and frequently novel behaviours.

Thus, playfulness, as well as being a means of relieving stress (including boredom) can be a means of ameliorating the sense of being oppressed or subordinated and create novel perspectives and behavioural responses, all of which, in protean form, will have their synaptically coded, neuro-cognitive counterparts. Most of these playful and creative responses, neurologically coded as protean social scripts, may simply be redundant and of no developmental value, but some may re-emerge in non-play contexts as novel, valuable, adaptive and protective behaviours.

Additionally, whilst play and playfulness have the potential to generate valuable novel behaviours and insights, the very act of being playful or being a proficient player, may confer enhanced social status, trust, power and autonomy on the individual, their co-players, peer-group and wider social affiliates.

Accepting Thompson's dualistic usage of the terms 'effect' and 'affect' (Thompson, 2009), this thesis posits that play and playfulness can, within the individual subject, potentiate quantifiable *effects* antecedent to novel behaviours. According to the traditions of behavioural science such *effects* may be measured using such conventional instruments as pre and post intervention self-report questionnaires but treated as empirical phenomena these effects may also be detected using MRI brain scans. Moreover, play and the playful culture of Apause may, simultaneously, be bringing about *affects* and changes for the individual subject within their socio-cultural context. Hence, even though the novel behaviour may, in itself, prove to have no adaptive value in its repetition, in the actual moment of its playful execution it could, in the performative terms of Austin, have 'changed the state of affairs' (Austin, 1962). In this construction, the formality of play, the 'nonsense' of metaplay, and the transformative force of performativity may, all three, be phenomena coterminous within the same event.

Play, Metaplay and Performativity

I am therefore proposing, as a starting point, a tripartite analytical model which teases out the playfulness or *metaplay* from the structure and actions of its *play* event whilst invoking the linguistic notion of the *performative* as a way of encapsulating and theorising the transformations implicit in such play-based speech acts. In such a model, all forms of games, play and playfulness encountered within Apause may be rubricized as tropes within the generic phenomenon of performativity. That said, as articulated in the flow theory of psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, from the viewpoint of the playing subject, all such theoretical distinctions may well be fused as one and the same

experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). Consistent with both Bandura and the post-structuralist feminist thinking of Judith Butler, the transformations implicit in such performative interactions can occur within the time bounded activity of the event itself or may be a function of a more protracted sequence of psycho-social influences such as identificatory processes and the materialising of social norms (Bandura, 1997, p. 6; Butler, 1993, p. xxi).

The model I will attempt to illustrate pictorially below follows that of Richard Schechner's in which he presents his theorising of performance, theatre, script and drama as a series of overlapping discs which diminish in size in relation to the degree of specialization within each domain. In Schechner's model *performance* signifies the largest and most inclusive disc which encompasses all the other domains but extends to the audience, on top of which sits *theatre* as its own specialist domain within performance which he describes as the domain of the performer or actor. On top of theatre sits *script* (the domain of the teacher, guru, master) and this is 'all that can be transmitted from time to time and place to place - the basic code of the events'. It is passed from person to person, and the transmitter must know, understand and be able to communicate to the performer the nature and mechanisms of the script. The script requires a cognisant act of communication between people. Finally, *drama*, the most specialized domain, sits on top of script and is 'the domain of the author, the composer, scenarist, shaman'. (Schechner, 2007, p. 70)

Drama: the smallest, most intense (heated up) circle [disc]. A written text, score, scenario, instruction, plan, or map. The drama can be taken from place to place or time to time independent of the people who carry it. These people may be just "messengers,"

even unable to read the drama, no less comprehend it or enact it.

(Ibid. p. 71)

Schechner's model is a useful reference and possibly a point of departure in terms of understanding the relationship I am trying to theorise between, play, playfulness and performativity. In part, it fails to serve this thesis because it does not provide a taxonomy which discriminates between the three terms. In Schechner's model the domains of *script* and *drama* are conceptualised as being discreet. His model does not appear to identify or accommodate, within the flux of performativity, the multiple instances of ambiguity in which play and playfulness, simultaneously create *script* and *drama* as one and the same phenomenon. In an Apause event these spontaneous interactions are encouraged and interpreted as manifestations of the participants' agency and contribute to the process of building self-efficacy belief and viable social scripts.

The reader may be aware that, after initially situating the thesis from a positivist, empirical standpoint in looking at the nature of adolescence, behavioural theory and the design of interventions, I am inclining incrementally towards engaging in a more post-structuralist discourse and practice in my analysis. I will address, in due course, the philosophical incommensurability between the two epistemologies. But in keeping with play itself, this is just one of several instances in which the making of meaning is a creative act, a feeling state of ambiguity, intractably oscillating between two opposing perspectives.

Towards a model of a Theatre of Applied Performativity

The domain of Performance

In common with Schechner's model, then, my framework begins with the all-encompassing *performance* event and includes the ways in which the school,

the health services, the community and culture at large sanction and provide the logistics, time, space and the participants for the Apause event. The *performance* of the Apause Peers event is already underway as the peer educators travel to the school and gather in the reception area, check their scripts and classroom resources before being escorted to the classroom where the *theatre* or Scripted Performance Workshop commences. The next specialist domain is the *theatre* of the event.

The domain of Theatre

Theatre: the event enacted by the specific group of performers; what the performers actually do during the production. The theatre is concrete and immediate. Usually the theatre is the manifestation or representation of the drama and/or script. (Ibid. p.71)

By situating *theatre* in this manner and making it synonymous with the *Scripted Performance Workshop* (SPW), one is suddenly struck by its multiple ambiguities and the instability of such binary distinctions as the author of the theatre event versus its actors, or character as distinct from actor, or message and messenger. Just as actors are in conventional productions referred to as 'players' and are said to be 'playing' in a piece of theatre so the peer (or adult) facilitators are 'playing' in the Scripted Performance Workshop, and, by the same token, so are the learners also players and playing in the workshop. In my model, I have created the domain called *theatre* and specifically the *Scripted Performance Workshop* to signify an amalgam of all the symbolic and codified material in the scripts as well as the neuro-cognitively coded social scripts, normative perceptions and related psycho-social constructs which may be called upon by the players as a citational process prior to materializing as action matter or play. Whilst theatre and SPW is a specialist domain of activity within

performance and includes the immediate *action matter* of *play* itself, it does not specifically denote performativity. Neither does the term 'theatre' in this model automatically denote 'theatricality' or refer to an aesthetic form; rather, it refers to a field of action which is bounded by time and space, regulated through the psycho-social and cultural parameters of the script. The action may or may not give the appearance of theatricality.

The domain of Performativity, Play and 'Flow'

The next domain - labelled *performativity/play/flow* - is what may be extracted or distilled out from the more broadly inclusive domain that I have called *theatre* and refers specifically to those 'action fragments' which may be observed or intuited as performatives or instances of performativity. Whereas the *theatre* domain signifies all the recognisable, bounded formalities and apparatus of the performance 'proper' and contains all the performed action, in this analysis, not all theatrical or performed action implies or constitutes the more specialist domain of performativity. How, one might ask, are we to distinguish between the performance of an event (theatrical or otherwise) and its *performativity*? As with play, the epistemology is complex, contested and convoluted.

If we return to Austin, a possible or workable answer lies in his examples of explicit performatives, those unambiguous situations when something is being done, as opposed to being described or represented at the point of enunciation. Thus, a performative has the force to bring about change and can, in that sense, have a constituent function in how we construct reality. Kene Igweonu and Osita Okagbue (Igweonu and Okagbue, 2013, p. 4) cite the art historian Jane Blocker who argues that performativity makes an artwork more than just an object or a theatrical performance, because '... it helps reinforce the claim

that the work actually makes something happen'(Blocker, 1999, p. 26). In the same publication the authors argue:

In this book, we see the difference between performance [theatre] and performativity as being in many ways reflective of the difference between reality and make-believe, between the real and the mimetic, between the presentation of reality and representation of the real. (Igweonu and Okagbue, 2013 p.4)

Another, and arguably more readily verifiable, notion of the difference between performance and performativity is observed by Geraldine Harris, 'performance foregrounds its quotation marks whereas performativity in real life strives to conceal its citationality' (Harris, 1999 p.76). I take this to mean that in many performance traditions there is no attempt to disguise theatrical conventions, it does not conceal its representational as opposed to its presentational nature. Indeed they may be actively implemented in order to demonstrate or highlight the performed and fictional nature of the experience, hence the framing, rules and contexts are made explicit. By contrast in performative contexts, Igweonu and Okagbue argue, these explicit conventions 'are mostly absent or are not necessarily rendered operative' (Igweonu and Okagbue, 2013 p.4). A corollary of this suggestion of the theatrical domain within performance foregrounding its quotation marks, is the notion that theatre 'implies an awareness or consciousness of performing on the part of the performer', whereas in performativity this often is not the case (ibid. p.4). Taken in this sense, whilst we can observe 'objectively' the *performance* or theatre of the SPW event, we can only infer its *performativity* and intuit the nature of the transformations which are taking place. Returning to Burghardt's argument, we can recognise easily enough when play is happening. Furthermore, our rhetorics might lead us to

believe we can see its progress function in terms of potentiating adaptation, growth and socialization, that is to say its performative potential, but evidencing empirically the causative link between the actions of play in the moment and subsequent behaviours is fiendishly elusive.

In citing Thompson's distinction between an *ontic* and an *epistemic* approach to analysing theatre making (Thompson, 2004), Matthew Gusul explores how play, playfulness and theatre may be theorised in the Theatre for Development (TfD) context, and proceeds to develop a model for the description and analysis of his practice of 'workshop performances' in India (Gusul, 2015). Thompson, in turn, had cited the work of anthropologist, Errol Valentine Daniel (Daniel, 1996) in providing a useful terminology for thinking about the ways 'people participate in and see their place in a society' (Thompson, 2004).

He analyzes groups using both an "epistemic" and an "ontic" approach. The epistemic concentrates on how a group sees the world and the ontic on how they exist in the world. The epistemic is concerned with seeing, studying, and observing while the ontic is concerned with being and participating. Both theory and theatre, etymologically related, belong to the epistemic. But of course the epistemic is actually a subset of the ontic: seeing and studying the world is also a way of being in the world.(Thompson, 2004)

Using Daniel's analysis, Thompson asserts the process of theatre making, according to Western conventions and exemplified by Schechner's model, is orientated around the making, performing and reception of a narrative, scripted, authorial drama. This implies explicit, socio-culturally sanctioned theatrical techniques. For example, methods of acting, character, storytelling and the use of mask. The emphasis here is on an epistemic, observational and aesthetically distanced experience. In Forum Theatre and many theatre-in-health-education

practices in which highly cognitive processes of observing, problem solving, self-reflection, appreciation of health risk and transmission of health knowledge are framed as theatrical functions, the epistemic approach is theorised as being intrinsic to efficacy. By contrast, Gusul describes a theatre practice which is primarily concerned with the ontic, specifically as it manifests in play. By privileging play and the ontic, 'lived-in-the-moment', fully absorbed experience of participation, the self-conscious, awkwardness that many non-trained actors feel when asked to perform, evaporates. Gusul's 'system' was originated by Professor David Barnet of Alberta University in his work with GeriActors and Friends (G&F), an intergenerational theatre company mixing senior citizens with university drama students. Gusul explains that the emphasis on play and having fun and allowing personal stories to emerge out of the play culture, combined with the removal of any sense of failure, ensures the young people and the older citizens enjoy a sense of creative parity, or what Turner describes as 'communitas' (Turner, 1982, p. 47). Gusul goes on to movingly describe the experience of joyful, laughter-filled and playful presentations of stories by older Tamil members in a new intergenerational company in Tamaraiikulam, Southern India. This hybrid form of theatre, dubbed by Gusul 'Intergenerational Theatre for Development' enabled a withdrawn, almost mute, former beggar to fully participate in the theatrical event and further socially integrate with other members of the community.

It is in this model of TAP, in which the subject is cognisant that they are playing, whilst simultaneously not consciously performing in a formally recognised theatrical role or representation, that I believe an important distinction may be constructed. A theatre practitioner might intuitively conceptualize that the

containing, and explicit theatricality, of an event is antecedent to its emergent, ontic, performativity. Occasionally though, enactive participation in an event, not initially conceived as being theatrical, is so burgeoning with psycho-social, cultural, performative and ontic affect, that it achieves a novel theatrical expression. It will be seen that in Apause performativity gives rise to theatricality and theatricality gives rise to performativity, but that the terms are not synonymous. Critical to Apause and this thesis, however, is the assertion that the achievement or realisation of *performativity* is ascribed higher transformational value than the execution of theatrical forms.

I believe this to be consistent with Thompson's usage of the term 'action matter'. In concordance with Gusul and myself, he links it with play and asserts it is the interaction in the moment of execution itself - its performativity - that potentiates transformation. Consistent with Howard, Mellanby, Burghardt and Blakemore, Thompson (2012) recognises that the action matter of play has a neuro-cognitive, neuromuscular and physiological basis and articulates his understanding below.

The phrase 'action matter' is used to acknowledge that our behaviour is constructed out of embodied potentials, traits and experiences that coalesce into full interactions between people in the moment of their execution. It is used to indicate that this construction is not based on disembodied cognitive processes, but on action that is substantive; it is etched into and exhibited through the shape of our muscles, nerves and tissue. We play with this matter – what Schechner (Schechner, 2002, p. 23) refers to as 'bits of behaviour' – in an endless process of repetition and adaptation creating seemingly unique events.(Thompson, 2012, p. 29)

It is the argument of this thesis that Thompson's 'action matter' and the 'endless process of repetition and adaptation creating seemingly unique events' corresponds directly to the adaptive function of play in generating a superfluity of protean social scripts – a process and aesthetic affording unique value and significance to the developmental sensitivities of the adolescent brain.

The 'scripted' action of the SPW performance marks the beginning of a liminal event, prescribes the physical requirements of the liminal space and introduces the convention that young people (peers) and not adult authority figures are going to be facilitating the event. Moreover, according to the rubric of the scripts, this is going to be an increasingly collaborative contract of engagement between the learners and their peer facilitators. The theatre of the performance indeed encompasses all the action. These are all the observable pieces of performed play and involves all spoken utterances, gestural, spatial and group interactions which are both embodied manifestations of the scripts and the materialization of the players' spontaneous interactions. This domain contains what the players perform in earnest and can look like the serious practising of behavioural skills, or exchanges of argument and medical information. It can take the form of solemn corrections of normative beliefs or utterances which re-instate more pro-social norms and declared commitments to exercising better judgement and control. This formalised play element may be thought of as the *public transcript* of Apause and the action matter is what one might anticipate or infer intuitively merely through the reading of the script in private - unconnected in time and place to its performance. These components of the action matter are the formal, expected and culturally sanctioned aspect of play. It is what Austin would recognise as an 'explicit performative' such as in the unequivocal naming of a ship, the making of wedding vows or placing a bet. In the very act

of utterance, the status of participants or state of affairs changes – the utterances and actions bring about that of which they speak. In the model I have proposed, theatre can indeed be performed but, nevertheless, may have little or no impact or affect. However, constructed and regulated in certain ways, the theatre of playing can provide a context for, and be antecedent to, transformations. It is those transformative action fragments of play which I define as instances of the phenomenon of *performativity*. They are performative elements which may exist as a specialist domain within performance and theatre.

The domain of the Playful or 'Metaplay'

I will be returning to Gusul's work as I present further analyses of Apause SPWs in subsequent chapters, but for the present I am going to depart from Gusul's analysis by teasing out the distinction between play and the playful, or what Sutton-Smith calls 'metaplay'. Hence in addition to this formalised trope of play with epistemic qualities, the term 'performative' or the performativity of the event also implies and contains its ontic, *playful* counterpart - its *metaplay*. This is the final and frequently the most private or clandestine domain within the model. The metaplay manifests when the players are cognisant of the explicit form of the play, what is expected from it, but then proceed to play with the rules themselves. Within the play the players become *playful*, they are complicit in acts which invert its rules, reverse roles, parody it, expose its paradoxes and generally have fun and generate pleasure, and a very immediate social currency within it. They signal clearly to their audience and co-players that whilst, in one sense, they may appear to be conforming to expectation and are performing in earnest (the public transcript), they are simultaneously showing,

in the words of Stewart, that, “This is Play”, that is to say, it is not for real. This particular form of action matter called *metaplay*, or playfulness, albeit framed in a dualistic relationship with play, is rarely decipherable or inferred from a reading of the scripts. Because it is spontaneous, improvised and negotiated in the moment, the slipperiness of metaplay, in this context, defies conventional authorial scripting. To the players it may feel illicit, something they would not normally expect to do, or get caught doing, in the presence of an adult authority figure. Metaplay, in the context of adolescents participating in Apause, is frequently the materialized expression of the players’ *private transcripts*. These private transcripts are not well investigated and understood phenomena of Apause, but especially in the context of peer-facilitated workshops, it is argued here that *playfulness* may constitute the most salient and transformative domain of the performative interactions contained within the performance.

This view which privileges the ontic over the epistemic is, I believe, in concordance with the Intergenerational Theatre for Development practice of Gusul. I am not suggesting Apause constitutes a model of exclusively ontic engagement on the part of its participants, rather it is a practice which starts out as being epistemic in character, but as the collaborative and playful ethos emerges, so it becomes more ontic in nature. Critical to developing an understanding of TAP is an acknowledgement that the two ways of experiencing and viewing the action matter, the *ontic* and the *epistemic*, exist in a reciprocal and oscillatory relationship.

Hence I define a Theatre of Applied Performativity thus: *‘the institution of performativity by applying an explicit, regulative framework of psycho-social and cultural parameters, wherein the realisation of the event is constituted predominantly through play and playfulness.’*

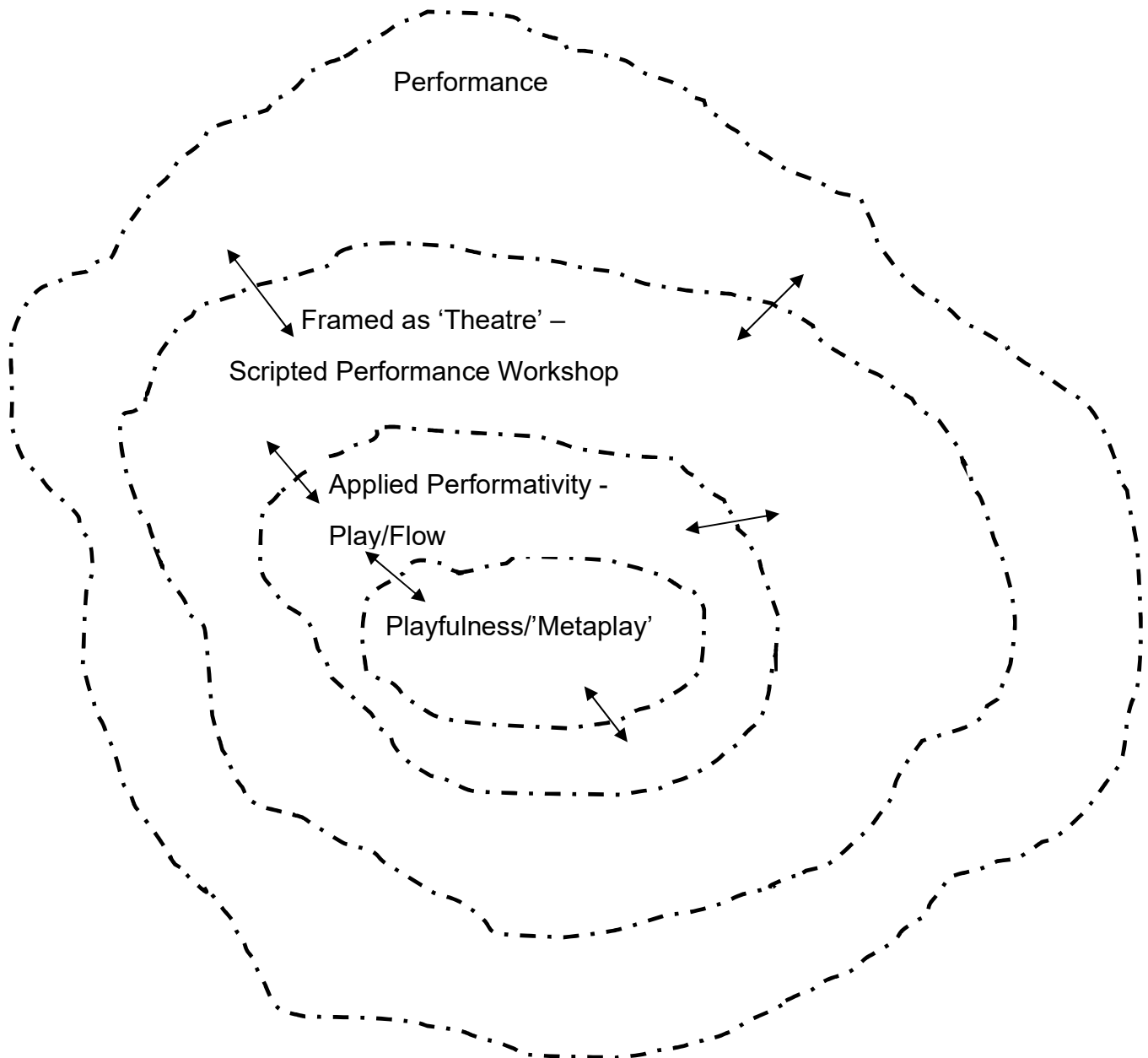
The primary concern of TAP is the *application of performativity*, enabling participants to experience positive, identifiable and enduring transformations. Of

secondary importance in TAP is the realisation of theatricality. The performed action of the event may be framed as its 'theatre', but the aesthetics of its theatricality remain contingent. Accepting the deployment of a theatrical convention may be antecedent to and offer the mechanisms of the event's performativity, nevertheless, in its manifestation, performativity may also disrupt or transmute the original convention and become manifest as an unexpected or novel presentational event.

Below is a pictorial representation of how the various elements of TAP may be conceptualized in relation to each other. As the discs or domains get smaller they represent more specialized components within TAP. The SPW is the specific presentational vehicle used by Apause, the regulative framework within which the applied performativity is constituted. It is the 'theatre' of the event and is epistemic – what can be observed. The domain of 'performativity' is ontic – the played experience of the event. Metaplay is a specialized form of ontic event constituted within play.

As the diagram below suggests, whilst the domains are theoretically discreet, in practice their boundaries are often permeable and factors in one domain may interact reciprocally with factors of another.

Figure 3 A Theatre of Applied Performativity



Regulative and constitutive parameters of the Scripted Performance Workshop

Thus far I have proposed a model for the SPW which operates as a function of a reciprocal relationship between two domains. The first domain enshrines the psycho-social theory, health insights, classroom practices, theatre and presentational practices and is systematised in the peers' scripts. This domain follows the epistemic tradition. The second, ontic domain, is constitutive of the

'spontaneous', unscripted, improvised, performative, play and metaplay elements – the action matter. At stake in the constitutive domain are the aesthetic parameters of the SPW.

In adopting a performative stance in his theorising, the anthropologist Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah identifies a persistent duality in the nature of ritual. This approach is further developed by Sue Jennings in her anthropological study of the Senoi Temiar peoples of Malaysia and has influenced her ground-breaking practice in drama and play therapy. They see a distinction between the action matter which is performative and 'constitutive' of the event, and those rules of engagement which are 'regulative' and maintain a relative core stability and historical continuity within the cultural conventions of the event (Tambiah, 1981, p. 115; Jennings, 1995b, p. 16). This separation of the substantive action matter of the Apause event from the abstract, symbolic and culturally encoded parameters with which it is rubricised, is a heuristic device I will be adopting throughout this analysis.

Accordingly, the action matter and constitutive character of the events will be framed broadly with reference to Sutton-Smith's rhetorics and other relevant theories of play. Due to the clandestine, illicit or otherwise unaccounted for nature of adolescent play, the constitutive action matter will frequently, but not exclusively, be interpreted as manifestations of the participants' hidden transcripts. Such transcripts are usually interpreted as being manifestations of an imperative to be agentic in generating novelty and pleasure despite being subordinated within an adult hegemony. The action matter, notwithstanding its character of play and playfulness, nevertheless has the serious and performative function of conferring upon the participants novel constructs or

realignments in terms of their normative beliefs, identity, status, self, agency and autonomy.

Qualitative data generated predominantly from or reflecting the performativity of Apause will be used in the analyses for this thesis. It is derived from the constitutive field, primarily in the form of transcriptions from video and audio recordings and in the case of RAP supplemented by field notes. This will facilitate the primary focus of this thesis which is on the aestheticity and *affect* of Apause - its ontic phenomena. Other insights will be drawn from historical analyses of a large body of quantitative data gathered over around twenty years, and some qualitative studies of Apause. These bodies of data will be used to cross-reference and, if appropriate, triangulate between the two research traditions of quantitative, empirical and 'objective' investigation which provide metrics of programme *effect*, versus the qualitative, personally situated, subjective, and broadly post-structuralist practice of this thesis which is concerned with aesthetics and *affect*.

Whilst accepting that within a post-structuralist practice it might prove to be a false binary, I will return, now, to a consideration of the regulative versus the constitutive dualism. In the first instance, the regulative framework comprises all that is codified in Apause scripts. As noted earlier, it may best be understood as enshrining the rhetoric of progress and reflects theories derived from the disciplines of biology, social-psychology and education. The regulative framework, however, extends beyond the signs and codes of the script. It can refer to the organisational structures of a classroom, school, education system, health service and the socio-cultural and political context. It reflects, and is broadly concordant, with the adult hegemony. The regulative framework will be

used to provide a particular perspective on the action matter, but it is presented usually in terms derived from an adult hegemony, it is epistemic and an adult public transcript. Nevertheless, if appropriate, adult hidden transcripts may be foregrounded and interrogated.

The regulative parameters of performativity in the SPW are critical insofar as they are antecedent to, and facilitative of, its constitutive action matter. Without its regulative framework, the action matter of the SPW simply would not occur. The collaborative ethos and methodology of Apause stipulates an iterative relationship with the scripts. This approach facilitates both a reflective and reflexive practice: reflective in the protracted, iterative cycles of revising and re-writing scripts with the peer and adult facilitators in the light of their classroom and lived experiences; reflexive in endorsing a classroom practice which acknowledges facilitators must feel empowered to rephrase, re-order and improvise the content of the scripts as they interpret the performative needs of the moment. Thus the relationship with the script is to a greater or lesser extent contingent, creative and reciprocal and has much in common with the practices of Gusul's Intergenerational Theatre for Development.

Such a reflexive relationship between the action matter and the script inevitably provokes playful responses within the playing of the script; in other words, it gives rise to a metaplay as the performers play with the form itself. In the original psycho-social theorising of Apause, this was rationalised as a necessary empowerment or enhancement of the peers' self-efficacy beliefs. So it is possible to argue, even without a post-structuralist discourse which tends to deconstruct binary distinctions, that the practice of writing scripts and execution of the performance itself through the reading of scripts as a regulative

framework, is riven with ambiguities as the players indulge in the metaplay of inverting, re-ordering, joking and laughing at themselves whilst playing the script.

Just as Gusul's practice of 'Intergenerational Theatre for Development', gives rise to the form he dubs 'Workshop Performances', so the practice I am describing, that of a 'Theatre of Applied Performativity', gives rise to the form I have dubbed 'Scripted Performance Workshops'. Both practices cite the performative nature of play as being intrinsic to their transformative potential, but they differ in the extent to which the actor/facilitators confer status on the scripts as antecedent to play. In the Scripted Performance Workshop there is no attempt at dissimulating the scripted origin of the performance, moreover, the classroom-based SRE context speaks to a broadly epistemic practice. In common with the workshop performances of Gusul, the SPW participants however, given license to play within and be playful with the script, breach its epistemic conventions and the formal 'theatrical' performance, thus giving way to a performative, ontic, and more substantive form of engagement.

Chapter 3 -.Theory and Methods of Apause Roll-out

Peer facilitators

There are several characteristics of Apause and the SPW method which distinguish the approach from other comparable practices within the field of socially engaged and applied theatre, perhaps the most obvious of which is the use of peers as facilitators instead of professional theatre practitioners or educators. As has been intimated earlier, the choice of peers who are from the same school or community, but around three or four years older than the 'target' population, immediately creates a set of inter-related, psycho-social and performative dynamics which are novel and run counter to the orthodoxies of the existing models of TIE and classroom-based RSE.

In illustrating the kinds of TIE practices that were being used in the early 2000's, Anthony Jackson provides a rich account and analysis of *Forever* by the M6 Theatre Company which offered an effective theatrical framing of the trans-generational health challenge of unplanned teenage pregnancy and parenthood. It was a play followed by an interactive workshop which 'allowed pupils to interrogate characters from the play they had just seen'. (Jackson, 2007, p. 219) A similar format of a play followed by an interactive workshop in which the learners are given significantly more choice as to the structure, direction and emphasis of the workshop is reported by Trish Wells (Wells, 2013). In common with all three of Apause peer-facilitated programmes, the workshops are based in classrooms with numbers of students attending being consistent with their normal class sizes. Both Wells and Jackson give accounts which would seem fairly typical of applied theatre practices aimed at working in schools, and they both articulate an aesthetic and affective engagement of the participants which advocates an alternative to a top downwards, transmission of

knowledge pedagogy. This view that complex forms of affective engagement, allied with challenging approaches to cognitive reappraisal of their decision making processes, being one of the novel and major contributions that participatory theatre approaches have to offer, is developed by James Ponzetti and colleagues (Ponzetti Jr *et al.*, 2009). They report on a comprehensive evaluation of *Are We There Yet?*, a participatory THE production addressing middle adolescents' relationships and sexual health.

It is noted, however, by Jackson and Wells that workshops and participatory methods are expensive to implement and require a threshold level of cooperation by receiving schools which is not always forthcoming - schools may favour just the theatre production. Additionally, Wells explains the importance of sensitive casting to reflect the mixed ethnicity, social backgrounds and varied sexual orientations of the target population. What none of these authors describe is a method of participatory theatre that is actually entrusted to the young people themselves from their schools to facilitate, neither do they describe workshops which create a framework which potentiates up to 100% of participants entering into role and presenting themselves as effectively managing pressure situations through assertiveness and/or negotiation skills. For reasons which will be discussed in the evaluation section of this chapter, none of these authors reported formal evaluations of health outcomes which indicated quantifiable changes in behaviours.

In entrusting peers to facilitate the workshops, the A pause programme indicated a clear belief that young people themselves were capable of being agents of change within their lives. This immediately elevated the status of both facilitators and learners, demonstrating both in the practical activities and the

non-authoritarian, 'expert-free' quality of interactions, that the Aopause event was conceived and manifested in an ethos of mutual trust and respect. It was with this aim of implementing activities which framed novel interactions designed to promote the status and mutual respect of the participants, that Aopause anticipated and concurs with the findings of Yeager and colleagues (2018). They argue that at the critical phase in the lives of young people – middle adolescence - when their social interactions are actively orientated towards building respect, status and autonomy, most interventions signal the implicit assumption that teenagers are *not* capable of attaining such pro-social goals without targeted input from experts such as visiting health professionals, specialist teachers and theatre companies. Such well-intentioned interventions may inadvertently be neutralising or even reversing the learners' neuro-cognitive predisposition (experience-expectant plasticity) towards being actors in their lives by casting them in passive, epistemic learning roles, in which they receive information, follow stories, and observe characters with whom they may identify, but never get the opportunity to play. Essentially, their relative passivity means they are being excluded, in large part, from the ontic potential of play and theatre making processes.

As discussed above, under the terms of the 'black box' approach, the Aopause research team did not claim to know the precise mechanisms by which one group of young people would initiate a reciprocal process of change with another, younger group. Nevertheless, Aopause enshrined in the scripts a variety of participatory and performative processes which moved the learners to a point where they were enabled to present their capabilities in the enactive mastery of assessing a situation, choosing and executing a variety of responses including

performing an assertive solution, presenting refutational arguments, physically removing themselves from the situation and, in Get-WISE and RAP, exploring and finding negotiated solutions. There was no theatrical production, but with Apause Peers and Get-WISE, there were three or four interactive workshops of approximately an hour, and with RAP, the series of workshops could range between six and fifteen visits.

In creating a workshop-only based method, facilitated by older students, Apause brought into play simultaneously several pragmatic but critically important features of an intervention capable of bringing about change on a whole population or public health basis. Firstly, it always had the potential of scalability. The sheer numbers involved in Apause Peers increased the chances of meaningful quantitative evaluation. Secondly, it was relatively inexpensive and never dependent on paid, highly skilled actors who needed intensive rehearsal and training in interactional competencies with the additional expense of transportation or overnight stays. Thirdly, in Apause the interactive and participatory elements were accorded preferential status as the central processes deemed capable of transformation. They were not merely a 'follow-up' or the occasionally optional adjunct to a more recognisably conventional theatre production. Fourthly, it was the nature and quality of interactions between the teenagers themselves that were adjudged to be important and not an aesthetic based on the qualities of the playwright, actors and director. So, all the training was focused on promoting understandings and competencies around presentational, facilitational and interactional processes rather than the plastic arts of representing characters, conveying a narrative and maintaining a fiction and aesthetic distance. Finally, by carefully developing a script which the

peer facilitators became increasingly adept at presenting within a performative event, the programme was able to implement a regulative framework capable of enshrining psycho-social and educational principles which were antecedent to the constitutive qualities of play and playfulness.

Scripts and Scripting Processes

The function of scripts and the emergent practices of script development and deployment will be themes which recur throughout this thesis. Each of the three interventions, (Apause Peers, Get-WISE and RAP) has a distinct relationship with the scripting process and the performative function of scripts within the action matter of the workshops. Notwithstanding the specificities of each of the interventions, which will be further investigated in subsequent chapters, there are some theoretical and practical principles which offer continuity and common understandings around the use of scripts.

Unlike scripts representative of the dramatic and literary tradition of European theatre, Apause scripts are not predominantly an arrangement of words to be uttered by characters; they are best understood as a rubric of actions to be executed by all the participants. It is true that, on first reading, the scripts have the appearance of dramatic texts because there are words on the page that require enunciation, but depending on the confidence and competencies of the peer facilitators these words may be read aloud, partially improvised, or totally improvised. More importantly, the scripts indicate how various activities are organised and how discussions may stimulate and anticipate a wide variety of spontaneous responses and performative contributions to the event from the learners.




In their development, the scripts enshrine, in the most readily interpretable format and set of conventions possible, codifications of all the psycho-social, educational and health behaviour related principles that can be mustered by the research team, stakeholders and, most importantly, the young people involved.—This includes the iterative processes of reviewing and re-writing. On the next page is an excerpt from the first Apause Peers session (Figure 4). Whilst there are words that may be read and/or improvised, it is clearly a set of instructions interspersed with icons giving tips and reminders as to how to maximise the collaborative engagement of the learners. The icon of two eyeballs  is a reminder to the reader to look up from the script and make eye contact with the learners. The  icon indicates that someone needs to distribute a resource, whilst the hand in silhouette  signifies that someone will need to write on the board the ideas contributed by the learners. In practice, during their training, the peers quickly recognise the icons and anticipate that some specific action is required to advance the exercise. They become familiarised with the classroom management routines and briefly scan the scripts for icons and written cues which map out their actions and often just refer briefly to the scripts before engaging with the small group interactions or the next classroom management task. As the peers practise reading the phrases they become increasingly sensitized and enculturated in the non-authoritarian, collaborative ethos and ‘tone’ of the interactions. Hence, rather than issuing directives, it can be seen from the excerpt below that Peer 2 advises.

Figure 4 Excerpt from Apause Peer Script 1

Section 2 – “Reasons Why” Exercise

Peer 1 For this next activity you will need to be in groups of three or four.
Each group will need a pen; in a moment we will give you paper. 📄 📄
OK, could we have you all in groups now.
Thank you. When you get your sheet copy the table and headings that we write up on the board. It helps if you have your paper in landscape.

(One / two members of the team hand one A4 piece of paper to each group.)

Peer 2 It usually works better if one person does the writing for your group. This person needs to write down all the ideas you have. There should be ideas from everyone in your group. 📄 📄

Peer 3 Don't say things like 'that's rubbish' and don't laugh at people's suggestions. We want to make sure that everyone gets a chance to say something.

Peer 1 We want you to make a list of all the common reasons why teenagers might start having sex. Write them down in the left hand column.

<i>Common reasons why teenagers start having sex</i>	
--	--

Peer 1 We will be coming round to help you, to make sure every group has got something written down. OK, you've got 4 minutes.

Walk and 🗣️ 😊
🗣️ *Talk*

The scripts, then, serve multiple functions. In the first instance they assist in the training, and whilst they may be deemed prescriptive, and in Austin's terms may be 'constantives' in that they are *descriptive* of action and can be statements of factual information, they are particularly effective at engendering in the peers

the programme ethos and quality of interactions. I am arguing that actually, in the very reading and uttering of the words on the page, the peers are constructing for themselves novel social scripts, behavioural norms and patterns of communicating that simultaneously transform them and their addressees. This should not, I think, seem too outlandish an assertion, since as Fischer-Lichte articulates in her account of the 1986 event *Reading Homer* in which participants read the entire *Iliad* in twenty-two hours without intermission, even the inexpert reading of a text can have the transformative potential of performativity (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 10).

After his meticulous deconstruction of Saussure's claim that writing is *exterior* to language, writing being nothing but the representation of speech, the poststructuralist philosopher, Jacques Derrida states: "From the moment there is meaning there is nothing but signs. *We think only in signs.*" (Derrida, 1997, p. 51) I take this to imply that no matter what language forms the peer-educators used, be they memorised pieces of A pause text from the script, be they some sort of improvised approximation of what they had learned from the script, be they stumbling, barely 'expressive' readings, or had they delivered 'fluent', 'spontaneous' outpourings of their own closely held beliefs, in all instances they are using signs and they are all, in the Derridian sense, citations, iterations and traces of earlier, pre-existing signs.

Susan Broadhurst (1999) and Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008), from the fields of performance art and performance theatre, identify the semioticity of performance acts as phenomena which are not confined to signs within the realms of verbal utterances but argue for the ascendancy of the intersemioticity of the body, gesture and space over spoken utterances. Meanwhile, Jackson (2007, p.184)

and Thompson (2003,2009) argue that the potential for transformations within applied theatre occur as a function of their 'heteroglossia' (multi-language discourses), affective, multi-sensory and substantive qualities of the experiences. These perspectives are consistent with my understanding of the term 'phrase' as used by the post-structuralist philosopher, Jean-Francois Lyotard. His use of 'phrase' being largely (although not completely) synonymous with 'sign' as used by Derrida. Lyotard lists such actions as a "Whoop", a wink, a shrug and even an attack of tachycardia as 'phrases'.(Lyotard, 1988) p.70 para. 110). Phrases, for Lyotard, represent at least one universe:

'There is what is signified, what it is signified about, to who and by whom it is signified; a universe'. In short, the sense, the referent, the addressor and addressee (ibid. p.70, para. 111)

The term 'occurrence' is defined by Lyotard as an event which is experienced as having taken place, even when there is no apparent, or permitted, extant phrase universe referring to it.

This study explores the proposition that the transformative aesthetic of the SPW is a function of those specific occurrences within the performance when the phrase universe of the scientific discourse fails to fully encompass the matter of the event. Even though, paradoxically perhaps, the scientific constructs encoded in the script might appear to be antecedent to the event, it is at the occurrence of the unscripted moments that we see most clearly the moment of an aesthetic expression, the interweaving of two opposing experiences. On the one hand, the discourse that perfectly represents the object: "*we are looking at a fictional behaviour* - a learner is demonstrating the mastery of a behaviour for

future use”, on the other, an alternative apprehension in which there is little correspondence between the perception of the object and its representation by the scientific discourse; “this behaviour we are looking at is *not fictional* - the learner is being a *real* person, *experiencing* a great deal of real pressure in a highly public, real-life, social situation and is actually *being* assertive.” In Apause, this incommensurability between the *epistemic* conventions of the script which describe the action matter as a serious, but essentially fictional ‘practice situation’ where a character is at risk but gains control, versus its *ontic* realisation of the subject’s substantive experiences of pressure, public exposure, vulnerability and finally assertiveness, finds an expression and possibly resolution through play, playfulness and fun.

Lyotard insists that there can never be a perfect fit between the object and its representation, rather there is an oscillation between the discourse or language that describes it, and the matter and feeling of the event. The two incommensurable positions exist concurrently and the true relationship between the discourse and its object is an expressive one, one that demands an aesthetic form.

Following Tambiah’s dualistic analysis of ritual as an interaction between the ‘regulative’ components of the event and its ‘constitutive’ performative phenomena, in Apause the regulative parameters are found as codes inscribed in the scripts and are the repositories of psycho-social processes initiated through explicit pedagogic, presentational and theatrical conventions. Albeit given varying levels of consideration and prominence, in the conception and development of a novel Scripted Performance Workshop event, there is an explicit intention that all six of the following regulative parameters, to be

discussed shortly, will be brought into play and find their constitutive materialization.

Roll-out

Theorising the nature and function of scripting within the Apause practice will be an ongoing endeavour in this thesis, as the term 'script' refers to multiple instances of 'coding' for potential realisations of action matter and may not automatically imply words that are found printed or written on paper. There is, however, little to argue over the assertion that scripts were absolutely instrumental to the scalability of Apause. Every peer-educator, teacher and health professional who worked in an Apause classroom had a script to hand, if not *in* hand. In the following chapter, which focuses on the practice and implementation of Apause within the schools and educational context, a fuller description of how scripts were used in training will be presented. Central, however, to all Apause training events were multiple opportunities for trainees to observe, interpret and practise the interactions encoded in the scripts. Bearing in mind much of the classroom action is constituted out of spontaneous interactions arising between facilitators' and learners' responses, the successful training of Apause facilitators depends on establishing the principle that the scripts are not intended to capture or prescribe the granular detail of the event. Each Apause classroom event is unique and co-constructed with the learners.

Without exception, all training events started out in an atmosphere tinged with a degree of awkwardness and often scepticism, and one of the earliest functions of the scripts to emerge was that of a kind of 'security blanket'. Peers and adult facilitators have often remarked that their scripts gave them a sense of security as they transitioned between the states of relative safety (and 'privilege' in the

sense of being in control) of small group work in training, to the more public exposure of presenting an exercise, first to their training colleagues, and ultimately, in the heat of the moment, to a classroom of learners. As the practitioners achieved higher levels of control, the scripts were referred to with less frequency, but key strategies, tactics and phrases had become established as reliable social scripts. Hence, an argument may be made for the understanding of scripts as culturally sanctioned *transition objects*, as first theorised by psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott between the 1950s and 1970s and latterly Robert M. Young (Winnicott, 2010; Young, 1989).

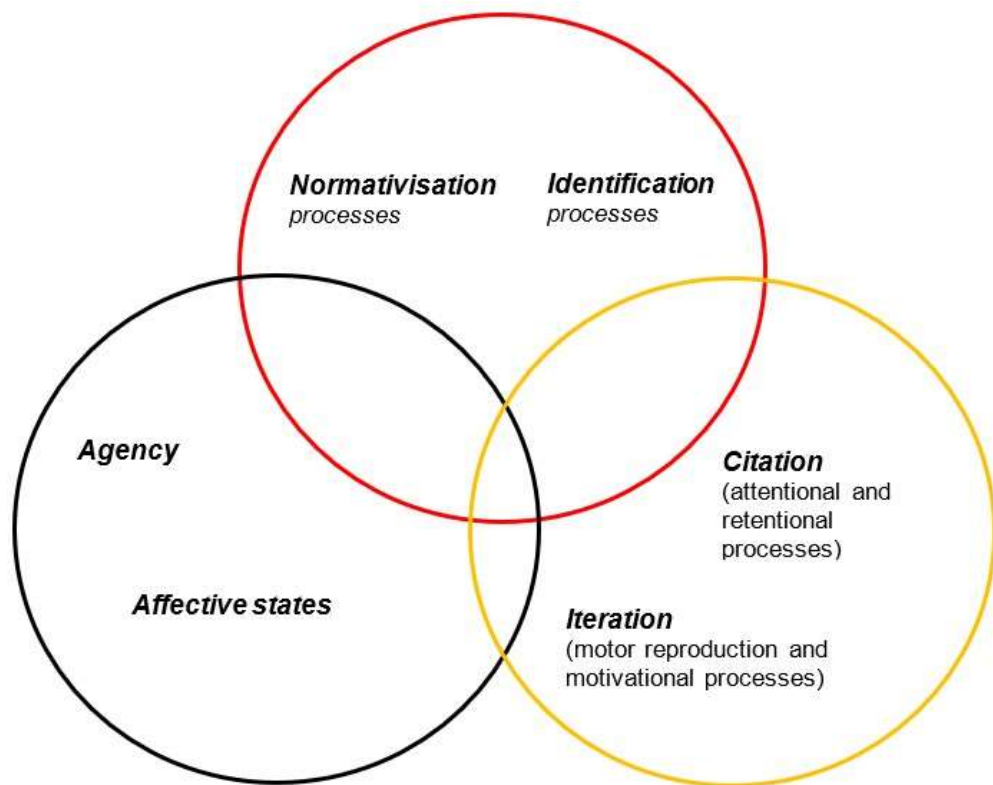
To summarise, the scripts and the team's evolving understanding and applications of them emerged as a dynamic relationship. As well as being a regulative framework bringing continuity and programme fidelity to the classroom action, scripting could also engender a collaborative relationship between the classroom facilitators (peers and adults alike) and the research team.

So, what were the known psycho-social and cultural parameters and processes that contributed to the structuring of the scripts?

The regulative parameters of applied performativity in the Scripted Performance Workshop

These six parameters have been systematised as six separate processes, sensibilities or states – although how stable the distinctions may be maintained in the action matter of the Apause event will be the subject of repeated interrogation.

Figure 5 Regulative parameters of applied performativity in the SPW



In the proceeding chapters, each of the terms will be given deeper and more systematic consideration according to how they figure in the context of first presenting and then interrogating the examples of Apause practice. At this stage, it serves to give some functional definitions.

Normativisation processes broadly refer to those psycho-social interactions by which individuals construct their perceptions of how *most* people around them think, feel and behave in given social contexts. It is what subjects construct or take to be ‘normal’ – even if they do not personally subscribe to all of those norms. Established through normativisation processes, ‘social norms’ are often formulated as beliefs and perceptions rather than ‘objectively’ derived facts or knowledge. In this thesis it is postulated that social norms are constructed

through *mentalizing* and the formulation of *social scripts*. No matter how normative beliefs are inculcated, it will be shown they are powerful predictors, facilitators and inhibitors of behaviour.

Closely linked with normativisation processes are identification processes, hence they are grouped within the same circle, however, the latter are concerned with the degree to which individuals perceive themselves to be similar or have the potential to be similar to other individuals. 'Similar' in this sense also implies a subject's experiences of empathy or being able to experience and evaluate social phenomena as if they inhabited the 'role' of that other person. Also at stake with identification processes is the degree to which people perceive themselves to be part of a socially assigned or culturally defined group. As well as the established categories such as gender, age group, race and religion, there are many more subgroups, often unrecognised by adults or outsiders, such as 'cool', 'hard', 'rebel' and 'hot'. Hence we find that peer educators may activate both identification and normativisation processes, arguably less readily achievable by adults.

I have grouped together 'citation' and 'iteration' in the yellow circle and at this point will articulate some working definitions. The terms citation and iteration are here treated as distinct, since the former, 'citation', is taken to mean the processes of first observational learning and retention of the experience as coded signs (synaptogenesis) and subsequently 'referring to', or 'drawing upon' those pre-existing signs, phrases, forms of speech and action – protean social scripts. Citation is essentially a mnemonic process entailing the encoding, retrieval and manipulation of some abstracted and symbolic trace of the phrase or sign. The latter term, 'iteration', is the substantive, spoken, embodied and

enactive performance of such speech acts - or as Thompson terms it - the 'action matter' of an event. Creating a duality between the citational and iterative components of an event may, in a poststructuralist practice, prove to be an unstable binary, but it serves as a compass in the initial process of mapping the terminologies.

The terms 'affective state' and 'agency' are again grouped as having a particularly significant bearing on each other whilst not being synonymous in the psycho-social paradigm. A subject's sense of their personal agency will be used in the way that Bandura applies it and for which he has coined the phrase 'self-efficacy belief' (SEB). According to Social Cognitive Theory, critical as to whether or not an individual ultimately executes a particular behaviour is the subject's 'self-efficacy belief'.

Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. (Bandura, 1997, p 3)

Consistent with Bandura, the term 'perceived self-efficacy' is defined here as subjects' beliefs about their capacities to achieve designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives, that is, their beliefs about their personal agency. Without a sufficiency of self-efficacy belief, no matter what an individual's capabilities and motives might be, it is unlikely that they will successfully perform a related behaviour.

If people believe they have no power to produce results, they will not attempt to make things happen. (Bandura, 1997, p 3)

Bandura explains his distinction between SEB and Social Cognitive Theory.

It is important to distinguish between *Social Cognitive Theory* and the *self-efficacy component* of the theory, which operates in concert with other determinants in the theory to govern human thought, motivation and action. (Bandura, 1997, p. 34)

So, what are the sources of self-efficacy belief? There are four principal sources of cognitive apprehension which enhance SEB; these are: enactive mastery; vicarious experiences learned through the observations of successes and failures of others; verbal persuasion and various related types of social influence; and affective states.

Enactive mastery experiences are the most influential source of efficacy information because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed.(Bandura, 1997, p. 80)

While 'affective states' appears last on Bandura's list, this thesis attaches great importance to the subjects' intensity of feeling. As James Williams, when discussing the works of Lyotard, explains:

Lyotard does not believe that language or discourse, a connected subset of language, can capture events. Instead, deeply felt encounters show the structures of discourses to be insufficient for accounting for events. More profoundly, discourses depend on feelings and the disturbance they cause. There is no discourse without intensity of feeling.(Williams, 2005, p. 79)

Hence 'affective state' is linked with SEB and achieves status in my model as a highly prioritised regulative parameter. How, in the action matter of the Apause event, specific kinds of affective state emerge as constitutive elements of performativity, will be an increasingly significant focus of enquiry as the thesis progresses.

The constitutive parameters of play and metaplay in the Scripted Performance Workshop

This is not a scientific treatise. In adopting a broadly post-structuralist practice, it would not, however, be a balanced analysis to dismiss the contribution the disciplines of psychological, social and behavioural sciences have contributed to the design and understanding of Apause – although, at times, the incommensurability of the incumbent scientific paradigm and the post-structuralist practice will be felt. Nevertheless, having itemised the regulative parameters in terms so clearly derived from the disciplines associated with behavioural sciences, one is left with the question: “What is achieved by trying to identify constitutive phenomena?” A personalised answer, and the single most powerful motivating impulse driving this inquiry, is that the science does not capture or convey for me the intensity of feeling, the affective, aesthetic and ontic experience of peer facilitated and performative events. The objective processes of scientific inquiry in Apause never articulated the possibility that play, and playfulness were the ontic milieu in which all the regulative parameters could be materialised. A second answer is that, whereas the rules or laws of a game or play form may provide its ostensible regulative framework, a study of its rules is not the same as a study of how the game is actually played and experienced. The regulative framework of a performative event can only provide a partial, predominantly epistemic, account of the occurrence. We need the constitutive parameters as a lens to construct an ontic approach to analysing the experience of and being within an event.

Drawing from the field of performance art and performance theatre, there are three well established aesthetic parameters that have been described by Fischer-Lichte and Broadhurst namely ‘liminality’, ‘autopoiesis’ and the

'collapsing of binaries'. Whilst both Fischer-Lichte and Broadhurst concur on the transformative potential of such performances, neither of them goes as far as ascribing to them the performative force or transformational power of a rite of passage or ritual.

I believe that liminal forms of aesthetics can affect, *indirectly*, the ethical and the political. (Broadhurst, 1999, p. 29)

Fischer-Lichte states:

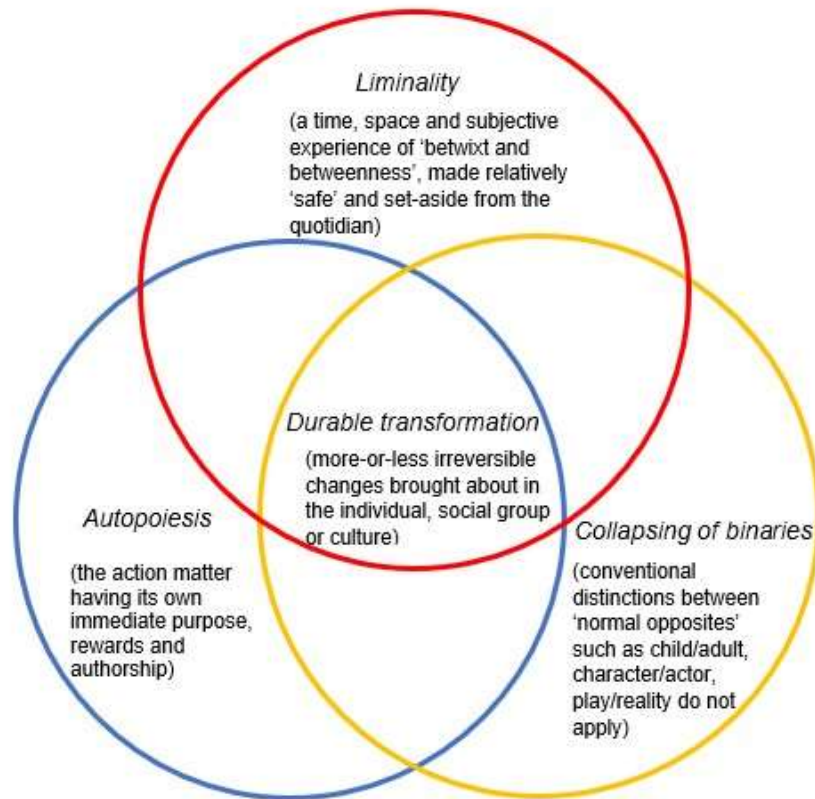
As we have seen, liminality in performance lacks two traits that apply exclusively to ritualistic liminality: first durability (irreversibility); and second social recognition. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179)

It is in Fischer-Lichte's usage, in which an event having a particular intensity gives rise to irreversibly transformative phenomena, that I am claiming 'durable transformation' is a fourth constitutive parameter in the Scripted Performance Workshop. Critically, it will be also shown how 'social recognition' is intimately involved in a Theatre of Applied Performativity.

The first three parameters and the nature of their aestheticity have been well theorised by other authors such as Fischer-Lichte, Broadhurst, Schechner and Turner to name a few.

It would not be coincidental, I think, if one is struck by the similarities between the first three parameters of play coming from a field which theorises the aestheticity of performance and those conditions constituting play as theorised by biologists such as Burghardt.

Figure 6 The constitutive parameters of play and metaplay in the SPW



Whilst these parameters are of central importance, they are not necessarily unique to Apause events. Nonetheless, it is argued that many, if not most, forms of TIE and TfD often fail to create events which allow participants to experience all three parameters. For example, in representing a narrative structure and characters, as typified in *Forever* by M6 Theatre Company, whilst liminality might be achieved, the audience never become the actors or characters, thus reinforcing the binary distinction between actor and spectator. Moreover, by not allowing the audience to act in improvised scenarios, the action matter or substantive nature of the event, as experienced by the learner participants, never achieves an autopoiesis inclusive of their contribution. In

terms of the regulative parameters, the participants' *agency* or self-efficacy beliefs can only be minimally enhanced due to their lack of opportunity to experience Bandura's 'enactive mastery'.

Where relevant, I will direct the attention of the reader to the first three parameters and their function within the event, but the main focus of the analyses will be on those performatives which are recognisably play and playful and how these interactions have the potential to constitute durable transformations.

Situating a Theatre of Applied Performativity within the field of Applied Theatre and socially engaged practices.

It is important to note that whilst I have created the term a 'Theatre of Applied Performativity' to encapsulate the theoretical particularities common to Apause classroom events, this thesis examines three distinct interventions. Whilst all three are activated through the realisation of scripts and scripting processes, only Get-WISE and RAP deployed explicit theatre making processes to augment or expedite the application of the regulative parameters of performativity. In my writing up until now, it has not been difficult to argue the Apause practices in general fall outside those familiar rubrics of applied theatre wherein companies and actors come into a school or community setting and initiate the proceedings with a theatrical production. My reading of the literature has led me to conclude that there have been few, if any, rigorous formal evaluations using quantitative methods which have suggested that interventions, using a theatrical production format, effected statistically significant changes in adolescent sexual behaviour. Even the NiteStar

programme in New York which used peer educators, did not actually publish any findings demonstrating statistically significant changes in behaviour.

When Elliot *et al* constructed their experiment to evaluate, quantitatively, the behavioural effects of a theatre in AIDS education programme using an RCT, the sample size was so small as to render it virtually impossible to detect any plausible behaviour change (Elliott *et al.*, 1996). I use Elliott's study as an example of, not just how problematic such population-scale behaviour change is to achieve in adolescents using *theatre* methods, but also how difficult it is to achieve using *any* health behaviour technology (Yeager, Dahl and Dweck, 2018).

Hence, in situating Apause programmes outside the familiar tropes of theatrical production orientated practices, it does not contribute to this thesis to review a plethora of practices which neither serve as fair comparators nor have demonstrated behaviour-change effectiveness. Moreover, on a theoretical basis, having articulated the psycho-social parameters underpinning the Apause programme theory, design and the parameters constitutive of its play aesthetic, I think it should be clear why Apause (particularly in its use of peer educators) should not be rubricized alongside the theatre production based practices.

Notwithstanding those exclusions, the NiteStar programme does have much in common with Apause (Brodzinski, 2010, pp. 68-88). Firstly, it is based on Social Learning Theory and an understanding that much teenage behaviour is based on modelling and observational learning, it acknowledges the significance of identification and normativisation processes and attaches importance to affording opportunities to practise behaviours. Secondly, it relies

on peer influence and, accordingly, is rigorously selective of its cast of actor/educators. Thirdly, it is based in a fundamental trust in young peoples' ability to regulate their own lives through their own beliefs and decision making processes, rather than reflecting a discourse of adult hegemony in which adolescent behaviour is problematised as being irresponsible and out of control. Finally, in common with Get-WISE and RAP, the socially situated content of the interventions is developed with the cast of young actor/educators as fellow researchers.

However, NiteStar is recognisably based in a British TIE model of a visiting theatre production, and the actors, therefore, may not necessarily come from the institutions they are working in.

They are carefully selected and receive in-depth health training, on college level programmes, in sex education, health and theatre. In particular they receive specialist teaching on sexuality training communication which is designed to equip them to be expert facilitators with the programmes they work on.(Brodzinski, 2010, pp. 69-70)

Two factors, I think, differentiate Apause from NiteStar, the most obvious being the absence of a theatrical production in an Apause programme. Secondly, the extent to which the peers become promoted from their daily social roles to that of actor/educator. This almost exclusively high level of artistic and facilitative competency was never thought by Apause to be a pre-requisite or even desirable factor in a peer programme. Such rarefied personal qualities and interactional competencies in peers always meant a great deal of investment in expensive training which in turn would make roll-out or scalability an even greater challenge. On a more theoretical and aesthetic basis, Apause peers

were always, in the first instance, peers and only incidentally slipped into role, they were not actors presenting a 'great story' (Ibid, p.71). This relative erasure of aesthetic distance and the binaries separating actor from spectator and actor from character, it is argued here, is facilitative of the playful and performative aesthetic. There is much to admire about NiteStar, but I do not think it serves this thesis to suggest that we are comparing like-for-like or that the two programmes have a common genesis in British TIE.

Brodzinski, correctly I think, draws important parallels between NiteStar and the Nalamdana health education company based in Chennai. They use local people as actors, they operate in a non-confrontational and non-didactic way which presents stories in heightened comedic, theatrical and filmic idioms, and in local languages. The street theatre format shows believable characters dealing with the complexities of health and cultural issues in the 'excessively dramatic' manner of Bollywood. Evening performances are 'followed by a question and answer session and may end with information regarding nearby HIV testing centres etc' (Ibid, p.80). Brodzinski is clear that, like NiteStar, theatre produced by Nalamdana must, in the first instance, be entertaining and fun. In common with Apause it is playful and has a peer component through the deployment of performers from the local community, but whilst its aesthetics and theory-base may have much in common with other theatre in health education practices, it still is representative of a genre of practice which is markedly different from Apause and does not 'look' like TAP. This may also reflect the fundamental difference between TAP and Nalamdana in that the former is designed to have a transformative influence exclusively on adolescents and acknowledges that

adolescents have unique neuro-cognitive requirements and predispositions compared with adults.

There is a body of work developed by practitioners that pre-dates the emergence of Get-WISE and RAP which has, as a central tenet, the working *with* the target group or population as collaborators in the construction of the events, often over a series of workshops or visits. More contemporary practitioners such as Gusul and his Intergenerational Theatre for Development (see above) and Liz Postlethwaite, Lowri Evans, and Sara Cocker of Small Things Theatre Company, Manchester, who work with elderly people experiencing a mix of dementia, sensory and physical health needs are representative of this genre. Their work is highly creative and improvisational using props, costumes, singing and storytelling and involves spontaneous play interactions with their participants. In Nicola Hatten's account of Small Things, it is clear how skilful the actors are, but just as striking is the observation that the elderly participants themselves become enabled as skilled improvisers and storytellers (Hatton, 2017, pp. 77-89). This work is based on the principle that the participants are being creative in the 'here and now', using their imaginations and is not dependent on the restoration of reminiscences. A novel, non-linear aesthetic emerges in which all contributions are incorporated within a culture which does not recognise 'mistakes'. Although neither form of theatre making can be readily described as deploying peers as actors or facilitators, what is most intriguing, and gives rise to a deeply satisfying and humane aesthetic, is that in the moment of playful engagement itself, that binary which separates actors from their older participants is dissolved.

These practices of engendering creative play in the participatory engagement of the event itself, giving greater prominence to the aesthetic and affective domains than the attendance to a pre-determined set of health outcomes, knowledge acquisitions or solutions, is also central to the performative realisation of Apause. Nevertheless, I am arguing that Apause, conceived as a practice of applying performativity, retains its uniqueness because it sets out to create the set of social and performance conditions prerequisite to performativity, out of which novel theatrical moments may or may not emerge. Rather than theatre, it is play and the playful dynamics of performativity facilitated by peers in an explicit curriculum of interactions surrounding sexual and relational health that is being applied, and not necessarily something that is intrinsically or recognisably conventional theatre.

Notwithstanding this theoretical distinction between applied theatre versus applied performativity, Get-WISE and RAP represent a departure or development from Apause Peers by drawing on the languages of theatre, and theatre making processes as a system of researching and achieving insights into some of the social realities of young people. With a specific focus on how they negotiated their relational and sexual needs, it quickly became apparent that their existing idioms of day-to-day speech and naturalistic improvisations reflected a social norm that, like adults, most young people did not have a repertoire of social scripts enabling them to engage in intimate negotiations of a verbal nature. Hence whilst, according to six regulative parameters of applied performativity, it was imperative participants engaged in citational and iterative processes, without an explicit verbal phrase universe available in their quotidian interactions, theatre provided a powerful means of framing

performatives and introducing novel language forms. As Thompson argues some six years after the inception of Get-WISE:

Theatre is the research method itself [...] Theatre is an action that is research [...] Theatre becomes the enquiry, not the object of enquiry. (Thompson, 2003, pp. 147-8)

In the TAP practice of prioritizing the realisation of performative interactions as being more important than the institution of pre-determined theatre forms or orthodoxies, I believe the work of Claire MacNeill has much in common with Get-WISE but most notably with RAP (MacNeill, 2011). Similar to my development of the Get-WISE and RAP projects, MacNeill developed an action research practice involving multiple iterative cycles of reflective and reflexive processes. Despite the wide variety of novel performance and theatre conventions deployed by MacNeill, she never lost sight of her aim of helping looked after and vulnerable young people gain greater agency in their lives.

As an applied theatre research-practitioner my work has been committed to examining where and how applied theatre can integrate into the worlds of these young people and be of best use. (Ibid, p.97)

MacNeill writes movingly about how the looked-after young people experienced too much 'tension, resentment and competition' to work cooperatively towards a theatrical presentation. In response, she switched to a more individualized format of video recordings of interviews in the style of a 'Big Brother' video room – a popular television programme at the time. This recognised and responded to their need to have their own space, be heard and tell their own stories. Another technique, adapted from Boal, used by MacNeill was to give the children disposable cameras so that they could generate photographic

images of things they liked and disliked about their lives (Boal, 1979, pp. 120-144). This individualized approach allowed each young person to develop their own unique style of presenting accounts of themselves and their worlds and put them in control of the process. Meanwhile, the role of visiting artists was transformed to become their assistants and facilitators, thus inverting the young peoples' daily status of being subordinate within an oppressive, adult hegemony. The empowering interactions described by MacNeill, despite not being conventionally theatrical, nonetheless were transformative. I believe the work realised a performative aesthetic by being conducted within a broader psycho-social frame of reference which prioritised the parameters of promoting agency (SEB), positive affective states, exploring identification and normativisation processes whilst giving opportunities to engage in the citational and iterative processes of creating images and language forms in which they could speak about themselves.

In many ways MacNeill's work has much in common with TAP, particularly in regard to RAP which used peers as facilitators of workshops which engaged with at-risk and hard-to-reach young people, but also in respect of Get-WISE in that the theatre making tools were used to research the lives and intimate relationships of adolescents in mainstream education. Apart from the main distinguishing feature of the use of peer educators by Apause, MacNeill's practice differed in using the broader remit of deploying applied theatre and a variety of contemporary media forms to engage much more globally with the lives of the looked-after young people and not applying a theatrical frame to focus specifically on relationships, sexual health and negotiation skills. Accordingly, the series of exercises applied in all three Apause programmes, I

believe, are more meaningfully rubricized as comprising curricular content. In common with conventional curricula, Aopause certainly included knowledge components on reproductive health, services and rights. However, Aopause distinguishes itself from most, if not all, RSE curricula and applied theatre practices in being conceptualized as a curriculum of more-or-less explicit transformative interactions – a curriculum of applied performativity. Whilst the essential elements of the Aopause Peers curriculum had already been formalised by Marion Howard and her team, with Get-WISE and RAP the curricula emerged, were curated and systematized through the collaborative development and use of scripts. In contrast to MacNeill's account, in RAP, which worked for several years in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), because the peer educators operated in teams of up to five, with short, 'punchy' activities, I suspect it was much easier to facilitate a playful culture of collaboration in a series of emergent and increasingly engaging embodiment exercises, projective techniques (Jennings, 1999) and scenarios.(Evans *et al.*, 1998; Evans, Akerman and Tripp, 2009)

How the regulative framework informed the lines of inquiry for both Get-WISE and RAP will be developed in the relevant chapters to follow. Aopause distinguishes itself from other applied performance practices in its pursuit of the application of performativity, particularly in terms of how it might manifest as play. This motivated the exploration of theatre techniques, rather than subscribing to a particular orthodoxy of applied theatre.

Research Methodology

In identifying the psycho-social theories and parameters underpinning the regulative structures of Aopause, Mellanby and Tripp were able to construct, trial

and develop several quantitative instruments of evaluation. Consistent with Michael Patton (Patton, 2002) and Helen Cahill (Cahill, 2018) all three Aopause projects were developed with an underpinning theory of change and the evaluation processes were developed as an iterative process being informed by and reflecting programme development. Evaluators, programme developers and collaborators were either the same people or seen as colleagues within the same team.

As described by Cahill (2018, p.180) and Michael Balfour and Kelly Freebody (Freebody *et al.*, 2018, pp. 28-30) a logic frame approach to programme development and evaluation was standard practice for all Aopause projects. So, at different points in the Aopause cycle participants were required to complete pre- and post-intervention self-report questionnaires. As has been mentioned earlier, normative beliefs, for example, were judged to be particularly important indicators of initial programme impact and subsequently proved to be useful proximal indicators of longer term behavioural effects.

The most important questionnaire was simply called, the 'Year 11 Questionnaire' and this was a four hundred plus item, self-report questionnaire for students having a mean age of sixteen completed under closely supervised conditions. The items not only reflected the psycho-social constructs driving the programme theory and methods, but included many items designed to gain insights as to the respondents' experience of their RSE and their person, social, health education (PSHE) in general. It also included items on sexual behaviour and relationships, diet and exercise, alcohol and drug use, the school environment, their academic and employment expectations, religious beliefs

and backgrounds and a conventional set of questions to ascertain their family status and demographics.

A critical methodological and ethical consideration in questionnaire design, deployment and analysis is the detection of perverse or paradoxical intervention effects. As the work of Anat Gesser-Edelsburg has demonstrated in her quantitative and qualitative evaluations of production-style THE interventions, despite the rhetoric of its practitioners and commissioners, injudicious assumptions about the transformative aesthetic of the form can result in precisely the opposite effect of the desired educational outcomes (Gesser-Edelsburg, 2005; Guttman, Gesser-Edelsburg and Israelashvili, 2008).

The content of the Year 11 questionnaires, the protocols for administering them, statistical analyses and interpretations of the quantitative findings have been widely published in peer reviewed journals and were the basis of the NFER report. It does not serve this thesis or advance an understanding of Apause to reiterate or radically reinterpret these quantitative findings, since this is a broadly qualitative piece of research and not necessarily commensurate with the hypothetico-deductive tradition. Rather, I will cite the quantitative findings where they serve to meaningfully triangulate with, illuminate, or present anomalies compared with the observations and inferences inducted through the qualitative inquiry.

A similar pre- and post-intervention questionnaire methodology was used with Get-WISE, and these schools also participated in the Year 11 Questionnaire. These quantitative data were only part of the original mixed methods evaluation of Get-WISE and they were supplemented by extensive video and audio records and supported by field notes.

The RAP project, because of the limited numbers of participants, meant the sample size was not amenable to any form of meaningful quantitative analysis. Accordingly, various systems of qualitative evaluation were developed which will be discussed more fully in the in the RAP chapter.

Most data for this thesis are derived from video recordings and audio recordings of interviews supplemented by field notes. The predominant system of presenting data in this thesis is in the form of detailed transcriptions of classroom action captured using digital video recordings. In RAP this was not possible due to child protection laws, but a representative transcript has been constructed using the session guide and field notes derived from an audio recording made with the peer educators. For all three interventions I am positioned, to a greater or lesser extent, as a participant-observer and my own affective states and cognitive responses are intrinsic to the description and communication of the substantive action matter of the events. Detailed descriptive accounts, which on the one hand enable epistemic analysis, just as importantly attempt to reconstruct for the reader something of the ontic dimensions of the phenomena of play and playfulness – what it is to experience, participate and be in a Scripted Performance Workshop. I have often been frustrated when reading theorised accounts of performance which fail to convey to me the ‘feel’ of the event. In this instance the classroom topography, spatial, gestural, facial ‘phrases’, costume, misfires, public and private/subversive transcripts are all constitutive of the polysemic nature of the event and are included to enable the reader to construct a personal picture of the occurrence.

Presenting and interpreting data

Philosophical Situatedness

Running through this thesis are series of philosophical and ethical ambiguities. On the one hand, A pause has its origins in discourses recognised as being broadly scientific, spawning its medical, ethical and psycho-social underpinnings. I draw on those understandings if they contribute to the enrichment of the account and my argument. Set against that is a post-structuralist practice which has proved to be a more meaningful approach to exploring those performative phenomena which I, and by inference the participants, experience. Such phenomena are not so amenable to the binary distinctions characteristic of scientific analyses. For the adherent to a strictly post-structuralist practice, the two positions may be incommensurable (Williams, 2005, p. 82; Lyotard, 1988), but my position follows Lyotard who argues for the creative expression of an oscillatory experience and relationship which demands at least two perspectives - the discourse or language that describes it, and the matter and feeling of the event (Lyotard, 1988). The discourses may, at times be incommensurable, but to favour one to the exclusion of the other would do an injustice to the value of the event.

An ethnographic study and description as data

In the first instance, then, this study follows in the ethnographic tradition of description (Stevens, 2016, pp. 4-5; Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 8). Whilst comprising the specific presentation of data as transcripts, descriptive practices also contribute to the general tone and character of the whole thesis. The largely unabridged transcripts may be found in the Appendices. Without these detailed and lengthy descriptions which attempt to capture the rhythms, ebb and

flow and affective dynamics of the participants, including myself, it would be impossible to create an account of the performative nature and aestheticity of the events. It would also exclude the reader from formulating their own interpretations.

As the transcripts were analysed, inductive processes enabled the emergence of novel theoretical postulates. Through iterative cycles of cross-referencing, these constructs were checked against the incumbent psycho-social theories, freshly encountered performance and play theories and findings from quantitative analyses. Only within the concluding processes of this thesis have I been able to position the performativity of play and playfulness as a distinctive characteristic of Apause and theorise the dynamics of its transformative potential.

Chapter 4 – Apause Practice and Implementation

Apause – population behaviour change as a public health strategy

Some ten years before the emergence of Apause in 1990 as a ‘proto’ public health intervention, Tripp and colleagues were conducting research into the lives and relationships of adolescents (Hinks, 1982; Curtis *et al.*, 1988; Curtis, Lawrence and Tripp, 1988; Curtis, 1989; Curtis and Tripp, 1989). Like Howard and Berlin, both of whom also claimed success in developing participatory and behaviourally effective interventions, Tripp was a clinician specializing in child and adolescent health. He was acutely aware that the teenage years were a formative and time-sensitive phase of development influencing long term health and relationship patterns. Tripp was also aware that teenagers presented unique challenges in terms of their socialization and learning needs.

It was during the 1980s that the HIV/AIDS pandemic started to take its toll and in the late 1980s that the government began to make resources available to promote better management and prevention. It was evident that the demographic most at risk of both contracting and transmitting the disease was young people. With no vaccine available, it was widely acknowledged that the only way of containing the disease was through improvements in sexual health services for young people in conjunction with the reduction of sexual risk taking practices. Concerns surrounding the rise in unwanted and unplanned teenage pregnancies and STI rates became more prominent later in the 1990s, nevertheless, from the 1980s to the present there remains the challenge of designing, implementing and evidencing interventions and services which actually enable and support populations to be more effective at managing their health related behaviours (Wanless, 2002; Wanless, 2008). With the spectre of

HIV/AIDS looming, by the end of the 1980s there was an urgency to discover 'technologies' which could positively influence health behaviours. Such technologies, particularly regarding adolescent sexual health practices, were seen by many during the late 1990s as being key to addressing the emergent issues of rising teenage pregnancy and STI rates.

From the outset, then, A pause was conceived as a public health intervention. Functioning within the framework of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and subject to scrutiny and approval by the regional medical ethics committee, it was an educational programme to be run using a rigorous experimental design capable of being scaled and replicable with sufficient programme fidelity to feasibly undergo an RCT.

The programme theory of change and applying a logic frame model

It is not the purpose of this thesis, to account for all the roll-out protocols which enabled A pause to start in 1990 in just two local schools and expand, within fifteen years, to approximately one hundred and eighty schools. I will be selective in what is described in so far as it serves to illuminate the argument of this thesis - that experiences of play and playfulness were elements central to the successful implementation and roll-out of the programme. Notwithstanding its parsimony, this description attempts to demonstrate how programme theory, evaluation, design and implementation followed the practice of a logic frame model as described by Cahill (2018, p.180) and Balfour (Freebody *et al.*, 2018, pp. 28-30).

Following a careful reading of the literature and observing and analysing other promising practices, Tripp, Mellanby and Phelps concluded that they could adapt the Atlanta peers model and design their own set of adult-led classroom

exercises according to one unifying programme theory – ‘Collaborative Goals’ (Mellanby, 1997, p. 36) see Figure 1 page 18.

Mellanby was clear that without engaging them in attentional processes, they would be unable to promote in the learner a ‘genuine enjoyment of the programme’, which I believe gave a theoretical justification to prioritise play and metaplay as being intrinsic to the social learning experience – though it was never explicitly acknowledged as such. In the Discussion and Conclusion chapter, the reader will find that this tripartite representation is consistent with Clifford Geertz’s Tripartite Model of Human Interaction. (Figure 21 page 357) (Geertz, 1975, p. 144) and Bandura’s model of Triadic Reciprocal Causation (Figure 9 page 176).

Integrated evaluation protocols

Running concurrently with developing the programme theory, the team also developed evaluation protocols. In accordance with the tradition of medical and educational interventions, the most accepted procedure was to use self-report pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. These contained items designed to be sensitive to changes expressed as programme goals within the theoretical framework. The team settled on a ‘light touch’ system for getting some insight as to the classroom processes and so short, three minute questionnaires were used pre- and post- the two adult-led components and the peer-led component. These focused on a small number of knowledge items but asked about, attitudes, norms, extent and kinds of involvement, affect, pleasure, classroom behaviour, and their perceptions of the learning environment and its management. As discussed in the previous chapter, the most substantial evaluation took place in spring and was a four hundred-plus item self-report

questionnaire completed by Year 11 students (mean age 16 years) and took between thirty and forty-five minutes to complete.

Roll-out: Programme theory as a basis for script development, training, process monitoring and disseminating evaluation

Initially A pause Peers scripts needed to be published in their hundreds and revisions could be made within weeks of them being put to the test, but on rolling-out nationally, print runs could require several thousand copies, having implications in terms of economy of scale. Once the A pause team was committed to a version of a peer script, it might only get updated once or twice a year. Nevertheless, these revision sessions, which involved focus group sessions with peer educators, were intrinsic to understanding when scripts were being effective or otherwise. The practice of regularly revising peer scripts was equally applied to the updating of manuals used by adult facilitators and formal script revision sessions with nurses and teachers were instituted. Typically, instances were identified when procedural instructions lacked clarity and risked failure in their execution. More often spoken phrasing would be found to be confusing with poor punctuation or lacking in credibility. Sometimes important medical findings or social/ legal developments needed to be included.

After several iterations, the A pause programme stabilised around a fairly consistent structure which was replicable in various parts of the country and in a diversity of demographics ranging from rural areas to inner city schools, including Newham in East London. Inevitably, the range of schools reflected a diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds and affiliations with a few independent, single sex and 'religious foundation' schools.

As the programme expanded and became taken up by local schools Mellanby and Phelps were replaced by local health professionals (usually school nurses, but also Department of Child Health staff – including me) and the classroom exercises, as well as the training events, became formalised into detailed manuals. The same procedure applied to training of the peer educators. This was considered critically important and, on developing successful training exercises, I was quickly required to systematise them as sections in the peer training manual. All training events underwent process monitoring with post-event questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and ultimately regional and national reviews of content and training processes.

Programme theory and training

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Theory of Collaborative Goals. It provided a logos and point of reference for every aspect of Apause. It was used as an explanation in order to ‘bring on board’ novel adult facilitators. It was a way of conveying the rationale behind the items in the questionnaires but equally importantly, it enshrined the highly interactive and collaborative ethos of the whole programme. It gave certain permissions for trainers to experiment. Illustrative of the sense of fun and excitement that Tripp and Mellanby wanted to induce in the peers during training, was an extraordinary performance they gave which encompassed all the classic misfires to which peers were prone. As these senior clinicians of over six foot four inches apiece blundered around, they created a truly shocking and ‘cringeworthy’ double-act, with one turning up late, forgetting his script, both misreading poorly rehearsed lines, messing up overhead slides, making personal comments and being rude to each other and members of the attendant peer trainees. Everything they attempted was met with shrieks of embarrassment, enjoyment and derision as the teenagers

itemised and fed back with relish all the mistakes made by the lead researchers. Thus the play of the event gave way to the nonsense and role-reversal of its metaplay, providing relief to stress whilst also achieving the programme goals of practicing refutational arguments (McGuire, 1964) and strengthening a positive social norm of peer preparedness.

The observation and practising of novel behaviours and classroom skills was not confined to peer educators and their learners. The team had experienced, first-hand, the febrile nature of interactive SRE classes. The taboo nature of the subject matter, embarrassment, awkwardness, and the premium placed on inviting learners to interact with novel language forms and behaviours, potentiated the learners' hidden and subversive transcripts. Unsurprisingly, then, most teachers and nurses anticipated delivering Apause with some trepidation. Nevertheless, according to the Theory of Collaborative Goals, Apause adult training sessions, just like peer training sessions, required attendees demonstrated, through various role-play conventions, that they had an effective set of classroom strategies, tactics and interactional competencies to facilitate safe and enjoyable sessions. Hence, enormous effort and imagination went into developing adult classroom manuals and resources which guided and emancipated practitioners and learners alike. Equal effort went into designing training events which put great demands on the trainers who often travelled long distances, stayed in hotels and were required to help their trainees transition from anxious and sceptical teachers and nurses to confident, reflective and reflexive Apause practitioners capable of playing the classroom event and inducing the learners to be playful themselves whilst still remaining faithful to the regulative structures of the manuals.

Visiting nurses and their co-facilitating teachers often struck-up highly entertaining and interactive ‘double acts’.. Preferably they were paired to achieve a gender mix and strong bonds of friendship and trust were forged in these performative events which we believed contributed to the learners’ opportunities to interact within respectful, rewarding and enjoyable relationships.

Scripts, manuals, questionnaires and classroom resources

I am aware of the critique that the use of scripts to assist peers (and ‘manuals’ for adult facilitators) in their delivery makes the event ‘inauthentic’ and inflexible for facilitators and learners alike. See below an excerpt from the 2004 evaluation of A pause by NFER.


Scripted nature of programme. [...]This was considered restricting in terms of the development of the deliverers’ confidence.

Comments included: *‘It is the scripted nature...you are not creating teachers who will be inherently good at this’, ‘It’s peer-delivered rather than peer-led.’* [...]. Moreover, the programme was seen as a *‘narrow approach [which] doesn’t draw on the knowledge and skills of the audience. There is no scope to bring in prior experiences or difference. There is no flexibility’*.¹⁴(Blenkinsop, 2004, p. 24)

Notwithstanding the contradiction in terms of the phrase ‘you are not creating teachers who are inherently good at this’ it should be immediately apparent

¹⁴ “It should be noted that these interviewees regarded the whole programme as ‘scripted’, and did not distinguish between the peer-led sessions, which are scripted, and the adult-led sessions, for which classroom notes (including case studies) are provided.” Blenkinsop, S. W., Pauline. Benton, Tom. Gnaldi, Michela. Schagen, Sandi. (2004) *Evaluation of the APAUSE SRE Programme*. [Slough]: http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/SRP01/SRP01_home.cfm..

from an examination of the excerpt from an A pause Peers script (Figure 4, Page 124) above that, contrary to the expert's appraisal, within minutes of introducing the programme, the participants are invited to share their understandings of early sexual involvement and have these formally acknowledged through having them written on the board.

Whenever in the numerous times learners are expected to share their ideas, within the script can be found the icon,  'R + P' is a shorthand for 'Repeat and Praise' which signifies that no matter what responses the learners give, they will be acknowledged, amplified and praised and in most exercises written up on the board. Hence the learners' responses, that is the action matter constitutive of the event, how they are verbally repeated, praised and inscribed on the board cannot be scripted. Their responses are part of the heteroglossia of the event. Typically, learners' ideas are in the first instance discussed in small groups, then they are written down on the group's piece of A4 paper or worksheet, then they are spoken or read aloud to the whole class by a group representative, the idea is repeated (often paraphrased for clarification) and finally it is presented for a fifth iteration on the board, to be further subjected to class discussion. Given the post-structuralist underpinnings of this thesis, the prominence afforded to the performative construction of mentalizing processes and social scripts, it is theoretically entirely consistent to work collaboratively in order to codify the regulative parameters of classroom action in the form of scripts and manuals.

Built into the manuals were the cues and protocols for administering of questionnaires. All sessions, both peers' and adults', were delivered with a complete set of new resources. Because many of the exercises required small



group work with each group doing something unique which was eventually shared back with the whole class forum, these resources needed to be 100% present and reliable. Nurses often had to rush from their clinical practices to run an Apause session and they were understandably intolerant of arriving in a sensitive SRE session without the requisite resources. Equally, teachers became accustomed to the total reliability of the commercially produced Apause manuals and resources. It was, in part, this attention to detail which enabled the programme to be successfully rolled out in distant parts of the country.

Commissioning and Embedding Apause

Once the Apause programme had been commissioned and the scale of the operation in a new area established, a standardised set of training procedures were set in motion. Additionally, a local area coordinator was appointed with each participating school having its own in-school coordinator. The contracts typically lasted around three to five years and were front-loaded. This meant in the first year cohorts of teachers and nurses were trained to deliver the Year 9 adult sessions and the first cohorts of peer educators were trained. These were 'train the trainer sessions', so that key personnel were identified as being potential trainers and they were themselves, over the next year, inducted into the role of trainer so that the following year they supported the training and in the third year were capable of functioning autonomously with just the materials being posted up from the Exeter Apause headquarters. Equally, peer educators themselves happily volunteered to be champions of the programme and assisted in promotional events, recruitment and training. In the second year, the Year 10 adult sessions were introduced so that the first cohort of students received their third set of Apause sessions at some point in the next academic year.

Process monitoring

Process monitoring questionnaires were used to generate data and anonymised reports for individual schools and the commissioning authority. These often gave early indications of success and could be diagnostic if certain practitioners, schools or individual classes were experiencing problems and if there were issues with the programme itself. They were extremely effective at boosting morale and convincing commissioning authorities, schools and individual teachers that the considerable investments and adjustments they had made were bearing fruit. It was virtually unheard of for the young people themselves to report Apause had been anything other than a positive, relevant and fun experience.

Evaluating and disseminating programme impact

The Year 11 questionnaire was typically used both in those schools which had just started Apause and schools that had not yet started or just wanted high quality evaluation of their existing PSHE provision. For a school that had just started Apause they would have two cohorts of Year 11 students completing the questionnaire before the first cohort of Apause learners reached Year 11 to complete the programme. This meant that the school was providing two data sets of internal controls to compare against the Apause learners.

This thesis is not the place to discuss in any depth the complexities of Apause Year 11 questionnaire statistical analyses, findings and reports. Suffice it to say, over a twenty year period well in excess of one hundred and fifty thousand young people completed the questionnaire, providing large and rich data sets. Whole individual school year cohorts were used as the units of study to enable better matching and controlling of sociodemographic factors. In effect, this would adjust for, or eliminate, the situation in which, for example, socially

advantaged predominantly white children from highly aspirational schools were compared as if 'like-for-like' with inner city schools representing more disadvantaged demographics and a diversity of cultural backgrounds. Findings were fed back to schools in automatically generated, anonymised reports comparing their school with other Apause schools and 'control' cohorts from both groups. Summarised programme findings and data from side studies were published in peer-reviewed medical and educational journals and included in national reports and international meta-analyses. Such findings were broadly corroborated and positively reported in Blenkinsop's NFER report of 2004.

Once Apause was well-established in an area costs tapered off significantly, as they only relied on Apause in Exeter for resources, evaluation reports and occasional 'top-up' training sessions.

Discussion

Apause: a 'playful culture' in the context of incumbent SRE practices

As evidenced in the previous chapters, SRE provision in English schools during the 1980s to 2010s was widely reported as generally inadequate. Undoubtedly there would have been some effective teachers and many teachers would have considered their classroom practices and relationships with their students to be good. Teachers were not greatly supported in the development of their SRE teaching and hence many researched and developed their own practices to which they would become attached. It is fair to say that there was a prevalent culture of teachers having a degree of autonomy in their classrooms with a sense of them knowing their children, their backgrounds and what was best for them. Additionally, most teachers made personal judgements as to the moral and religious orientation of their sex education and what was appropriate in

terms of detail and content. This privileging of context specificity is still widely promoted and is manifest in current government policy which states that within a national curriculum framework, teachers and schools will need to tailor their SRE provision according to their interpretation of the needs and backgrounds of their students – hence the plethora of new teaching resources.

Despite the inconsistency and lack of priority accorded to SRE, it was considered by Tripp and colleagues that, if all young people were to have an equal opportunity of receiving effective SRE and at a period in their lives when it might have some impact on subsequent health behaviours, it could only take place in the ‘level playing field’ of pre-sixteen school classrooms.

Given the general picture of extreme variability in the incumbent SRE provision and practices, the highly interactive, fun orientated, student empowering ethos of Apause, coupled with a standardised curriculum, method of delivery and regular external evaluation, it might have been anticipated that Apause had a mixed reception within schools. However, our own internal monitoring processes were widely corroborated by the independent evaluation carried out by the NFER when they found Apause was very positively received by over 85% of participating schools with a small minority experiencing logistical problems providing peer educators, particularly when they had to be bussed from a local sixth form College - as was the rule in Devon.

There were several reasons for the popularity of Apause. Firstly, for the most part, it was freely provided by the local commissioning authority. Secondly, it offered practical and fun training days with colleagues from different schools and members of the medical profession. Thirdly, it was greatly enhanced by

pre-packed ready-to-go resources, relieving teachers of arduous research and preparation of their own resources.

However, signing up for Apause implied a major commitment from the schools, with the requirement that they 'hit the road running', meaning all schools, teachers, nurses and classes should, ideally, be ready to deliver within a few weeks of receiving training. This 'medical' culture of standardised protocols, rigour, and accountability, all necessary features of a clinical trial, was alien to schools – especially in the somewhat laissez-faire tradition of SRE provision. In addition to the demands of Apause adult-delivered provision was the peer-facilitated component – an even more radical departure from educational orthodoxies. Again, despite the significant readjustments schools and colleges were required to make, this aspect of Apause was most widely praised in the NFER report.

Despite the widely acknowledged shortcomings of existing SRE, there still remains an ideological adherence to the maxim of enabling students to make an 'informed choice'. This was often the justification for the widespread practice of giving out worksheets and biological accounts of sexual intercourse, STIs and contraception (Blake, 2011) and, of course, avoiding any of the tricky issues associated with teachers and students having to talk explicitly about values, beliefs and behaviours.

Under such an attenuated regime, the use of role-plays and simulations to practise protective behaviours and articulate explicitly what kinds of intimacy might be consensual and pleasurable, was, I believe, unfairly dubbed by some teachers, as well as a few influential national figures and academics, as 'indoctrination' and not education. I believe that such a censorious stance was,

in part, an expression of hegemonic, gendered and illiberal socio-cultural norms. Paradoxically, adherents to such conservative views found allies in the more liberal camp. They were equally challenged by the proposition that if it was the purpose to enable young people to exercise real choice and control in their lives, they needed every opportunity to have context specific biological and medical knowledge, use explicit language and actually demonstrate enactive mastery through role-plays and simulations. This ran counter to their orthodoxy of giving learners information, provoking a contrived class discussion and then leaving students free to make up their own minds. Within the programme theory it was anticipated that these contradictory socio-cultural norms were also encountered by the adult facilitators as personal ambivalence, embarrassment, cognitive dissonance and inadequacy during their own intimate interactions and extended to the more public discourses of the classroom.

Under the perturbing circumstances of being compelled to use such explicit language and encourage it in others, the use of scripts in which carefully selected forms of words with accurate information, offering protocols for small group activities was accepted as an invaluable way of ensuring the students receive their entitlement of a multitude of novel and fun interactions. In the meantime the practitioners gradually constructed their own social scripts in the form of more personalised forms of words and teaching style.

Generalisations, assumptions and stereotypes

There were a number of well-researched and thought through generalisations, assumptions and stereotypes enshrined in both A pause Peer and the adult-led components which, I believe, are inevitable in the provision of a scalable public health intervention. At the time it was acknowledged by the team that for 95% of

thirteen and fourteen year olds sexual orientation followed the cultural prevalence of heteronormativity. A pause taught that it was developmentally normal for teenagers to have feelings of attraction and enjoy sexual experimentation with members of the same sex, but this did not automatically imply they should identify as gay or lesbian. Rather, sexual orientation was mutable, particularly during adolescence, and individuals would have an adult lifetime to decide for themselves their sexual preferences. Hence, situations of applying sexual pressure were usually, but not exclusively, shown using mixed couples, but quite often peers (more usually girls) demonstrated the assertiveness techniques as same sex relationships, and it was common in the peer sessions for the learners to contrive a situation in which they experienced assertiveness techniques in same-sex couples. The underlying assumption and ethos was that sexual intimacy should always be consensual, with promotion of the 'norm' that applying of pressure was unacceptable in any relationship of whatever sexual orientation.

In previous chapters I have established that teenagers experience unwanted pressure to become sexually involved. They encounter this as pressures from their peer group, girlfriend or boyfriend, and the media. Moreover, this pressure may not always be apparent or explicit and is experienced as normal or a social 'norm'. This underlying programme assumption and stereotype of the adolescent experiencing pressure to become increasingly sexualised and sexually active was repeatedly borne out during the first exercise of the peer programme where the learners create a class list on the whiteboard of reasons why young teenagers might start having sex. Additionally, a body of research strongly suggests that adolescents have not yet developed the interactional

competencies to reliably navigate the 'hazardous' social circumstances during which such pressures are brought to bear. We therefore believed that all teenagers, whatever their sociodemographic background and sexual orientation would benefit from a social skills based curriculum.

When the Blair government identified teenage pregnancy as a public health crisis in 1997, it catapulted what was a locally-based, research programme into the public eye and meant we were soon bidding nationally for commissions from local health authorities with ring-fenced monies earmarked for teenage pregnancy programmes. It is worth emphasising that *Apause* was not exclusively a response to the perceived teenage pregnancy crisis. It was an experimental study to investigate the possibility of improving the lives of teenagers by helping them achieve more healthful behaviours. These included enjoying more respectful and fulfilling relationships, refusing unwanted and/or unprotected sex, negotiating physically intimate alternatives to penetrative sex, effective contraception and good use of local sexual health services.

Whether pregnancy is causative of teenagers' social exclusion or is merely associated with it, appears to be less clear cut now than it did in the late 1990s (Duncan, Edwards and Alexander, 2010; Rutherford, 2012). Unsurprisingly, during peer training events I encountered resistance to suggestions that teenage parents would be missing out on educational and social opportunities and their children would be disadvantaged.

There were undoubtedly areas of the programme which were weaker than others and schools expressed concerns that if it were not funded by the local authority, their institutions would not be able to meet the costs. Those who experienced it first-hand endorsed it. Some national experts were quick to

identify its perceived shortcomings and I encountered evidence which led me to suspect they were instrumental in Apause receiving radically reduced commissions after the publication of the 2004 NFER report.

Conclusion

Despite the manualised and medical character of the Apause roll-out protocols, an examination of our Theory of Collaborative Goals and observations of classroom practices of both peer and adult-facilitated elements would confirm the assertion that an Apause event generally succeeded in the design aim of being engaging, fun and enjoyable.

This thesis argues that such pleasurable interactions are not merely expedient or adjuncts to the more 'serious' enterprise of imparting relationships skills and health messages. Rather, it will be demonstrated that participants were engaged in developmentally appropriate forms of play and playfulness and that these interactions were instances of performativity. Durable transformations within the individual subjects in concert with their socio-cultural contexts were constituted during the immediate manifestation of the action matter and utterances of an Apause event.

Despite its successes, I believe Tripp's team situated Apause too narrowly in the research traditions of medical discourses, health provision and adolescent health behaviours. The incumbent conceptual framework rendered the team incapable of presenting, defending and ultimately enabling the intervention to evolve in the light of emergent linguistic, performance and social theories within changing cultural contexts. This thesis aims to examine those limitation, reframe Apause events in terms of a Theatre of Applied Performativity and go some way towards redressing those shortcomings.

Chapter 5 - Apause Peers: Durable Transformations

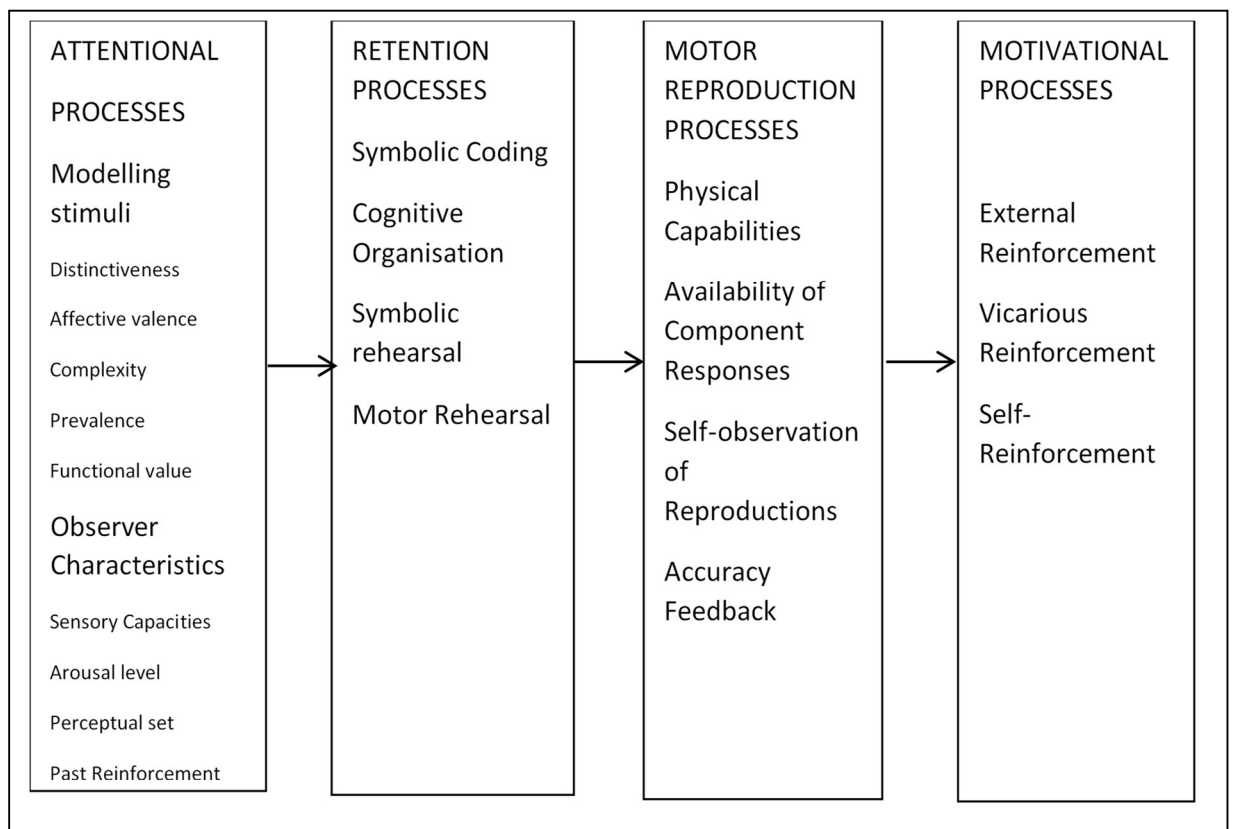
Rationale

The incumbent and dominant theoretical framework for Apause is Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, hence most of those regulative parameters of TAP may be identified as elements within Bandura's four processes of observational learning (Bandura, 1977, p. 23). For ease of comparison and cross-referencing, both frameworks are presented below (Figure 7, page 169 and Figure 8, page 170). The main difference between the two is that in applied performativity *affective states* and *agency* are given the prominence of being parameters in their own right, although such a binary distinction may not prove stable in a poststructuralist analysis. Having examined Bandura's model it might be argued that *affective states* is included as 'affective valence' within 'Attentional Processes', likewise *agency* or self-efficacy belief (SEB) corresponds with 'Self-reinforcement' within 'Motivational Processes'. My rationale for elevating *affective states* and *agency* to the status of parameters in their own right is that I believe they have a dynamic function throughout all phases of an Apause event, realisable through the participants' ontic and aesthetic sensibilities. Moreover, I hope to demonstrate how intrinsic they are to the phenomena of play and playfulness.

By selectively illustrating a precis of Apause Peers with transcripts of video records, this chapter strives to give the reader insights as to the nature of play and playfulness characteristic of Apause Peers. This process aims to establish a general 'goodness of fit' between the data and the first three components identified as the 'constitutive parameters of play and metaplay in the Scripted Performance Workshop', namely *liminality*, *autopoiesis* and *collapsing of*

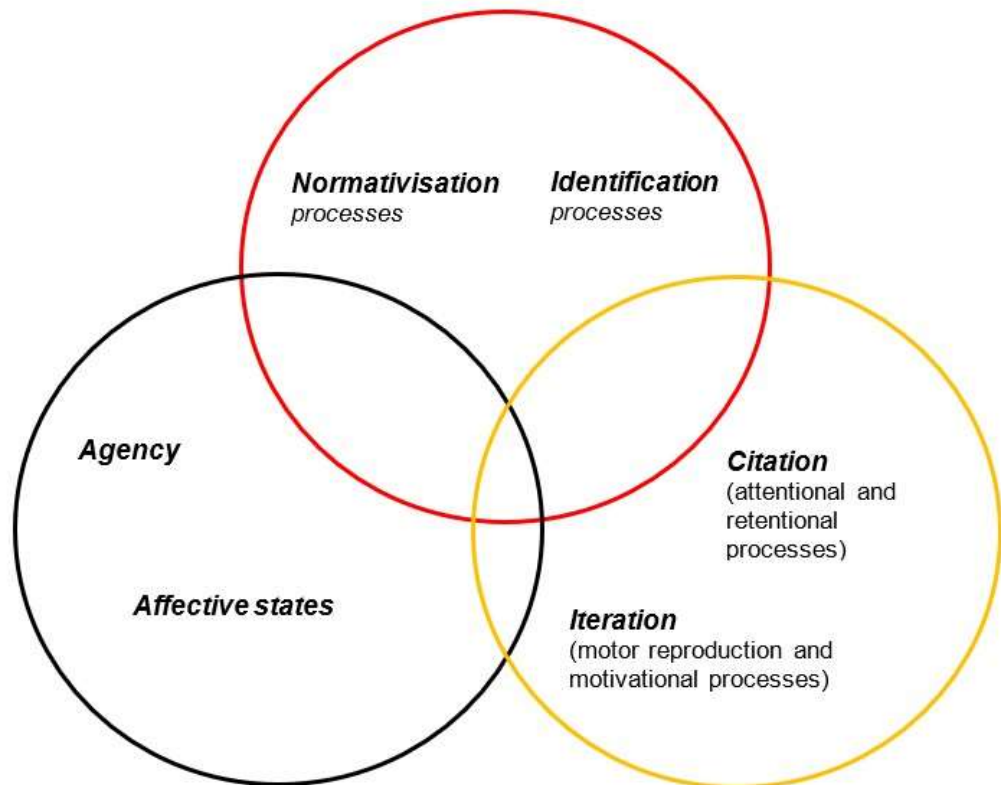
binaries. The chapter will go on to demonstrate how these contribute to the processes of play and playfulness and further speculate how such ontic states and aesthetic experiences may potentiate the fourth parameter – named as *durable transformation*.

Figure 7 Bandura's Model of Four Processes of Observational Learning (Bandura, 1977, p. 23)



The chapter will conclude with a review of some of the published and unpublished findings generated by both quantitative and qualitative data and discuss the extent to which they are consistent with the data and interpretations as presented through the TAP model.

Figure 8 The regulative parameters of applied performativity



A Synopsis of Apause Peers

Engaging year nine students (13 – 14 year-olds), the Apause Peers programme comprises a cycle of four phases facilitated by sixth form students aged between 16 and 18 years. Each phase, or session, lasts approximately one hour and they are typically one week apart. The peer-facilitated component is sandwiched between two blocks of three, adult-delivered Apause sessions, one block taking place earlier on in year nine (13-14 year-olds) with a second adult block being delivered after the peer cycle and taking place in year ten (14-15 year-olds). After providing a synopsis of the four Apause Peers phases, the primary focus of this chapter is an occurrence of phase three of the peer cycle,

dubbed *The Power to be Me*, which took place on 25th June 2003 at Okehampton Community College, in Devon, England. The school serves a small prosperous town on the edge of the Dartmoor National Park. The population is almost exclusively white, working predominantly in the agricultural economy with some light engineering and services.

Permission to make video recordings of the Apause Peers sessions was granted by the school to the University of Exeter for the purposes of research and training for peer accreditation. All participants signed consent forms, but actual names are replaced to preserve anonymity. The third session is chosen for two related reasons: firstly, that for all participants this seems to be the single most readily recalled part of the whole of the ten hours of the Apause Programme; and secondly, it most vividly demonstrates how the four aesthetic parameters come into play.

The Four Phases of Apause Peers

A fuller description of these sessions can be found in the Appendices.

Session 1 Risk Appreciation

- Introductions: explanation of roles and re-establishment of ground rules
- Reasons Why Exercise: Small group work then feedback to board and full class discussion and votes on reasons why teenagers start to have sex and reasons why they might wait
- Consequences: The peers read some of the biological, medical and social consequences of early sexual involvement. Illustrated using projected images

- Girl's Story: A case study presentation of a girl who fears she is pregnant by a boy who is now having sex with her best friend.

Session 2 Pressure on Relationships

- Pressure from media: advertising and media promote gender stereotypes and cause many young people to feel inadequate and vulnerable to sexual pressure.
- Stick People: Introduce two gender-neutral, stick people. Small group work fed back and written on board. Conclusion - there are many things that go into making a good relationship which do not include sex.
- Stopping Points: Projected images describe of a continuum of different kinds of relationships. Physical 'closeness' is presented as a series of steps. Secretly learners write the correct step for someone their age. Class moves to sign corresponding to their step. Displays of ambivalence demonstrate social pressure.
- Pressure Scenes: Vignettes are presented in which teenagers find themselves being put under pressure to have sex. Solutions are discussed in small groups and shared with class.

Session 3 The Power to be Me

- Recap: Pressures young people face to become sexually involved
- Demonstration and Practice of assertiveness techniques: This enables the learners to be coached into using all the three methods of assertiveness – the *Three Rs*.
- In brief, the first method, *Resist*, is to say 'No' and keep repeating it, the second, *Reverse*, is designed to put pressure back onto the 'pressurer' by first saying how the pressure is making the resistor feel

(uncomfortable, frightened, bad etc.) and then asking the pressurer why they keep applying pressure after they've said 'No'. The third method, *Remove*, is to simply get up and remove themselves from the situation. This is done in a non-confrontational manner and is not designed to signal the end of the relationship.

- Practice with pressure lines: learners are challenged with a range of pressure lines and situations. Example: "Everyone is doing it – why not us?", learner retorts, "Well, I'm not everyone and how do you know everyone's doing it?" Inducing such refutational arguments is an instance of applying social inoculation theory (McGuire, 1964).

Session 4 Final Session

The Match Game: A 'Quizmaster' organises the class into approximately six groups. Brief dramatic presentations of pressure scenes. Groups write down and call out how characters should respond. Game show protocols are observed, and scores are awarded to teams. Excitement escalates as protocols are proved fallible and scores arbitrary.

Pressure Scenarios: A diversity of social contexts, the backgrounds and the settings, by means of worksheets, are allocated to teams of learners. Teams have fifteen minutes to prepare scenes in which the protagonist is put under pressure and show how they manage it and maintain the relationship. Everyone participates in their team presentation.

Analysis of Phase Three - The Power to be Me

The unabridged transcripts can be found in the Appendices from which I have extracted the excerpts below. The full transcripts offer the reader a more nuanced experience of the event with its distinct phases, modulations in mood,

intensity of engagement, granular detail on clothes, spatial dynamics, movement and gestural interactions.

The constitutive parameters of play and metaplay in the Scripted Performance Workshop

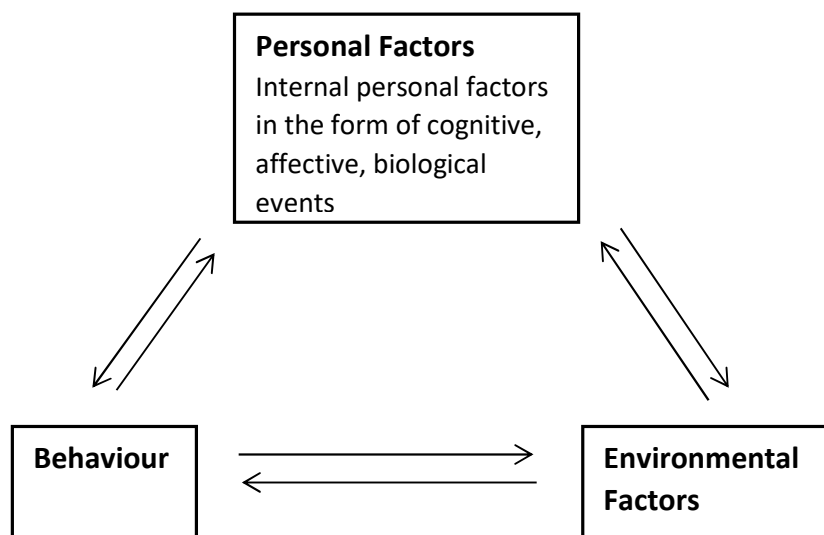
In the Theory and Methods chapter, I cited Erica Fischer-Lichte in identifying three defining characteristics and aesthetic parameters of performance with transformative potential; these were *liminality*, *autopoiesis* and the *collapsing of binaries*. Furthermore, Fischer-Lichte introduces the term '*durable transformation*' to distinguish between the aesthetics of a transformation that audience members might experience when attending a work of performance art such as Marina Abramović's *Lips of Thomas* by comparison with the kind of transformations that might be experienced in a performance designed to bring about specific social change (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 179). I use Fischer-Lichte's usage of *durable transformation* to denote a characteristic which marks out TAP, Apause and the SPW approach as distinctive. In Apause the performance as a social intervention is constructed and executed with the intention of instigating transformations within a curriculum of possible responses which are more-or-less irreversible in nature and hence, by Fischer-Lichte's definition, are *durable*.

I have argued that the transformations occur within the individual subject on a neuro-cognitive level through synaptogenesis, experienced as the processes of mentalizing and the development of novel social scripts. Such individualistic transformations are further enhanced and accorded a temporal urgency due to the neuro-cognitive phenomenon defined as 'experience-expectant plasticity', a time-limited window of opportunity particularly characteristic of the developing

adolescent brain and may be considered to correspond to Bandura's retentional processes.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, whilst transformations certainly do take place on an individual basis they are only part of a dynamic relationship between those individual factors, their behaviour and their socio-cultural environment. This relationship Bandura famously dubbed 'Triadic Reciprocal Causation'. (Bandura, 1986) Figure 9 below is adapted from Bandura's *Self-efficacy : the exercise of control*.(Bandura, 1997, p. 6)

Figure 9 Bandura's Model of Triadic Reciprocal Causation



In this specific instance of the Apause Peers SPW the curriculum of transformations encompasses shifts in normative beliefs, changes in identificatory processes, an enhanced sense of personal agency and the inculcation of models of behaviour and skills – social scripts - such that participants, at a future point in their lives, might have the capacity to resist unwanted pressure to become sexually involved. It is worth re-iterating here that Bandura understands a subject's capability and likelihood of performing a

behaviour is powerfully mediated by their sense of agency or SEB (Bandura, 1997, p 3). Critical to this thesis, and unique to a Theatre of Applied Performativity, is that these transformative processes are constituted through play and the metaplay of the event.

Susan Broadhurst, in her book, *Liminal Acts*, theorising the aesthetics of certain kinds of marginal and experimental performative modes, states there is ‘... a noticeable lacuna between such practices and current critical theory’(Broadhurst, 1999, p. 1). Broadhurst goes on to describe a range of performative types which are, ‘assembled under the heading of ‘liminal performance’ (ibid., p.1). What are the characteristics of A pause Peers Session 3 which might qualify the intervention for consideration as a *liminal act*? Can participants, especially the learners, be said to undergo experiences of liminality?

A limen is a threshold or sill, a thin strip neither inside nor outside a building or room linking one space to another, a passageway between places rather than a place in itself. In ritual and aesthetic performances, the thin space of the limen is expanded into a wide space both actually and conceptually. What usually is just a “go between” becomes the site of the action. And yet this action remains, to use Turner’s phrase, “betwixt and between.” It is enlarged in time and space and yet retains its peculiar quality of passageway or temporariness.(Schechner, 2002, p. 58)

Developing Turner’s observation, Schechner states that rituals and rites of passage are events which take place in Van Gennep’s *liminal phase*.

During the liminal phase, the actual work of rites of passage takes place. At this time, in specially marked spaces, transitions and transformations occur. (Schechner, 2002, p. 57)

From the transcriptions what we can see from the outset is the procedure of creating a 'specially marked space'. The normality of the science laboratory with its specific spatial configuration of heavy benches is violently and somewhat subversively disrupted. From being strategically positioned such that learners are ordinarily compelled to face the front with a perspective indicating a teacher commanding the proceedings from the focal point of the main bench, they are now dragged and pushed noisily with minimum caution or decorum to the margins of the classroom. This signals a new space of multiple perspectives and possibilities, which itself becomes subjected to further demarcation by the creation of a circle of chairs. At this point the learners have no idea of what is about to occur, but they do know that the normal conventions and authoritarian structures of a science lesson delivered by a teacher from the front of a classroom will be temporarily suspended. As the session proceeds, the work of the spatial conventions serves to confer a liminal quality on both the classroom and the space enclosed by the chairs. When the learners are seated, prior to being ushered to the empty chair at the front of the circle, they are safe, but once one of the peers or a classmate has singled them out to come to the front, they undergo the ordeal of navigating that void. They may offer resistance, but unless it is of the utmost resolve, the combination of pressure from their fellow learners and the peer-educators coupled with clapping, words of praise and encouragement and the physical challenge of someone coming towards them with the sole purpose of getting them out of their chair, the neophyte will nearly always succumb and start to make that transition. So, whilst the expectation of peer-educators and fellow learners are the social drivers which compel the learner to make the transition across the space, certain theatrical conventions coupled with the novel configuration of the furniture and the subordination of the

authoritarian role of the teacher combine to create certain characteristics of a liminal event.

As Broadhurst notes, there is not a convenient fit between liminal acts and more conventional performance modes. *Apause Peers* does not have the immediate appearance of a piece of theatre, although arguably the role of Scene Manager is homologous with that of the Joker in Boal's Forum Theatre. Equally, the session bears little resemblance to a conventional lesson in a classroom. However, there are 'tricks' borrowed from theatre and contemporary popular entertainment that expedite the physical action within the liminal space of the classroom, acts which have many characteristic features Broadhurst uses to define liminal performance.

A certain sense of excitement is generated by the liminal: for instance, in many of the works, feelings close to disquiet and discomfort are experienced. A certain 'shift-shape' stylistic promiscuity favouring pastiche, is signalled, together with repetition (a repetition which foregrounds not sameness but difference), parody, playfulness and a delegitimation of authorial authority. Moreover, liminal performance strives to play to the edge of the possible, continually challenging not only performance practice but also traditional aesthetic concepts. (Broadhurst, 1999, p. 1)

Aspects of liminality will be revisited, but this introductory transcript concurs with Broadhurst's account and begins to illustrate the repetitious, parodic and playful nature of *Apause Peers*, while the merely contingent regard for the scripts, suggests an emergent sense of the primacy of 'spontaneous' action over the authorial and systematising function of the script.

Transcript 1 A pause Peers - Setting the scene

Then Del and Ros introduce the first technique by turning to each other, looking into each other's eyes and saying simultaneously, "No" firmly and clearly. They have a light-hearted and upbeat tone, and both smile and chuckle briefly afterwards. The class require no further prompting and suddenly become extremely animated and quickly repeat it in pairs, saying, "No" loudly and laughing before turning to someone else and again trying the technique. Despite the peers' efforts to encourage the learners to create extra clarity and emphasis, the class carry on and appear impervious to Angie as she reads from her script, "You can do it a bit louder and a bit clearer." The class continue saying "No" amongst themselves, apparently oblivious to the peers until the peers ask them to be quiet now and begin to invoke the Ground Rule of "Listen".

The class stop the repetition of "No", but a sizeable minority still continue to chat, and the peers read aloud from the scripts further instructions which seem to be ignored.

Angie, without the assistance of the script, begins to assume the role of Stage Manager (SM) and attempts to calm the class down in anticipation of the more formal role play demonstration.

Angie: Could you be quiet over there. You all did really well, but now we want to move on. Ok. *(She places her script on the science bench and moves round to the front while still twisting her torso to allow her to check on the words. Meanwhile, Del and Ros are adjusting the two empty chairs and are negotiating who sits where).*

SM (Angie): Guys, could you settle down please... (*With more authority, still glancing at the script over her shoulder*) Ok, so now we're going to put this... into practice.

An argument central to this thesis is that the 'delegitimation' of the script is a necessary function of the transformative processes enshrined in the SPW. It is not entirely unpredictable that this apparently subversive action actually enables the emergence of *autopoiesis*.

... apparent in all forms of role reversal between actors and spectators, [it] allows all participants to experience themselves as co-determinate participants of the action. (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 165)

From the earliest interaction between the peer-educators and the learners we can see there is a tension as the peers' performances stumble and oscillate between the requirement to communicate the epistemic sense of the script with fidelity and to engage in more ontic, unmediated acts of 'being' with the learners.

Both the peers and the learners are aware, from their primary schools and drama classes, that the altered spatial convention of the room heralds a less didactic presentational form and will instigate a more interactive mode of communication. At those points when the peers decide to be less script dependent and start to interact apparently more spontaneously, the learners are abruptly roused from their torpor and become more active players in the event.

In the next transcript, they are presented with a scenario which ultimately requires selected individuals to leave their chairs and perform with the peer-educators in front of their classmates and the possibility of their enhanced

influence in the event becomes evident. There are attempts to refuse to comply. We see 'stitch-ups' in which learners, independently of the peer-educators, 'volunteer' their friends, forcing them to cross the space. 'Pay-backs' are a particular source of delight as one learner prosecutes revenge on the person who volunteered them in the first place. In the case of Arthur, his refusal lines were uttered with a knowing sense of dramatic tension which verged on the parodic, using pauses, facial expression, rolling of eyes and gestures, leaving everyone in a state of suspense as to whether he was indeed going to resist the advances of Ros.

Further on, in Janet's case, who presented a mastery of the 'Reverse' technique which exceeded that of the peer-educators', she precipitated a situation where she was more influential in enabling her classmates to learn the method than the peer-educators. So, as well as largely controlling the running order of who comes to the front, the assertiveness responses were highly variable and unpredictable, ranging from acute self-consciousness to a gleeful 'playing to the audience' and in one case, ultimately, outperforming the peer-educators. The ensuing signals of approbation; 'whoops', clapping, laughter and cheering were often anticipated and initiated by learners ahead of the peers' prompting, suggesting that the learners were, in part at least, creating a performance for the benefit of each other. Hence the whole classroom, as a liminal space, is appropriated by the learners in cahoots with the peers. It is at such points, I am arguing, that the Apause Peers intervention can be said to bring into play a feedback loop with its own self-referential performance sensibility, or *autopoiesis*.

At such times, the feeling is one of no single player or groups of players being fully in control, with some uncertainty as to how the action will unfold. This does, indeed, give rise to feelings of disquiet, and not just amongst the participants (as is evidenced in their protective gestures and body language, by their apprehensiveness about coming to the front and in the attempts by Angie to bring the class to order) but also amongst adults in the room who might normally be in positions of responsibility.

As was noted in the NFER evaluation of Apause, adult observers reported ambiguity about the performance capabilities of peer-educators, with seventy-five per cent of schools saying they had been well prepared, whilst at the same time over half reporting they needed more training in classroom control (Blenkinsop, 2004, p. 38). This apparent contradiction where peers are reported as being both well prepared and apparently lacking in classroom control is unsurprising since, as Broadhurst has argued, these acts of liminality come with little critical theory for analysis as a performance mode, far less as a pedagogic practice within the conventions of a mainstream school classroom. It seems few observers are able to ignore the sense of fun and excitement generated by Apause Peers.

This performance trope with its autopoietic energy, inclusivity and lack of a conspicuous authority figure, quite alien to our educational culture, is characteristic of a *playful culture*. Nevertheless, it leaves observers ill equipped to intuit quite what is happening and how it achieves its performative force. This autopoietic energy, however, is not merely incidental or a contradictory undertone within a more conventional pedagogy. Although, historically, the nomenclature of 'autopoiesis' was never part of our trainers' vocabularies,

certainly within my own role as lead trainer I routinely attempted to communicate an intuitive understanding that this peculiar quality of spontaneous and apparently random interactions was a defining feature of the non-authoritarian social dynamic of an Apause Peer event. It was empowering for young people and enhanced their sense of agency or self-efficacy belief. Now, at the time of writing, I am persuaded that the term *autopoiesis* is an appropriate tool with which to theorise the aestheticity of the play and playful character of the Apause Peers event.

Perhaps more significantly, it appears that the participants, at some points, abandon their preconceptions of what might constitute a 'good' performance or a 'worthy' lesson and become complicit in an experience which satisfies their impulse to create and play in an absorbing and enjoyable *social event*, irrespective of its educational, health, conventionally aesthetic or theatrical considerations. Viewed in the context of peer-to-peer interactions (as opposed to pedagogically conventional adult-facilitated interactions) autopoiesis, then, is materialised through acts of play or playfulness.

The observation that, once fully engaged, the participants appear to be concerned exclusively with the action matter of the moment as opposed to any future benefits that may be derived, is strongly suggestive of Huizinga's notion of play as being non-purposive and set aside from quotidian considerations which is further echoed by Burghardt's observations

- "The behaviour is something that the animal engages in voluntarily."
- "The reward is the activity itself. In other words, it's not for an obvious goal such as mating or eating."

- “It may occur much earlier in the animals’ life than normally we would see the serious version of that behaviour. Such as in play fighting.”
- “The behaviour is repeated over and over again.”
- “The animal has to be pretty healthy, in a safe, relaxed state.”

Transcript 2 A pause Peers - Learners present assertiveness techniques

Running counter to the guidelines of the script, the scene is not modelled first with the roles reversed, that is with Anne pressuring Tony, instead, a boy, Arthur, is named by Charmian. He is identified by the peers and brought to the front amidst a great deal of kaffuffle, shuffling of seats and laughter. He is smiling broadly, perhaps cheekily, and sits in the empty chair beside Ros. Ros is more mature and self-assured than Del which seems to give Arthur considerable kudos and his male friends are watching with keen anticipation to see how he copes with the invitation from Ros to come upstairs to have sex with her. It is mostly the boys of the class who are laughing now. Angie asks the class to quieten down and says, “Come on, give him a round of applause for coming up.” The class clap loudly and a few make a high-pitched “whoop.”

(Angie briefly reminds Arthur of the technique of saying “No” three times and then in the role of Anne’s mother leaves the couple alone in the house).

SM: Ok, I’ve got to go out now. I’ll see you guys later.

Anne (Ros): *(Her palms are together and squeezed between her thighs. She is smiling and talks confidently)* So Tony, we’ve

been going out for a long time and I think it's time to take our relationship to the next level.

Tony (Arthur): *(Arthur is clutching his stomach with his left hand and his right hand has gathered up part of his T-shirt. He smiles, nods and hesitates for four seconds. During this time members of the class start to laugh. He takes a big, quick breath, smiles and says) No (Most of the class find this very funny and laugh loudly and Arthur starts to laugh)*

Del: No Laughing.

Angie: No Laughing, come on. *(Arthur looks over his left shoulder in the direction of Del and stops laughing)*

Anne: *(Appealingly)* Well, you never know, you might like it.

Tony : No *(He says this with a look of nervous uncertainty. No one laughs)*

Anne: Go on.

Tony: *(Laughingly)* Hummm *(The whole class laugh loudly. He tips his head to the right and releases his right hand from his T-shirt and lifts and opens up his hands and forearms slightly in a gesture suggesting, "I'm weakening, my defences are opening up". He rolls his eyes upwards three times suggesting he is giving serious thought to the proposition then gathers himself and in a lower, more decisive tone says: "NO" (The whole class laugh very loudly, and clap spontaneously without being prompted by Angie. Arthur quickly leaves the chair and moves back to his place)*

SM: Well, done, give him a round of applause. (*The class continue to clap enthusiastically*)

The third of the parameters with which we attempt an initial analysis of A pause Peers is *the collapsing of binaries*. On a cursory consideration, one might conclude that the collapsing of binaries has already been identified as implicit in the first two parameters of *liminality* and *autopoiesis*. It has been illustrated how the binary distinction between the 'reality' of the classroom and the 'subjunctive' or 'fictional' nature of the performance space becomes blurred. The peer-educators and the learners, when engaged in the role plays, are simultaneously playing both the fictional characters of either Tony or Anne as well as presenting a facet of their own selves or personas. So, the learners want to see Arthur's Tony and they are looking at Arthur dealing with pressure from the character of Anne. But of much more social significance is the fact that it is Arthur's Tony facing seduction by Ros's Anne. Ros, who is very self-assured, who is physically very attractive, dressed to underscore an awareness of her attractiveness, is now inviting Arthur to come upstairs to have sex. It is precisely this collapsing of the binary distinctions between 'reality' and fiction, character and actor, aesthetic and social drama, identified as characteristic of the 'betwixt and betweenness' of liminality which is also one of the driving preconditions of the autopoietic interactions.

As argued by anthropologists, ethnographers and performance theorists alike, amidst the 'serious' and intense engagement within ritual acts there are typically, if not always, reciprocal experiences of play, playfulness and parody (Turner, 1969; Turner, 1982; Schechner, 2007; Okagbue, 2007). Even when

such playful counterparts are not legitimately or explicitly integrated and simultaneously being performed, then lurking within the regulatory structures of ritual are opportunities for subversive and private transcripts to spontaneously emerge as part of the action matter that constitutes the event. It is the argument of this thesis, that all three of the Aopause peer-facilitated interventions have features in common with rituals, particularly in the sense of their explicit function of bringing about durable transformation, but that it is specifically those interactions recognised as play and playfulness which maximise the potential to transform both individuals and the social contexts in which they are performed.

Can the first three parameters of liminality, autopoiesis and collapsing of binaries occur in an event, and yet *not* bring about a durable transformation? Certainly, Fischer-Lichte and Broadhurst would seem to think that is the case. My argument is that in TAP, realised through the regulative conventions of SPW, the answer is 'No', they are not experienced as phenomena separate from the processes of durable transformation. Like Howard, who states that whilst the acquisition of sexual health knowledge is *necessary*, it is not *sufficient* to bring about behavioural change, I am arguing that whilst these aesthetics are *necessary*, they are not *sufficient*. In a TAP event, as in ritual, the regulative psycho-social and cultural parameters bring a focus and purpose to the transformation, enabling broadly developmental, pro-social and healthful changes to occur. By playing, and being playful, in response to the regulative parameters enshrined within the scripts, certain interactions and transformations may be activated which have identifiably aesthetic characteristics.

In this next transcript it will be seen how the male learner, Seb, is playfully compelled by his classmates to go to the front to perform, whereupon he misfires, spontaneously performs the technically elusive theatrical technique called a 'double take' before the situation is playfully recovered by Angie.

Transcript 3 Apause Peers – Seb's double-take

SM (Angie): *(To John)* Well done. Do you want to pick another one?

John: *(With little hesitation)* Umm ...Yeah, Seb. *(Class laughs and claps. John also claps to give Seb encouragement)*

Friend: Go on.

SM: C'mon... c'mon. Give him a round.

Seb: *(Seated with his left hand folded across his lap Seb protests, and sounds as if he's just been discovered in a hiding place)* Aww.

(His classmate to his left pushes Seb from behind his left shoulder. This is not forceful enough to dislodge Seb, who is quite tall and strongly built, but enough to signal that it is his turn and there is no getting out of it. John sits in Seb's vacated seat as Seb smiles and moves across the circle tugging down and smoothing his T shirt twice, in a manner similar to that displayed by Gerri. While all this is happening the class clap, laugh and we hear another whooping call. He sits down beside and to the left of Ros, and Angie moves beside him to his 'downstage left'.

SM: It's on the board what you're going to do...you know what you're going to do?

Seb: No. (*Smiles and laughs at his mistake and nods in affirmation several times*)

SM: Yeah...that's it, say 'No.'

Seb: No.

SM: Right... that's it...off you go then... Bye.

Anne (Ros): Bye...(Pause) So, we've been going out for a long time... and I think we should go upstairs.

Seb: No (*Smiling with his jaws and lips held firmly and both arms crossed tightly in front of his abdomen. He thrusts his hips forward in his seat making his face lower than Ros's, so he is looking up at her. He licks his upper lip.*)

Anne: Well... go on.

Seb: No. (*Smiling and licking his lip again*)

Anne: Go on.

Seb: No.

Anne: Are you sure?

Seb: Yes.... NO! (*This is a classic theatrical double-take but executed with a total absence of contrivance. He covers his face with his right hand and laughs. The whole class join in, laughing loudly. Seb folds himself over completely so his face is resting on his left knee.*)

SM: (*Moving in beside him*) She caught you out there, but don't worry about it, so you still said, 'No', so that's really good, well done. (*Placing her hand on his shoulder for reassurance and possibly to indicate he's succeeded, and he can go back to his seat. Seb moves back to his seat while the class claps before Angie has time to prompt them.*)

Whilst it is clear that this transcript confirms the qualities of liminality, autopoiesis and the collapsing of binaries, it is within the playfully subversive interactions of pretending to physically bully Seb into performing, his nervous misfires and the paradox of his ultimate performative success and social reward that we might begin to infer how a durable transformation is instigated. From a performance perspective, it is a heteroglossic experience. Seb *feels* the physical, tactile sensation of the social pressure of his friends pushing to remove him from his chair, he experiences the self-consciousness and awkwardness of transitioning across the marked space, expressed through the repeated readjustments to his T-shirt, a well-established iteration of Gerri's and other initiands' earlier behaviour. He observes written codes on the board and hears verbal instructions, he confirms verbally, albeit ambiguously, that he knows what to do, then he goes into the role of Tony. He fluffs his lines showing to all the class he really is Seb. He performs an extremely funny and 'theatrical' double-take which is met with delight and approval, while his whole body collapses and folds over as he laughs at himself. But rather than experiencing the humiliation of failure he is told he has succeeded, and the class celebrate his achievement as he returns to his place as an initiate.

Why might all this playful and apparently frivolous interaction result in a durable transformation? In short, in a few intensely playful seconds all the six regulative parameters known to influence behaviours are brought into play. Seb experiences the pressure of a *normative* expectation, namely that in this group people are respected if they can say 'No' to unwanted sexual pressure. Once he has achieved the enactive mastery of the technique he can *identify* himself alongside the peer Del and all his friends who have also proved their

competency. Observational learning is achieved through the *citational* processes of watching others, seeing the cues on the board and being verbally coached by respected, older peers. He experiences the enactive mastery or *iteration* of the technique by actually performing it under pressure. Even when he is 'tricked' into making a semantic error, it is widely understood and accepted what his intention was and it is met with great approval, so as well as gaining the self-efficacy belief or sense of *agency* acquired through enactive mastery, Seb experiences all the pleasure of the positive *affective* state – he laughs. It is clear from the class response that he is held in high affection by his friends and that, in creating his own sense of relief and satisfaction, this is amplified through the empathetic responses and pleasure of his friends. All this will have enhanced his social status.

It is not possible to determine empirically what is happening on a neuro-cognitive level for Seb, but it is possible to infer that novel and existing synaptic pathways are being formed and/or reinforced. He will have undergone intense experiences of mentalizing in which he formulates ideas of how others are thinking and feeling and how they may be viewing him and his actions, and he will have had multiple opportunities to create novel social scripts drawing on a variety of sensory and semiotic cues.

Is it possible that citational processes will enable him to draw on his assertiveness techniques in a real life situation and say 'No' to unwanted sexual pressure – as might be argued through a developmental rhetoric of play? We have no data which confirms or refutes such a suggestion. Anecdotally, many personal friends who attended my local Queen Elizabeth's Community College in which Apause ran for over twenty years and who experienced Apause Peers as teenagers, informed me years later how intense the experience had been

and recounted, with some affection, much of the granular detail of the action. However, none have actually reported that it caused them to use the assertiveness techniques in real life. Conversely, John Tripp says he overheard a teenage girl telling a friend how she had dealt with unwanted sexual pressure and it conformed precisely to the Three Rs (refuse, reverse, and remove) of Apause.

As I suggested in the Theory and Methods chapter, this thesis is not an attempt at presenting a transcendent or all-encompassing theory of the transformative nature play. Following Sutton-Smith, I am demurring from such grandiosity. Rather, it argues that whilst allowing for degrees of imprecision as to the transformative dynamics of play, nevertheless it is play and playfulness which distinguishes Apause peer-facilitated interventions from other applied theatre and socially engaged practices and may account for its unique effectiveness in the field of school-based adolescent sexual health. That said, the data presented in these transcripts corroborate the thesis that in TAP play and playfulness generate an intense and complex heteroglossic social event. There is an abundance of enjoyable, repetitive, non-coercive performative interactions many of which, like the products of biological evolution are superfluous and may ultimately prove redundant. Nevertheless, in the creation of such play-based interactions, protean novel behaviours, insights, normativisation and identificatory processes may form the neurological and socio-cultural bases of subsequent protective responses and pro-social behaviours. Whilst, according to a developmental rhetoric of play and a public transcript of the event, it appears that the subjects are learning and creating social scripts through the modelling and motor reproduction of assertiveness techniques, it seems equally plausible to me that they are inculcating the social norm that the 'correct' way to

achieve sexual intercourse is to verbally ask for it - that is, to establish prior verbal consent. This novel social norm could be equally influential on subsequent population behaviour since it potentiates the enactment of social scripts in which one actor verbally asks for consent and in so doing opens up the opportunity for the other to say 'No'. This would be in marked contrast to the more normative expectation that many sexual encounters, including sexual intercourse and negotiating contraception are enacted with minimal recourse to verbal interaction (Vanwesenbeeck *et al.*, 1999; Stone and Ingham, 2002). Such non-verbal interactions are frequently associated with awkwardness and embarrassment and there can be a fine boundary between assumed consent and non-verbal coercion.

The transcript that follows shows how, despite the peers' somewhat unconvincing modelling of the 'Reverse' technique, requiring several glances at the board for reminders followed by an imprecise description by Angie, Janet improves on their performance and leads the way for other learners.

Transcript 4 A pause Peers - Janet turns the tables

Angie: *(Loudly and enthusiastically)...*Well done *(The whole class clap loudly, as does Del who is smiling generously. Ros is still writing industriously on the board yet more detailed guidance but stops briefly to acknowledge the girl's effort with a clap)...*Well done. That's a really good effort. Do you want to pick a girl to go? Another one?

Anne: *(Already out of her seat and returning quickly to her starting place, she pauses before saying)...*Janet *(Someone else also says Janet)*

Janet:Ahh. *(Sighs in a loud tone of resignation as if asking 'Do I have to?' She stands up, pulls down her white polo shirt and walks unhesitatingly towards the empty chair beside Del. Janet is the strong girl who, at the beginning of the class, shoved with one arm, three tables. She adjusts the hair from across her face and, smiling comfortably, folds her arms with her left hand falling in a relaxed shape across her right forearm. She swings her right 'downstage' leg over her left as if she were turning in towards Del)*

Angie: *(Bending down towards Janet)* So if you get stuck it's all up on the board. Say three 'Nos' . Say how it makes you feel and then ask, 'Why do you keep doing it?'...Ok? *(Janet looks at the board and smiles confidently. She has large, brown eyes, her face is open and interactive)*

Tony (Del): Hey, my mum's gone out for a bit. D'you want to go upstairs?

Anne (Janet): *(Shaking her head gently, smiling and speaking softly)*...No.

Tony: Go on.

Anne: No *(Higher pitched, more assured)*

Tony: It will be really good fun.

Anne: *(Looking him in the eyes, smiling, raising her eyebrows and in a higher, more emphatic tone)* No.

Tony: You'll really enjoy it.

Anne: *(Rolling her eyes to the ceiling and re-adjusting her whole body into a more 'planted' position and*

speaking with real conviction) You're making me feel really awkward.

Tony: Oh go on.

Anne: *(Speaking right to him as if really wanting an answer ...The distinct tone of a Nokia mobile phone penetrates the atmosphere)* No...Why do you keep asking me?

Angie: Yaeey! *(Leading the clapping as everyone immediately joins in – this was the most accomplished and word perfect performance so far – without recourse to looking at the board, Janet's performance had surpassed that presented by the peer-educators)*...Despite the mobile phone you did really well there! Do you want to turn it off?

Female learner: Yeah.

Angie: Yeah

Following Janet's performance, one more girl and four more boys come to the front to demonstrate their mastery of the 'Reverse' technique. Ros applies the pressure on the boys. Ever since Janet's highly capable performance, the new resistors themselves prove to be much more adept, presenting the most complex of the methods either without looking at the board at all or with just the slightest of glances. The sense that the resistors need encouragement and a bit of coercion from their classmates to come to the front builds up. This is quite without malice, rather it seems that it is how the rest of the class choose to involve themselves and appropriate their agency when it is not their turn to come to the front and take centre stage.

This transcription is included because it illustrates just how quickly and effectively the learners become empowered and could generate self-efficacy amongst themselves. Janet was so accomplished that she assumed not just the authority of the script but parodied the situation by gently mocking Del and reversing their status, diminishing his coercive potency as pressurer, refusing to accept the subordinate role of victim and becoming assertive herself. She demonstrated that she could *play* it 'straight' – she fully understood the legitimate public transcript of the event and demonstrated her enactive mastery of assertiveness. This transformed other people's beliefs and capabilities – girls and boys alike. Intriguingly, I believe her performance brought a substantive, additional and explicitly novel transformative dimension to the event. Her performance established a legitimised *metaplay* of the event. The social experience of awkwardness had lost its 'sting'. It was something they could subvert and be playful about. The class now was feigning their apprehension of coming to the front. Janet had demonstrated that the learners were no less accomplished at being assertive than the peer-educators; in fact, the learners could make it look easier. Gradually the learners were creating their own formalised routines for getting their classmates to the front by chanting names and physically prising them from their seats. None of this was scripted or anticipated by the peer-educators. It had the effect of foregrounding the learners' hidden transcripts, and was undeniably empowering (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 116). This, in turn, may have caused Angie to adopt her unnecessarily and ineffectual authoritarian stance. Play and playfulness were the transformative vehicles by which learners were building personal and social status through demonstrating their lack of fear of being pressured into sex - not only could they handle it, but they could make fun of it.

The session progresses to the last of the Three Rs which is to remove oneself from the situation – simply refuse to talk about it anymore and walk away. The transcript for this may be found in the Appendices. The action is picked up as the peers set about testing the learners' capacity to come up with responses to a wide variety of pressure lines. This is practice in invoking refutational arguments, a key component of social inoculation theory (McGuire, 1964). We can see now that the class are becoming more withdrawn and introspective. Many of the questions require responses that are novel, insofar as they have not been used in the Apause Peers programme yet and it appears they are less confident, possibly indicating that they have restricted repertoire of social scripts.

Transcript 5 Apause Peers – Refutational arguments

Angie: Any other ideas? What about if someone said, 'C'mon, have a drink, that will get you in the mood'. What do you reckon you could say to that one? *(Five second pause ... Gerri and her friend, Charmian, appear to be sharing an idea or conferring)* ...are you whispering...someone's got some...ideas...Yeah?

Learner (M): Yeah *(Sitting next to Gerri and Charmian forming a slightly more mature group, leaning forward keenly, and putting his hand in the air.)*

Angie: Yeah?

Learner(M) *(His voice is much deeper than the rest of the boys – smiles laughingly)* Alcohol doesn't make you any prettier. *(General and quite prolonged laughter lasting five seconds, particularly among the girls – someone claps)*

Angie: Well done. (*The boy turns towards Gerri and friend – all three are smiling together and laughing. It seems like not everyone heard his saying it and the phrase is repeated by Angie and at least one of the other learners in the class*) ...Are there any others? (*in a high voice again*)...How about you guys...are there any others? (*Five or six seconds of silence. Body language is quite protective here, faces are covered with hands, legs are crossed, and arms crossed. Some learners are biting their fingernails, while others have their arms locked forward with hands clenched together.*)

Ros: How about if they said, 'I have to have it ... what could you say to that?' (*Three seconds of murmured responses – possibly including 'I've got to fancy you first' - which are too quiet for the peers to pick up, but a small enclave of learners laughs amongst themselves.*)

Angie: What's that? Uuhh..let's try another one. 'Um..If you don't someone else will'.

Learner (M): Good luck to that person then.

Angie: Well done. That's really good.

Del: How about, 'A lot of your friends are doing it, why not you?' (*Three or four seconds pause*) ...What would you say back?

Learner (F): Because I want to stay individual.

Del and Ros: Yeah!

Angie: That's really good, well done.

Even in this short excerpt, the subversive or private transcripts of learners who feel threatened or subordinated are discernible, and yet the responses are

actually creative and funny, serving to attenuate the tension and reassert their agency and status.

The three parameters discussed so far, then, would seem to interact in such a way as to bring about the fourth of the parameters – *durable transformation*. Whereas Broadhurst states, 'I believe that liminal forms of aesthetics can affect, *indirectly*, the ethical and the political' (Broadhurst, 1999, p. 29), in the context of applying performance as social intervention, there is the stated intention that its effects should be more explicit, more readily evidenced. Whilst there is published evidence of the impact on subsequent behaviours of the integrated Apause Programme in its entirety, which uses both adult and peer-led components, evidence of the effectiveness of the peer programme alone on subsequent behaviour is more inferential. The process of evidencing the effect of Apause Peers is largely achieved through statistical analysis of psychometric antecedents of behaviour change.

Mellanby and Tripp argue that the most powerful antecedent of behaviour change, in this context, is the normative belief of the prevalence of sexual intercourse in under-sixteens (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). Suffice it to say at this point, even if irrefutable proofs of their impact are hard to demonstrate, there can be little doubt that the material acts enshrined within the events are clearly *intended* to leave the participants with enhanced beliefs in their capacity to perform protective and proactive behaviours. Such beliefs are underpinned by the fact that they have demonstrated their mastery of some assertiveness techniques in the presence, and with the approbation, of their classmates.

Whilst a behavioural scientist might adjudge *durable transformation* a 'subsequent outcome' as opposed to an *immediate* aesthetic dimension of the

A pause Peers intervention, it is argued here that intrinsic to the performative nature of the work and its aestheticity in terms of play and playfulness, are actions which immediately and explicitly potentiate such transformations through the requirement of the participants to demonstrate their mastery of protective behaviours.

Having established, I hope, a general goodness of fit of the A pause Peers intervention within the four parameters characteristic of a Theatre of Applied Performativity (*liminality, autopoiesis, collapsing of binaries and durable transformation*), I want to move on to the more thematic exploration of the phenomena and interrelatedness of *liminality* and the *collapsing of binaries*.

Liminality and the collapsing of binaries

The behaviour of proposing to someone that they come upstairs to have sex is generally conducted in privacy. Sexual intercourse, whilst being universally sanctioned as an apparently consensual act occurring in the privacy of the matrimonial bed, is surrounded by social, political, cultural and moral ambiguities and contradictions when it occurs outside marriage (Srinivasan, 2021, p. xii). Sex involving teenagers under the age of consent is the subject of almost universal opprobrium. Hence, the public presentation of an event in which older teenagers perform the pressurising of thirteen or fourteen-year olds to participate in underage sex represents a simultaneous violation of multiple taboos. It is little wonder that the atmosphere of A pause Peers is charged with diverse and contradictory emotions. As Fischer-Lichte observes:

In general, taboos are charged with strong, highly ambivalent emotions for the members of the concerned society. The desire to break a taboo equals the lust to watch others, who actually have

broken them, being punished and banished from society.(Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 153)

Such emotions are not reflexes, such taboos have already ‘... been charged and connoted with intense emotions for them prior to the performance.’ (ibid., p.153) So, we see that the meanings and the concomitant emotions are not separate entities divided from each other by a two-world theory of body and mind. Moreover, as will be illustrated, these emotions carry their own, non-linguistic semiotic and, according to Fischer-Lichte’s concept of ‘man as embodied mind’, the meanings may be communicated in ways that may be imperceptible or unconscious to others.

What I experienced from being both present in the performance itself and latterly in close engagement with the video recording, is that learners and peer-educators are communicating amongst themselves, creating non-linguistic signs which are influencing both the action as it immediately unfolds and subsequently in the actions of fellow participants. This interplay of signs or phrases - the autopoietic feedback loop - is, of course, intensified by the act of participating in the presentation of a taboo. The learners and peer-educators alike are thrust into a situation in which there is no easy recourse to a readily available and well-rehearsed set of responses. The situation they are presenting, and being complicit in, is normally both private and taboo. All parties are short of the social scripts and full semiotic repertoire with which to position and conduct themselves. So, we see Gerri protesting that she does not want to come to the front. She does not want to indicate that she is willing which would be tantamount to suggesting she is keen that Del puts her under pressure to have sex; on the other hand, if she totally refuses, it might suggest she is unable to have agency and exercise choice in her sexual involvement.

Moreover, it would render the whole event infelicitous and, in effect, impair the rest of the session.

This might be interpreted as a moment of liminality in the rite of passage sense, that of being caught 'betwixt and between', but equally it might be adjudged as an instance of cognitive dissonance. In almost choreographed repetitive movements, Gerri sweeps her hair away from her face with one hand and clutches her stomach with the other then she mirrors the sequence, before apparently smiling and clutching her abdominal area with both arms. On performing the ordeal with minimal linguistic expressivity, she sweeps the hair away from her face again, as if to accent its completion. When Gerri calls-out her friend to come to the front, her friend presents her own array of behaviours suggesting some emotional disquiet, including creating a false start by returning her shades, adjusting her orthodontic brace and a sequence of hair sweeping and clutching of the abdomen. The actions performed by Gerri and her friend are keenly attended to. They instigate laughter, clapping and praise, and Del is so keen to repeat his early success with Gerri that he repeats the pressure lines in a very similar and unchallenging manner with the friend. One can only speculate as to what feeling states the gestural signs may be corresponding to, but both girls showed a reluctance to come to the front and when they did, their faces were obscured by hair. Pulling their hair away from their faces might have signalled that they were resolved to participate, but the repetitions also suggested that the movements themselves were part of a comforting process. The holding of the midriff could have been signalling a desire to shield their abdomen and pelvis, to close it off and protect it from the threat of penetration. Whatever meanings might be attributed to them, these signs quickly became

inculcated into the repertoire of the other participants, hence, with few exceptions, both boys and girls used various repetitions and permutations of clutching and protecting the abdomen and pelvis.

The transcripts suggest that whilst the peers are indicating, with modelled spoken demonstrations and written cues on the board, how the learners are to deal with the state of dissonance they are about to be thrust into, just as important are the non-linguistic signs in tandem with the social and communal interactions of play and metaplay being brought into the discourse which are being initiated by the learners themselves. So, we see that boys tend to elicit more laughter amongst themselves and are more likely to treat the pressure scenario as something that can be dealt with by playing out the 'funny side' and parodying the situation – after all, boys are not 'supposed' to turn down an opportunity to have sex with a keen and attractive girl. At several points in the video recording we see a boy actually being thrust out of his seat by a friend into the enclosed circle. So, the limen or spatial divide separating the uninitiated from the ordeal and taboo of the sexual proposal and how that space is negotiated is a feature of the whole intersemiotic of the event. Scripted sentences, read words, memorised words, 'spontaneously' spoken phrases, prompts, facial gestures, conscious and unconscious bodily movements, non-verbal sound contributions such as clapping, laughter and whooping in addition to ambiguous feeling states, all interact simultaneously in such a way as to confound any sense that a merely cognitive and linguistic discourse is capable of encompassing the full complexity of the action matter of the event. This feeling of an intersemiotic overload translating to a cognitive dissonance is, I

would suggest, a necessary characteristic of the transformative processes initiated through the Apause Peers event.

Notwithstanding certain similarities, whether this constitutes the full-blown state of liminality anthropologists associate with a rite of passage is, however, far less readily demonstrable. Okagbue provides a rich account of *Bori*, a form of ritual theatre performed by the Hausa people of Northern Nigeria which I think is somewhat analogous. In the *Bori* performance the intersemioticity is achieved through a marshalling of socio-cultural cues, spatial conventions, costume, dance and music. As the increasingly complex drumming patterns begin to dominate, ultimately the effects of sensory and cognitive overload bring about changed states in the subject. In the case of *Bori*, the subject is a medium who is about to be possessed by a spirit.

Besmer's conclusion that the aim of the induction music and cues is to achieve a state of dissociation in the mediums through a process of sensory overload supports this view. (Okagbue, 2007, p. 92)

The social psychologists Carol Tavris and Elliot Aronson have written a compelling account of the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance and how it shapes our private behaviours and socio-political worlds. They define cognitive dissonance as:

... a state of tension that occurs whenever a person holds two cognitions (ideas, attitudes, beliefs, opinions) that are psychologically inconsistent such as "Smoking is a dumb thing to do because it could kill me" and "I smoke two packs a day." Dissonance produces mental discomfort that ranges from minor pangs to deep anguish; people don't rest easy until they find a way to reduce it. (Tavris and Aronson, 2016, p. 15)

It is not as though our learners are placed in such a crisis of multiple dissonances without any clue as to how they might regain their equilibrium. Their means of attaining a new-found agency and thereby alleviating the dissonances are built into the semiotics of the performance event. They merely have to perform the appropriate assertiveness skills, as demonstrated by their peers, but there can be no absolute certainty in the minds of the initiand, the peer-educators, or the spectators that they will achieve such a felicitous act.

Referring back to the male learner called Seb, we see that his performance is particularly illustrative of a liminal act conspicuously imbued with cognitive dissonance. He undergoes the, now customary, ambivalence of having to appease the expectation of his friends and the peer-educators whilst dreading the inevitable personal exposure and risk of failure. This dissonance is played out as he is physically pushed and cajoled by his friends, compelling him to navigate the journey from his chair, across the limen and into the designated chair where he undertakes his role. There is quite definitely a sense of uncertainty in his confusion as to whether he says, “Yes” or “No.” Paradoxically, given Angie’s coaching and Ros’s final pressure line, “Are you sure?”, it is as appropriate to say “Yes” as it is to say “No”. But how Angie recovers the situation so that his blundering utterances are deemed felicitous, both by her own criteria and through the spontaneous approbation of his classmates, is a fascinating example of what Sarah Jane Bailes is interested in, namely Austin’s “misfires” and “misexecutions”. This particularly high level of tolerance, support, even indulgence in how peers and learners alike accommodate Seb’s misfires would seem to illustrate Bailes’ observation.

Defining misexecution, he [Austin] states that, “the procedure is all right, and it does apply alright, but we muffle the execution of the ritual with more or less dire consequences” (Austin, Urmson and Sbisá, 1975, p. 17)....I am nevertheless interested in the “more or less dire consequences” that performance can articulate (the catastrophes of the misfire and the status of catastrophe itself), what it teaches us about coping, accommodation, and repair, and the continuation of the event beyond and as a result of misfire. These three terms imply communality and a consciousness of the social. (Bailes, 2011, pp. 4,5)

So, the ambiguities of Seb’s liminal experience building up to his precariously playful performative utterances, are situated in a supportive sense of communality. Everyone accepts Seb’s blunderings, indeed celebrates them with some affection, and his performance, whilst in execution might be flawed, achieves a procedural and social success. The playfully social prerogative of the event and performative sensibilities of his utterances override the strictly authorial authority of the script and thereby offer a balm to Seb’s dissonances and happily confer on him the status of an initiate.

What, I think, differentiates the liminality of the *Bori* ritual theatre, and, to some extent, Apause Peers, from the liminality as described by Broadhurst and Fischer-Lichte, is that the presentational and theatrical contrivances in Apause and *Bori* are designed to achieve liminality but as a state antecedent to the process of transformation. They have to undergo some degree of liminality and dissonance *before* executing the necessary and felicitous performative utterances and acts. For Apause and the *Bori* the liminal and performed event is designed to serve specific social functions which are felicitous in that they bring about specified and more or less durable changes, whereas the kinds of

transformation that performances described by Fischer-Lichte and Broadhurst would seem to be more ephemeral and less specific in nature and function.

In the extreme case of the *Bori* ritual, the subject, or medium, mysteriously seems to access deep levels of unconscious memory. Traces of a wide range of utterances, dance moves, gestures and facial expressions are accessed and performed. These correspond to a trance state whereby readily identified traditional spirit beings are believed to possess and be present in the performer. It would seem that for the *Bori* performer, more quotidian cognitive structures and responses are overloaded and bypassed to the point where more deeply embedded, culturally sanctioned codes are accessed and made manifest in the performance space. It appears that, prior to achieving the trance state, for the medium, much of the performed event serves a mnemonic function, initiating *citational* and *iterative* processes. This notion that play connects the subject to the past whilst potentiating novel social scripts is developed by Henricks.

In other words, play links us to what has gone before (and to our basic frameworks for acting-in-the-world) at the same time that it frees us from the grip of instinct and manufactures new possibilities of living.(Henricks, 2014)

The A pause Peers Session 3 is dubbed *The Power to be Me* and it is postulated that a process loosely analogous to the *Bori* ritual is initiated. With A pause Peers the learners undergo a form of induced cognitive dissonance in which they are challenged to override some of their allegiances to contemporary daily cognitive processes and values and reinstate and perform perhaps more culturally sanctioned and transgenerationally conservative norms. This prompts participants, for example, to reject pressure to be sexually incautious and regain what feels like a more 'authentic', 'deeper', 'culturally aligned' sense of

themselves. So, whereas the Apause Peers performance may not be liminal in the strictly temporally bounded and ritualistic sense, it does deploy many performative conventions analogous to ritual acts and processes in order to potentiate durable transformation.

Additionally, it is worth considering that adolescence is, itself, something of a liminal experience for young people in which they occupy a unique place in time and space being neither a state of total childhood dependency nor one of adult independence and autonomy. The Apause Peers event does not signal a completion of their particular state of adolescent liminality, but rather is an event which ‘marks’ them or offers an opportunity for them to take stock, a pause perhaps, and survey the topography of the journey ahead – perhaps better equipped with powers of anticipation, judgement and some cognitive coding for protective behaviours. This differentiates it from the liminality and aesthetics of performance theatre which are less directive and more ephemeral in function and, I hope, goes some way towards explaining why I have dubbed Apause Peers as an instance of applied *performativity* as opposed to applied theatre.

Notwithstanding its affiliation with liminality, the term *collapsing of binaries*, however, also has a specific linguistic and philosophical epistemology, which although, arguably, is already implicit as part of the practice of post-structuralist analysis, also demands some special considerations in the context of the SPW. In reading aloud from the scripts, the peers frequently make utterances such as:

“One thing you need to know is that most young teenagers have not had sex. So when you hear “everybody’s doing it”, that just isn’t true.”

The above is an extract from the Apause Peer Session 2, but in Peer Session 3 they read:

Peer 4 Messages come from TV and films, magazines, friends and parents - and they are especially confusing when it comes to sex. 👁️👁️

Peer 1 We want you to know that it's Ok for teenagers to:

Peer 2 Develop feelings about sex; 👁️👁️

Peer 3 Think and talk about sex; 👁️👁️

Peer 4 Recognise their feelings about wanting to be physically close and intimate. 👁️👁️

According to a convention running throughout the scripts, the lines are distributed and read by all of the peers present, reinforcing the sense of group solidarity and normalising the various assertions. There are repeated instances when essential elements of the programme ethos are re-iterated. “Remember, others do not have the right to pressure you in relationships, and you don't have the right to pressure them.”

But who is the author of such utterances? When, for example, a peer states, “Most young teenagers have not had sex,” where does that phrase come from? Do the learners perceive it as a scientific finding deriving its authority from multiple surveys of adolescent sexual practices - which, in fact, is the case? If so, such an utterance would be essentially descriptive, and its truthfulness could be subjected to interrogation. Accordingly, it would fit Austin's criteria of a constative utterance. Or is the speaking of the phrase more performative in its

application, in that in the physical formation of the utterance the action is bringing into being that which is being spoken of? According to the original understanding of the Apause research team, the speaking of such a phrase by peer-educators has more performative potential than exactly the same phrase spoken by adult facilitators, in so far as peers are nearly twice as effective as adults in reducing the prevalence of the normative belief that most teenagers have had by sixteen (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). This is deemed to be of great significance from a public health standpoint because the prevalence in a population of the belief that most teenagers have had sex by sixteen is strongly correlated with early sexual debut.

On the basis of published findings, this forms the most robust and insightful evidence as to a mechanism whereby the Apause programme achieves its behavioural outcomes. If such an utterance does achieve such a transformation in the addressees, then again by Austin's criteria it would qualify as a performative. But, as Austin argues, surely it can be both, thus collapsing the binary distinction between a constative and performative utterance. The utterer of such a phrase, in this case a peer-educator, is not disinterestedly describing a social norm, but also inculcating and reinforcing that norm. Moreover, by the expedient of being identified as a 'peer' to the learners and being positioned as having recently been a 'young teenager' themselves, they are simultaneously embodying that norm. Hence clear distinctions between the 'sign', the 'signifier', the 'sense' and the 'referent' are highly equivocal. I am arguing that it is at these moments of equivocation, or as Lyotard puts it, the oscillation between the discourse that describes it and the matter and feeling of the event, that the aesthetic parameter of the *collapsing of binaries* is encountered. Whilst

Mellanby and Tripp deduce from an empirical perspective that it is the enunciated iteration of such a norm which is behaviourally impactful, it does not exclude the possibility that it could be the actual observation of, and playful participation in, role-plays which materialize that norm, making it substantive, which constitute a more powerfully causative effect. This, I think, may be inferred by the immediate impact of Janet's non-fictional, and playfully assertive presentation of herself. This results in the diminution or subordination of Del and transforms the social and performative dynamic of the event for the rest of the participants.

I have not encountered in my reading of other accounts of applied theatre in school-based relationships and sex education an analysis which attributes such a central and transformative function of play and playfulness to the intervention. A possible explanation for this is that by adhering to the traditional aesthetics which maintain the integrity of story, character, aesthetic distance and the use of theatre as a fundamentally epistemic means of approaching health and social issues, it denies its audiences a fulsome and simultaneous experience of all three of these aesthetics. Consequently, the participants are typically debarred from actually *being* the characters, making manifest their own subversive transcripts and materially influencing the action matter and course of events. Hence, despite the ostensibly prescriptive and regulatory nature of the scripts, their performativity is constituted and experienced as play and playfulness. This enhances the learners' sense of self-respect, social status and autonomy whilst subtly bringing about transformative *affects* in terms of the pleasurable inculcation of novel social scripts, normative beliefs and shifts in the broader

socio-cultural perceptions of, and responses to, adolescents' emergent sexual identities, and needs for greater autonomy and respect.

It is intriguing that the third, and most definitive of the three Rs is not primarily a verbal response to the pressure, but a physical and spatial statement and as such would seem to be the least challenging to execute, arousing the lowest level of consternation. Indeed, a girl who had originally been very nervous when performing the *resist* technique, volunteered to come to the front for a second time to perform *remove* very successfully. Accordingly, the rest of the class seemed less interested in the sport of compelling their friends to go to the front.

As the class or learners are challenged to come up with refutational arguments in the final exercise, they become progressively more subdued and introspective. Here their responses are more in the subjunctive mode. Their cognitive processes and utterances are less performative. If anything, they are playfully subversive in their execution as they appear to withdraw into a more reflective mode prior to being formally released through the classroom door and into the corridor whereupon they assume their more familiar habits of interaction.

Whereas it is not argued here that Apause Peers is a full-blown ritual, with its characteristically bounded phases of the pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal, it is, nevertheless, possible to discern in this third session certain patterns which could be homologous to one of Van Gennep's rites of passage. There is a three-phase cycle of first entering and transforming the classroom space, then performing according to a transformative aesthetic, and finally restoring the classroom to its original function and leaving the participants somewhat more agentic and reflective individuals. It is argued that these performative

phenomena as well as creating opportunities for creativity and novel social scripts, also draw upon, and resonate with, traces of cultural codes and signs located deeply, possibly unconsciously, in the subjects' minds, thereby instituting the memorability, and durable efficacy of Apause Peers.¹⁵

As Burghardt suggests, play may serve another important function in the context of adolescents being socially engaged with the dissonances of highly ambiguous, emotionally charged and awkward taboos surrounding sex – that of managing emotion and stress (Burghardt, 2014, p. 95) It will be seen in the next section, just how powerfully feelings of embarrassment and awkwardness figure in the anticipation of, and immediate engagement with, Apause Peers events. A second and possibly reciprocal function of play and metaplay is the engagement with and amelioration of awkwardness.

Apause Peers - evidence of transformation and discussion

As part of the overall research programme, Francis Phelps and colleagues conducted a questionnaire-based study to begin to identify the experience of participating in the peer-led programme (Phelps *et al.*, 1994). Although, at that stage, the numbers involved in the investigation were relatively modest, with 54 peers and 884 pupils, some enduring patterns had begun to emerge. Firstly, that the peers found the training involving leading discussions and the role-plays the most challenging and that they were most critical of their performance in these areas. Nevertheless, 93% reported that their classroom skills had

¹⁵ In 1998 a group of researchers from the United States and representatives from the Department of Health visited the same school and were stationed in separate classrooms to observe the Apause Peers Session 3 described above. On reconvening, they independently reported a distinct and palpable shift in the atmosphere. The researchers were specialists in the 'Transtheoretical Model of Health Behaviour Change' and they described it as the moment when "the penny dropped", resistance to pressure suddenly became the norm and the class believed they could perform the role-plays. Prochaska, J. O. and Velicer, W. F. (1997) 'The transtheoretical model of health behavior change', *Am J Health Promot*, 12(1), pp. 38-48.

developed and 98% reported it had improved their self-confidence. Open questions gave rise to comments such as:

- Feel the sessions were A1.
- Very good at getting people working with each other and comfortable with the subject, fun, reassuring.
- Good for groups and individuals. [It] was very good – I found that I was learning an awful lot without realising at the time’.

The Apause Peers Session 3 described above was reported by the peers as being the most testing, but because it was their third session, by that time 80% said they were feeling more comfortable and relaxed, although the comments below testify to a degree of nervous anticipation. Clearly the peers understood that success in the performance was dependent on the volitional participation of the learners and that there was no certainty as to how they might respond.

- ‘the thought of not knowing what the kids would come with made me sweat a bit. When I got into the flow of things I felt great, the kids were great. Didn’t run dry on things to say and generally relaxed.’
- ‘Excellent. Much better than I thought they would! I thought they’d all just sit there, dreading coming up, but it turned out to be exactly the opposite – dying to come up front and have a go.’

Phelps and colleagues were clearly sensitized to the potentially awkward or embarrassing nature of the role-plays and degrees of embarrassment ranging between ‘A lot’, ‘Sometimes’ and ‘Very little’ were reported by 83.2%, with girls being nearly twice as likely as boys to report being embarrassed either sometimes or a lot. Levels of embarrassment were not, however, associated with how much they said they had learnt, nor with their participation in discussion or role plays, nor with post-intervention test scores for the

'knowledge' questions. Despite the role plays being the most challenging and provoking most embarrassment, they were also the most discussed, with two thirds of them reporting talking about it with friends and a quarter with their parents.

Whilst there were significant gains in all areas of knowledge with increased knowledge of strategies for resisting unwanted pressure, the most noteworthy gains were made in the questionnaire item, 'Most teenagers have had sex by the time they are 16' with only 40% correctly answering it (disagreeing) in the pre-intervention questionnaire and rising to 73% in the post. Consistent with Phelps and colleagues' understanding of this phenomenon at the time, they attributed it to learners *believing* the information given to them by peers.

These pupils appear to be more inclined to believe information concerning relationships when it is presented to them by people nearer their own age (ibid)

It would seem that Phelps *et al* considered that it was the imparting of correct factual information which was the salient mechanism in impacting on this normative belief. The role plays, they saw, as having the separate function of helping the learners to develop behavioural skills which would enable them to resist unwanted pressure.

This thesis, however, takes a performative approach to theorising the classroom action and, accordingly, suggests that the *regulative* structures which prescribed the witnessing and enactive mastery of the assertiveness techniques facilitated the *constitutive* experience of play and playfulness. These complex, heteroglossic and autopoietic social dynamics, would seem to have brought about an *affective* response in, alongside other parameters, *normative*

perceptions. The most significant transformation occurred in the beliefs surrounding the prevalence of sexual activity amongst under sixteens. Here, having sex changed from being perceived as a majority to a minority activity for this age group. From a performative perspective, the measurable transformations which occurred may not necessarily have been achieved as a result of one of Austin's *constative* utterances, that is, those *descriptions* of scientifically determined social trends (that most teenagers do not have sex by 16). Rather, they could have been constituted through the complex *performative* acts of speaking words, augmented by written, gestural and spatial phrases. Indeed, as will be illustrated in the Get-WISE chapter, this very same piece of 'knowledge' was never explicitly transmitted or enunciated as a piece of medical information in that programme, rather, the learners changed their beliefs to a statistically similar extent through the processes of co-constructing, interrogating and participating in the negotiation role plays.

On the basis of Phelps' work, it is impossible to ascertain if, or in what ways, the experience of awkwardness or embarrassment might be a function intrinsic to the transformative process. For example, it could simply be because adolescents are known to be acutely sensitive to being looked at and judged by others within their peer group. Blakemore describes both structural and functional changes in the developing adolescent brain which are activated as adolescents become aware of being watched by others (Blakemore, 2018). This is typically reported as an experience of embarrassment and awkwardness. She also describes the evidence of neurological transformations most characteristic of adolescents which are involved in developing an increasing awareness of self and how one's personal understanding and presentations of self are perceived

by others. Certainly, it would seem that from the descriptions in this thesis and the fields of neuroscience and behavioural sciences, these learners are not merely practising behavioural skills, as a fictional representation of potential responses. Rather, they are exploring, presenting and 'learning' aspects of their emergent selves in an intensely felt, played and playful experience of great social immediacy.

Interestingly, the comments of the peers (see above) provide some insight as to the oscillatory nature of both their own experiences and that of the learners. So, they would seem to move between states of high arousal, anticipation and self-consciousness versus a state of 'flow' in which the self-consciousness gives way to one of feeling in control, with the learners 'dying to come up front and have a go'.

By 2001 a quasi-experimental study had been conducted and reported by the Aopause team which examined if any elements of the peer delivered programme appeared to have more salience than an equivalent adult-delivered programme. (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). This revealed some interesting findings, the most significant of which, to the authors, was that if peer-educators and adults delivered exactly the same classroom activities, whereas the adults were more effective than the peers at improving sexual health knowledge, the peers were significantly more effective at influencing conservative normative beliefs. Hence if learners had received the peer-facilitated version, they were much more likely to have changed their minds after the programme and disagree with the statement that most teenagers had experienced sex by sixteen.

Within the same questionnaire there was a set of related items designed to be sensitive to how much importance the respondents attached to sexual

intercourse as part of building a successful relationship. Treating these as a scale and aggregating the scores, again, the findings suggested peers were significantly more influential than adults, and the peer arm of the study reported more conservative norms in which less importance was attached to sexual intercourse as part of a good relationship. Another part of the study showed that, in the peer-led arm of the investigation, the learners were more conservative about setting the level of what they judged was the right degree of sexual involvement for someone of their age, with significantly fewer thinking full sexual intercourse or exploring below the waist was right and significantly more setting the stopping point at 'smiles', 'holding hands', 'hugs and kisses'. (See Table 1 below)

Table 1 Setting Limits.

Student's responses during a session exercise on setting limits in physical relationships		
Where do you think someone of your age should stop?		
	Peer-led group	Adult-led group
Minimal (smiles, holding hands, hugs and kisses)	294 (32.0%)	96 (18.7%)
Exploring/touching above the waist	296 (32.2%)	160 (31.1%)
Exploring/touching below the waist	268 (29.2%)	189 (36.8%)
Having sexual intercourse	60 (6.5%)	69 (13.4%)

A total of 924 responses obtained from the peer-led group including six 'other' responses, 519 from the adult-led group with five 'other' responses. (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001)

From the perspective of this thesis which attempts to identify something of what is being experienced by the participants during classroom sessions, a particularly interesting finding, and consistent with Phelps' paper, was that the learners in the peer arm were significantly more likely to report embarrassment; this, despite the teachers observing the classes reporting high levels of fun and laughter similar to those evidenced in this thesis.

However, students' excitement, noise and laughter, and the comments of observing teachers (unreported) during the sessions suggested that the students were enjoying the programme. (ibid)

On closer examination of the paper, it is revealed that the adults did not actually proposition the learners to come upstairs and have sex.

It was considered inappropriate for adult leaders to role-play sexual propositioning with students aged 13 and 14 since this could have been subject to considerable misrepresentation outside the classroom. [...] The assertiveness techniques were extended to relationships and sexual propositioning when dealt with in role-plays between class members during the fourth session. (ibid)

Whereas Mellanby and colleagues would appear to be suggesting that the learners had an equivalent exposure to opportunities to practice assertiveness techniques, it is my contention that the two experiences, adult-led versus peer-led, were not, in a performative sense, comparable. Indeed, I believe this is reflected in the significantly less embarrassment reported by the learners who participated in the adult-led arms of the study.

Monica Prendergast and Juliana Saxton Page make a very useful distinction between *presentational* and *representational* forms of theatre. (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, p. 12) They characterize *representational* theatre as having, as

its organizing principle, one of creating a fiction, a hypothetical onstage world performed by actors who are 'intentionally hidden behind the mask of character from those who sit and observe in the audience'. When adult health professionals assume the role and character of teenagers, representing a situation in which one teenager is pressurizing another into having a drink or experimenting with a drug, there is little doubt in the minds of the audience that this is a fiction and that they are indulging the actors, participating under the comfortable trope of 'the willing suspension of disbelief' (Coleridge, 1817). On the other hand, when they are participating in the, comparatively, more *presentational* rubric of playing themselves in role-plays, as facilitated by the peer-educators, there is clearly a lot more social currency at stake. Here the theatre form, such as it is, is concerned with the presentation of material of a less fictional nature, 'within the thinly-disguised fictions of authentic contemporary reality'. (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, p. 12) The actors (in this instance, peer-educators) are less hidden behind the mask of character and are much closer to being themselves. More accurately, the peer-facilitated theatre experience is both presentational and representational. They may still be protected by the regulative function of the scripts which enshrine the *representational* conventions of the role-play scenario, but the action matter itself is constituted in such a way that they simultaneously inhabit both the fictional world of the couple being left alone in the house, and the *presentational* social world they share with the audience in the classroom.

Once the peer-educators make it plain that the learners themselves will be required to come to the front and demonstrate that they too can be assertive under the pressure to become sexually involved, the conventional distinctions

between actor and audience, character and self, are spectacularly collapsed. Now, both the learners and the peer-educators are playing at being novel versions of themselves in a situation which, on the one hand, is fictional, but on the other, is highly charged as a social drama of immediate contemporary significance. At stake now is a presentation of an interplay between conflicting social norms, experienced by many as embarrassing and awkward. Boys in particular, according to gender stereotype, are expected to be opportunistic and take advantage of the offer of a sexual encounter, and at the same time an emergent social norm requires them to demonstrate that they can exercise control and be assertive and refuse unwanted sexual pressure.

This highly ambiguous presentational playing out of a novel, sexually conservative norm is a different performative dynamic for boys compared with girls who, by social convention, are more explicitly supported and encouraged to resist unwanted sexual pressure. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, some of the findings presented by Mellanby *et al* in 2001 and 1995 suggest that the peer programme is differentially impactful on boys than girls.

By 2000 the Apause programme was expanding out of being a small-scale local experiment towards rolling out as a public health intervention commissioned by health, education, and local authorities. It was customary for the team to invite peer-educators to present an account of their experience, with demonstrations, in conferences and promotional events to attract potential commissioners. Despite the peers' enthusiastic advocacy, certain central commissioners and academics in the field were critical of the scripted nature of the classroom action, arguing it was not a true 'peer intervention' on the grounds that the material was designed and written by adults. In response to these criticisms, the

team conducted another study to build a better picture of the peers' experience. An anonymous, self-report questionnaire was designed using a mixture of Likert scaled items and questions requiring more open written responses. Out of a cohort of approximately 1500 peers a sample of 200 were randomly selected and 134 completed the survey. The findings were presented at XIV International Aids Conference, Barcelona 2002 and published in the extended abstracts.(Tripp *et al.*, 2002) Some representative written feedback in the questionnaires is shown below.

'I was really surprised at how well we were equipt [sic] for the session. We all felt confident and I feel as though everyone benefitted greatly.'

'As me and a few other people viewed A pause in a couple of schools we were a little nervous but when we entered the training this weekend I've become a lot more comfortable with what is in store.'

'Great course, had a really good laugh, learned a lot of stuff.'

'Really informative, good, laugh, no pressure and now I'm ready!!'

Questions about their experience of being a peer-educator in the classroom revealed that 90+% found it good fun and enjoyed the teamwork, 'A significant minority, just over 40% of females and 30% of males, found the classroom work more difficult than they had expected and about one in five felt it had taken too much time out of their other academic work. Less than 10% felt it had been too stressful' (ibid).

An impressive array of other benefits concerning personal confidence were also reported, but perhaps most revelatory were their responses to a series of open questions designed to learn about their motives for involvement in the

programme at different stages of the training and delivery process. Prior to training, their reasons were for personal betterment (70%) and enjoyment (45%) or both (80%). Once they had been trained and made a commitment to the programme, personal betterment and enjoyment were beginning to give way to more altruistic motives. Having delivered one complete cycle of four sessions at the point when they were starting to deliver a second cycle, altruistic reasons had become the most commonly reported reason (65%) with betterment now at 20%, enjoyment at 42% and either at 54%.

Overall, the authors of that study concluded that the criticism of the method is unfounded, arguing that despite the training and classroom delivery being challenging to a significant minority, the majority agreed that their involvement had afforded them many personal gains. Most importantly, the process had changed not only their views and sense of agency about how to manage their own relationships, but that they had become increasingly convinced of its value to the younger teenagers and that had become their main motive for continuing with it. In defence of the script, the authors (Tripp *et al.*, 2002) state:

... we believe the use of scripts offers a structure that enables peers to have sufficient confidence to deliver sensitive and difficult material and participate in collaborative learning with 13 year olds in an environment which does not personally threaten them but enables them to participate fully.

Whilst this defence of scripts possibly infers that they are instrumental in enabling 'collaborative learning' *with* 13 year olds, it falls short of addressing the criticism that they have been written by adults with a public health agenda.

Had the authors framed the Apause Peers experience more in terms of those interactions that are *not* explicitly enshrined in the regulative structures of the

scripts and focused the attention of critics on the interactions as experienced within the constitutive parameters characteristic of play, playfulness and performativity, they might have defended the practice more in the ontic terms of individuals' experiences of the volitional and playful reiteration of conservative social norms – that is their navigation of the liminality of adolescence and a phased initiation into the world of adult autonomy. My argument is that had Tripp and colleagues been in a position to take such an ontic perspective, instead of adopting the incumbent epistemic defence of apparently prescriptive health and educational benefits, they might have avoided the persistent and ultimately pernicious criticism of indoctrination.

As numerous academics in the fields of history, ethnography, anthropology, psychology, sociology and performance theory consistently argue, the constituent processes characteristic of play, performance, personal transformations and culturally sanctioned rites of passage are reciprocally interactive and perhaps indistinguishable phenomena (Huizinga, 1949; Turner, 1982; Turner, 1988; Schechner, 2007; Tambiah, 1981; Jennings, 1995b; Sutton-Smith, 2009; Stevens, 2016; Okagbue, 2007).

The original scripts were developed by Howard's team in Atlanta following a review of the literature, a survey of over one thousand sexually active teenagers, extensive clinical contact with young people and classroom experimentation and revision with the peer educators. From this perspective, the peers are not so much delivering an adult-centric agenda exterior to their social realities and priorities, rather they are being socially agentic, building a positive self-image, demonstrating increasing degrees of responsibility and autonomy whilst embracing personal change and facilitating transformation in

younger members of their community through voluntary acts of altruism. These are precisely the kinds of experiences described by Yeager and colleagues (2018) in their account of those few, more comprehensive and less targeted, interventions which did actually impact on adolescent health behaviours and educational outcomes.

It was not until 2002 that we began to get data from those schools which had only the adult-led components of Apause and either declined the opportunity to run the peer component or ran it in such an inadequate manner as not to be recalled by the students.

In 2012, John Tripp (now under the aegis of the HBG charity) undertook a statistical analysis of data from Apause schools in the years 2002 to 2009 (Tripp and Evans, 2012). The data was collected from 90 schools, 783 year cohorts and 33,343 students and included control schools which had no Apause, schools which had either partial or no Apause Peers and schools which had the full Apause programme with the peer components. The team designed a report for the use of various stakeholders, including public health commissioners and academics. However, the document was presented in a style which we hoped would appeal to the primary target readership of schoolteachers, less professionally attuned to the task of critically interrogating statistical analyses and interpretations. By this stage in the history of Apause, the intervention had been run in excess of 180 schools. Regrettably, lack of resources and logistical challenges prevented all of them from participating in the full programme and the evaluation protocol. Below is an excerpt from the executive summary.

As well as an overall increase [in desired outcomes] for all Apause students in many areas of the questionnaire there were clearly

important positive differences among the school cohorts who had received the full A pause programme which includes the peer programme (about two thirds of the schools):

- a greater appreciation and recall of delivered SRE (particularly in relation to assertiveness and morality)
- a greater relevance of their SRE (to their learning about relationships, discussion of contraception and management of intimate relationships)
- a higher proportion correctly understanding the normative belief that most people under 16 years old are virgin
- a decrease in numbers having experienced intercourse
- increased proportions who had used contraception at first and last intercourse. (Tripp and Evans, 2012)

The sample size and the rigour of the statistical analyses provided us with the first body of robust evidence indicating the unique contribution made by the peer-educators. Although this study was designed to ascertain the extent of the contribution made by the peers, the impact of the full A pause programme reported here is broadly consistent with the findings of the external evaluation of A pause conducted in 2004 by the National Foundation of Educational Research and funded by the Department of Health. (Blenkinsop, 2004)

In 2010, the then Department of Health commissioned Edcoms (an independent educational advisory service) to conduct a survey of evidence-based practice as part of their Healthy Schools campaign. Dawlish Community College in Devon was approached and they agreed to participate as a case study. Their head of Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Marina Gaskell, gave the following responses to questions as to how the peer component of A pause contributes to the school as a community.

The peer led programme opens up the discussion in school about sex education and what it is all about. It makes it more viable to talk about it. We want students to have discussions about it in the playground. When you know that students are delivering it, it helps that discussion process and young people know that it is ok to talk about it [...]The whole school is really positive about the programme. It is a chance for getting students involved in delivery and its all about helping the school community.

The Healthy Schools campaign was particularly committed to demonstrating that health benefits occur as part of a shift in the teaching ethos and whole school culture. This, I believe, lends weight to the argument that, in assessing the impact of the peers' contribution, it is important to look beyond the interactions within the immediate classroom space and time frame and regard those peer-facilitated events as being endorsed, promoted and made logistically feasible as adjustments made within the whole school culture. In order to get an idea of how Apause can impact on a whole conurbation, Gail Teasedale, the commissioning lead for improving sexual health in the City of Hull, included the following remarks in her endorsement of Apause in 2009. At the time she was in the fourth year of implementing Apause having established it in 13 out of the 14 secondary schools in Hull.

We have also found that successful implementation of Apause in schools with rates of conception above the city average has contributed to these rates being successfully reduced. [...] we have embedded implementation of Apause within the Healthy Schools team with their SRE lead being the person who leads on overseeing the running of Apause in schools. We also work in partnership with our local sexual health charity, Cornerhouse, who manage the peer education element of the programme.

Evidently, the improvement of adolescent sexual health on a population wide basis requires the collaborative efforts of a diversity of stakeholders, not all of whom, I would suggest, are persuaded or motivated by a purely medical account of the intervention. It is argued here that, in addition to the performative classroom interactions, the evidence points to the spectrum of durable transformations brought about by Apause as being a function of political will supported by sufficient funding, combined with its having a broad intuitive appeal to its stakeholders. I am arguing that the Apause Programme reinstates health promoting conservative cultural norms by activating the transformative potential of peer influences by means of applied performativity.

Chapter 6 - Get-WISE: Process versus Product?

Rationale

Despite generating data strongly suggesting its effectiveness at helping young people to postpone their sexual debut, quantitative evaluations of the Apause Programme were unable to detect similar gains in the learners' capacity to perform successful negotiations in their relationships. In 1996 I was commissioned by Tripp, through Imùlè Theatre, to investigate with the team a peer-facilitated approach to address this shortcoming.

Dr Osita Okagbue, a trustee of Imùlè and a senior lecturer in drama at the University of Plymouth, and latterly Dr Sue Jennings joined the research team as theatre consultants. We aimed to develop a theatre-based approach which integrated with the Apause programme Theory of Collaborative Goals (Figure 1, page 18).

Initially, the scope of the intervention was restricted to helping young people negotiate degrees of sexual intimacy which did not involve penetrative sexual intercourse. The rationale for this went as follows. If young people could reach consent on not progressing rapidly to full sexual intercourse, but instead achieve expressions of affection through alternative means of sensual and sexual acts of mutual gratification, then their relationships would benefit from a longer period of courtship before going on to either protected sexual intercourse or coming to an end. In the meantime they would have had pleasurable experiences of physical intimacy without having run any serious sexual health risks. Furthermore, the team believed that any RSE programme unable to improve young peoples' capacity to perform a range of health enhancing and

protective negotiations, fell short of the aim of preparing them for their intimate relationships spanning middle adolescence and early adulthood.

In chronicling the development of the programme, key theoretical and practical components are identified. What emerges are two distinct but interrelated insights. Firstly, we are sensitized to the existence of a dynamic relationship between perceived social norms and performative acts of their violation. Such events are typically stressful and characterised by debilitating experiences of awkwardness and embarrassment. Dubbed '*the creative transmutation of awkwardness*', in facilitating a playful engagement with awkwardness, stress can be ameliorated, solutions discovered, and social approbation generated. As a corollary we learn that the presentation of non-verbal interactions surrounding sexual intimacy necessitates the deployment of novel theatrical forms. An innovative approach called '*floor puppets*', enables participants to encounter presentations of intimate negotiations and construct contextually relevant anatomical knowledge in the 'here and now' of a performative experience. It will be demonstrated, however, that as the intervention became more refined in its more conventional theatrical aestheticity and orthodoxies, some of its affective and performative power was diminished.

Quantitative data generated from questionnaires are used to cross-reference with qualitative findings to build a complex and, at times, paradoxical account of the transformative nature of TAP and the SPW practice.

Okagbue's African theatre for development model

Whereas in Europe and the Americas the work of Brazilian theatre director, Augusto Boal, was known generically as 'theatre of the oppressed'(Boal, 1979), in Africa a similar application of an essentially Freirian liberatory pedagogy

(Freire and Ramos, 1972) is termed 'Theatre for Development' (TfD) (Okagbue, 1998). The pivotal concept of the various applications and methodologies of TfD is to effect a shift away from a theatre situation in which there are active performers and a relatively passive audience towards a dynamic where the audience is invited, and indeed able, to influence the outcome of the dramatic events. Typically, the theme of the narrative is an issue identified as being of local concern. Spectators are encouraged to become 'spect-actors' (Boal 1992) who, in a process mediated by the 'Joker', can stop the action of the narrative, offer suggestions and ultimately themselves step into the role of the protagonist, thus offering alternative solutions to the problem modelled by its progenitors.

In soliciting this erasure of the explicit actor/spectator binary, it is argued here that whilst autopoiesis is identified as an aesthetic parameter of western performance art and performance theatre (Fischer-Lichte, 2008), an equivalent trope of autopoiesis is a central and empowering feature of the TfD experience. Underpinning this dynamic of the interchangeability of actor and spectator is the ideological conviction that such a theatre making process has the function of promoting personal and collective agency. Various theatrical idioms provide the contexts, vocabularies and tools within which these dialectical processes are manifest. Participants are actually observing and rehearsing actions which, through citational and iterative processes, may be brought into play on confronting the same or related issues as they are encountered in real life (Boal 1979).

Contrary to the general thrust and findings of this thesis, at the time of commissioning, the project was an exploration of the means by which to activate principles of behavioural theory through the orthodoxies of theatrical

practices. Initially conceived as a conventional TIE project, on engagement with the distinctive processes of Okagbue's African TfD, what emerged was a nascent apprehension of a Theatre of Applied Performativity, arguably the antithesis of established TIE practices. The concepts of the 'regulative parameters of applied performativity' and the 'constitutive parameters of play' were not contemporaneous with the development of Get-WISE and RAP. These are recent analytical constructs, articulated during the writing of this thesis.

The challenge was to maintain the logic frame practice of Apause, whilst simultaneously incorporating the defining characteristics of a model of African Theatre for Development (TfD) that was being propounded by Okagbue at the time (Okagbue, 1998). Initially, two guiding principles were introduced by Okagbue. Firstly, the peer-educators, themselves, should have a central role as researchers and collaborators in the development of the programme and, secondly the peer-educators should have greater involvement in the design of an evaluation questionnaire with ideas and language apposite to the social context of the participants. Okagbue also stipulated that the structure of the sessions should remain flexible enough for the peers to respond creatively to the suggestions of the learners. Additionally, those same structures needed to be resilient enough to ensure key processes and activities were achieved within the time frames available, this implied that peers should have an understanding and ownership of the sessions sufficient that they need not read continuously from a script, instead requiring only the occasional reference to a session guide. Okagbue's African TfD model distinguishes itself from other TIE practices, such as NiteStar and arguably Boal's Forum Theatre, by aiming for the gradual empowerment of the 'target' audience in the means of theatre production itself. Ideally, the target population develops a capability of generating its own

performances, presenting themes and mechanisms for soliciting new dialectics as theatre processes. Such a liberatory process implies being involved not merely as players within prescribed conventions of theatrical forms but being *playful* with the conventions of the form itself – its *metaplay*.

In adopting Okagbue's model, we proceeded in the faith that a successfully implemented TfD intervention would emerge with a number of characteristics reflecting our existing understandings of Bandura's SCT (Bandura, 1986). Contemporaneous with Apause was Cydelle Berlin's NiteStar project in New York (Brodzinski, 2010, p. 70). Similarly based in SCT, Berlin and Lieberman described their work as a 'theatre education approach to abstinence education'. Indeed, on careful scrutiny of Brodzinski's account and the two publications of Lieberman and Berlin, there are no references to education about the use of contraception (Lieberman and Berlin, 2005; Lieberman *et al.*, 2011). Central to NiteStar's application of theatre is the telling of a good story with plausible characters with whom the audience identify. Two important points distinguish between TAP and NiteStar's TIE approach. Ethical considerations of the medical context have always prevented Apause from identifying itself as promoting abstinence. Our interpretation of SCT meant TAP did not necessarily require the telling of a good story.

Whether an intervention is based in SCT or an African TfD approach, we surmised it would embrace a style of learning which aims to transfer the power and the processes of making meaning from 'instructor' to 'learner'. It was assumed that it is the enactive mastery (Bandura, 1997, p. 80) of those emancipatory practices in the presence of 'significant others' which is of primary

importance in enhancing participants' self-efficacy belief and extending their repertoires of social scripts and protective behaviours.

During the early months of the development process we had, then unpublished, research findings from the existing A pause peer-led programme which suggested that older peers were significantly more effective than adults at influencing the normative beliefs of target groups (Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). This was a particularly compelling argument for the use of peer educators rather than trained actors. If we counted both the peer-educators (17-18 years) and the year 11 learners (15-16 years) to be members of the same target population, both groups still being within the developmental phase of middle adolescence, then the deployment of peer-educators achieved two additional benefits. Firstly, the older peers seemed to be more effective than adult authority figures at encouraging the learners to actively participate in the TfD conventions and secondly it met the TfD ideological aim of empowering the target population of teenagers in theatre making processes.

Consistent with SCT, the A pause team surmised that there were two weaknesses of a NiteStar THE model in which the peers performed a theatrical production representing a narrative about unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections or some other such undesirable outcome of early sexual debut. The first was that it suggested that the dominant perception of teenage sexual behaviour was that it was problematic and that they were viewed as being incapable of making independent judgements and acting responsibly. This ran the risk of alienation and impacting negatively on the self-efficacy beliefs (SEB) of the participants. This was an important conclusion to have reached and prescient in anticipating the findings of Yeager and colleagues

(2018). Cahill, whilst making a case for the transformative possibilities of humour and the surreal in the application of theatre conventions in HIV prevention programmes, also identifies similar shortcomings of the theatre medium (Cahill, 2017, p. 162). The second weakness with a story-based model being that, on a population basis, unwanted teenage pregnancies and STIs at the age of 14 -15 years are statistically rare and hence probably not perceived by the target group as a significant risk. We concluded such a cathartic approach to the presentation of a dramatic narrative jeopardised the social plausibility, medical veracity and ethical defensibility of the programme.

By contrast, we wished to create a performance idiom in which we introduced citational and iterative processes which modelled and reinforced the normative belief that teenagers were indeed capable of managing their own behaviour responsibly and, furthermore, had the capacity to anticipate and negotiate potential problems before they arose. The purpose of the theatre conventions would not be to create complete narratives in which the characters, plot, and case histories were laid bare, but rather to present fragments of situations inviting the students to analyse the behaviour and motives of the characters. The very incompleteness of the presentations were to be stimuli for the learners to formulate their own opinions on the characters' actions, call out suggestions, and replace the characters with themselves. The students would be expected to take part in the role-play situations and thereby demonstrate their own negotiating skills - the hope being that the students would interpret the action and move it towards a negotiated resolution with skills superior to those exemplified by the peer-educators.

Exploratory workshops – the laboratory phase

The earliest stages of developing the intervention, which eventually became known as 'Get-WISE', is documented (Evans *et al.*, 1998). In the Apause Peers intervention, as described in Chapter 5, there was no attempt to offer a model of negotiation. The imperative of enabling the participants to develop the skills of assertiveness overrode any confounding suggestions that worthwhile intimate relationships are predicated on a couple's ability to negotiate. Notwithstanding that limitation, it is also arguable that in a relationship in which either party lacks the capacity to state their 'bottom line' and exercise their option to refuse any further communication on the subject, there is no containing framework of consent. Without consent as an actionable right, there can be no meaningful parameters within which a more nuanced negotiation might be constructed.

In this TfD based intervention we wanted to explore positive models of teenage behaviour, in which both parties attached value to the relationship. I saw no virtue in creating a series of relationships in which one party put the other under such pressure that the resistor simply had to break off the relationship. So, I was alarmed when, in the first of our exploratory workshops, the group confidently informed me that a lot of young people, especially boys, only wanted a relationship for sex and would happily 'dump' a girl if she did not consent. This perception of young people's willingness to end a relationship because they attached more importance to achieving sexual intercourse than building on a good relationship, I judged to be a direct threat to the plausibility of presenting negotiation as a potentially valued relationship skill. In response, we resolved to further investigate this normative perception and the possibility of its mutability during the rehearsal and classroom workshops and to triangulate these findings with our quantitative evaluation using pre/post intervention questionnaires.

What follows is an account of some of the key challenges and turning points in our investigation of teenage sexual relationships through the medium of theatre. What might conventionally be called a rehearsal, I have referred to as the 'laboratory phase' or 'laboratory space' and the classroom action is called the 'classroom phase'. Both phases are considered to be processes; there is no definitive or 'finished' product, and the programme developed through a reciprocal relationship between the two phases, with successive and successful iterations being codified and documented as a set of notes which gradually became more formalised as manuals. These were subsequently dubbed 'scripts'. All names are fictional.

Typically, during the classroom phase the facilitators have to hand their notes/manuals/scripts. These provide a guiding framework to which peers refer intermittently within the emergent action matter of the workshop event. It was understood that these codes would be mutable according to the performance sensibilities of the facilitators. However, it was also agreed that whatever novel developments occurred would be identified, documented, evaluated, and, where effective, integrated into the next iteration of script development.

Laboratory phase 1 - Boal's 'will', 'counter-will' and 'dominant will'

A transcript of one of our earliest laboratory investigations is included in Appendix 7. We had been deploying Boal's notions of 'will', 'counter-will' and 'dominant will' (Boal, 1992, pp. 51-59). Having, during previous sessions, explored improvisations in which male characters expressed the dominant will of being only interested in girls for sex, and being prepared to end the relationship if their sexual desires were not consummated, the peers found such scenes very difficult to improvise and largely implausible. We, therefore, decided to look at a

relationship in which a couple feel a strong bond for each other, but nevertheless the male character appears to be pushing for full sex despite his partner's protestations that she was not yet ready for that degree of intimacy. I judged it necessary that one or both of the characters should be able to verbally articulate an offer to explore mutual masturbation.

A persistent experience of awkwardness permeates even a cursory reading of this transcript. Clearly, there is no denying my personal awkwardness, but it is further revealed in the extreme difficulty and discomfort Mitch and Erin encounter when trying to find a verbal idiom within which to express the dynamics of negotiating non-penetrative sexual intimacy.

Theologian, political theorist and writer on popular culture, Professor Adam Kotsko develops an argument that awkwardness is a feeling phenomenon experienced both by the individual subject and collectively as something which spreads through a social context or network, moreover, by virtue of its socially situatedness, awkwardness should more correctly be considered a social phenomenon rather than characteristic of an individual lacking in social graces. Awkwardness, for Kotsko, is related inversely to the enactment of norms.

Yet wherever we choose to place the blame or whichever direction we view from, one thing remains constant: there exists a certain norm that, though most often not explicitly stated, is regarded as both knowable and in fact known by all members of a given community. Awkwardness is then related to this stable norm as its opposite or violation.(Kotsko, 2010, p. 7)

The absence of a norm which endorses these negotiations as being verbally and publicly 'enactable', generates the mutually felt awkwardness and stress. This stress, in turn, precipitates ameliorative responses that can be interpreted

as play and playfulness. This would seem to confirm Burghardt's postulate that one important function of play is the management of stress (Burghardt, 2014, p. 95). Amidst the stress, however, I would argue that Irma and Mitch successfully deployed play and playfulness as a coping strategy and generated an effective and affecting scene. This observation, then, supports the view that children, and here I include adolescents, creatively engage in play in order to manage stress and generate coping strategies (Capurso and Pazzagli, 2016). While the two actors *played* the scene, prior to commencement of the scene, Irma responded by presenting *playful* pastiches of romantic love. In so doing she relieved the stress of the situation and reassured Mitch that although the character being played by Irma was rejecting the advances of Mitch's character, she, nevertheless, was fond of Mitch and, as a friend, wanted to reassure him.

Over the next two weeks the same group of peers constructed a workshop and a set of guidance notes enabling the processes of their laboratory phase to be restored in a classroom setting of a city high school on October 7th, 1997.

Get-WISE Classroom Phase 1

Transcript 6 Get-WISE Classroom phase 1 – Introducing the peers, the drama rules and 'negotiation'

Like the third Apause Peers session, as described in Chapter 5, the class of Year 10 learners arranges itself into an arc of chairs. The word 'RESPECT' is written in large letters on the whiteboard and the peers present very short fragments of action in which older teenage boys in a club or bar attempt to make the first 'romantic' move with teenage girls. Their incapacity to successfully execute their wills through inhibition

and lack of social competencies allows peers to present and explore the idea of a dialectic between the will and counter-will. The class are encouraged to work in pairs to try to create similar scenes of their own. Only a few seem to actually be improvising, but there is plenty of excited chatter. No one wants to share their work with the class.

A new scene is introduced. the problem of how Mark should approach Lorna with the proposition that they spend the night together – that is, to have sex. The class agree that both characters need to be explicit about what they want - their wills - but also conclude that it does not help to be too direct. A boy, Chas, after explaining that Mark needs to build up to it, comes to the front to demonstrate how it should be done, but quickly becomes tongue-tied and ends up blurting out, “I’m gagging for it”. All the class are totally delighted with this and laugh loudly.

Early exchanges

What has been achieved so far? The class have begun to see that in relationships, it is rare and implausible that characters’ actions are merely driven by their wills, more typically a dialectic exists between the characters’ wills and their counter-wills. The learners are engaged, offering advice and some are willing to go into role. The peers are improvising scenes freely, only occasionally referring to their notes to keep the workshop structure on track and there is a playful and creative rapport between the actors and spectators.

Despite the novel layers of complexity implicit in a negotiation, the latest scenario, as presented both by the peers and when Chas participated, could not sustain the sought after tension of role ambivalence between the will and

counter-will and they drifted towards a trope of the kind of refusal situation redolent of those in the third Apause Peers session. This should not be surprising since the learners had, themselves, prior experience of Apause Peers in the previous academic year and a particular social script would have been brought into play once the situational cues had been recognised. So, despite having established the notion of 'intention' ('wills' or 'wants') and 'prevention' (counter wills), in neither scenario could they execute an explicit negotiation elucidating what degree of physical intimacy either party is considering. No such social script had yet been presented to activate Bandura's sequential processes of observational learning. Chas exercised his prerogative to be playful in order to manage his stress and the collective awkwardness.

Transcript 7 Get-WISE Classroom Phase 1 – Negotiating other forms of intimacy

Lorna, now in the role of Boal's Joker, introduces another couple (Mitch and Irma) who are having the same sort of problems. They are seated side-by-side, with their chairs turned slightly towards each other, in front of the arc formed by the class.

ML = Male learner, **FL** = Female learner

(The scene is picked up here after about a minute)

Lorna: Yeah...We're going to try with Irma and Mitch talking about what else they can do. They're negotiating. Ready? Listen.

(the class sh sh each other)

Mitch: So...you don't want to have sex then?

Irma: Well no...not yet.

Mitch: Well...I'm fine...

Irma: I really love you and I enjoy your company and there's loads of other stuff we can do.

Mitch: Yeah, yeah? What other stuff?

Irma: Oooh...Y'know...there's like romantic stuff...like get out the massage oil...I give you a massage and you give me a massage...bath together...I mean I could give you a really good hand job. I mean you'd....

Lorna: Ok. Stop ...*(Up to 6 of the class laugh, possibly at the rather abrupt interruption)* ...Listen... *(Lorna carries on projecting her voice loudly over the class who are talking excitedly amongst themselves)*. Look, Irma agreed to give Mitch a hand job *(the class is agitated and a few laugh nervously)* ...What could Mitch do for Irma to return the favour?

(The class is very noisy now; many are talking amongst themselves and very few phrases are clearly distinguishable from the background chatter. A majority of the learners are covering their mouths. One boy is chewing the knuckles of his left thumb, holding it in his mouth with his right hand, while his neighbour rolls his eyes to the heavens and crosses them in what appears to be a pastiche of boss-eyed incomprehension.)

FL3: What's a hand job?

(A lot of nervous chatter as they talk intensely among themselves – a male learner calls out)

ML2: Stroke her vagina.

(Most of the class laugh)

ML3: Squeeze her tits

Lorna: Sorry?

[There is an edit here while the class get involved in noisy, small group discussions]

Lorna: Ok...shh...shh...Could you first tell us what you came up with?

The class are very noisy and excited

Chas: *(Singing it out enthusiastically)* Yeah, we will...

Jake & Lorna: Go on then.

ML2: Go on, Chas.

Chas: *(Beating out the rhythm of his emphases with his pen)*

These are all for women, she could still do - without having sex.

ML3: *(Thrusting out his arm to halt Chas)* It's what a bloke's got to do for a woman.

Chas: Yeah, what he can do for a woman.

Lorna: She doesn't have to do it.

Chas: Things she's not having sex but she's still having fun...A cucumber...Natural yoghurt and barbeque sauce.

Irma: What?

Mitch & Irma: Together?

(Whole class seems to call out and chat about this proposition for five seconds and a girl tries to say something which Irma attempts to pick-up)

FL1: That's what you said.

Lorna: Yeah?

FL2: She could toss him off.

Irma & Mitch: Yeah

Lorna: That's brilliant.

(More noisy class reaction)

FL3: *(To Mitch)* Or you could touch yourself.

Mitch: What's the point in that? *(Class laughs)*

Chas: She could play with her cliddy.

ML4: Buy a vibrator.

Mitch: Buy a vibrator.

Lorna: Brilliant.

(Whole class are very noisy again for around ten seconds)

Lorna: Listen...sh...Ok stop...Now we're going to see if we can run through the whole scene with the beginning, the middle and the end. With all your suggestions...alright? Ready?

(Class are saying "ssh" excitedly to each other. There is an intense sense of anticipation)

Lorna: Ready...Go.

Mitch: Right...So, I've bought those condoms, so I thought maybe... you know... tonight ...possibly we could have sex.

Irma: *(Shaking her head and smiling despairingly)* Mmmm...Oh Mitch we've spoken about this. You know I'm not ready to have sex.

Mitch: But I really care about you and I thought now...maybe...?

Irma: Mitch, I really, really care about you. You know I don't want to put you off. I want to keep the relationship going. I'm just not ready to have sex. I mean there's loads of stuff we could do...

Mitch: Yeah?... Yeah what could we do?

Irma: Like you, you know...massage...and you know...I could toss you off...and you could...

Mitch: And I could do the same for you.

Irma: Yeah, you could do the same for me...except gentler this time.

Mitch: What?

Irma: *(More emphatically)* Gentler.

Mitch: Well, what was wrong last time?

Irma: You were a bit...rough...heavy handed.

Mitch: What? I'm sorry but I mean, maybe if you'd actually give me some instructions, a bit of direction...

Lorna: { Ok

Mitch: { Maybe I might have more of a chance...

Lorna: Ok, stop...

Chas: *(Slightly hurt tone, possibly accusatory)* What happened to the cucumber?

ML2: Yeah?

(Whole class laugh loudly)

Lorna: It's still in the fridge.

ML3: Say "cucumber" quickly.

Lorna: *(Upbeat and loudly)* Cucumber!

Chas: Yay!!

(Class laugh and clap)

Lorna: So, in that scene, do you think Mitch and Irma were saying exactly what they wanted?

ML4: Yeah *(Other learners join in and agree)* ...

Lorna: And do you think that Mitch did actually, really want to just have sex with Irma? *(pause)* or

Mitch: Did I want to keep the relationship going?

ML5: You wanted to keep it going.

Liminality, autopoiesis and fluid binaries

Using the description of the classroom action and building on the analysis of Apause Peers in Chapter 5, it is possible to discern instances of Fischer-Lichte's three parameters characteristic of transformational performance (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). By engendering the expectation of incorporating the classes' - particularly Chas's - contributions into the performed action, we see also a novel autopoietic sensibility. This growing sense of the spectators having a stake in the action is evidenced when Lorna announces that they are going to run the scene again with "...all their suggestions". When, however, Chas's suggestion of a cucumber is omitted, he and a friend hold them to account, demanding someone says the word 'cucumber'. When Lorna accedes and says the word, it is greeted with triumphant laughter and applause.

The will and counter-will dialectic and interactional competencies

Introducing the will/counter-will dialectic represented an advance on the unidirectional dynamic of Apause Peers in which pressure is applied and the

responses are simply permutations on the theme of flat refusal. With Get-WISE the learners are presented with sympathetic characters in situations in which they are compelled to reveal their own internal tensions of wanting to keep the relationship progressing whilst worrying that their expectations of sexual intimacy are incompatible.

Despite these important paradigmatic shifts away from A pause Peers, I was experiencing feelings of ambivalence. Somehow, I had anticipated creating a scene or narrative in which the couple, Mitch and Irma, would be able to present a more tender and intimate side to their relationship, explore the pleasures of touch and communicate which parts of their bodies they were happy to have touched and in what ways. Possibly due to my insisting that the negotiations should be achieved verbally, early scenes, during the laboratory phase, lacked a certain tenderness or empathy. This was transmitted during the classroom phase. Chas's comments, and those of his classmates, revealed a phallogentric perception of what might be a suitable response to Irma's needs for a more sensual and exploratory dimension to their intimacy. Just as plausibly, the comments could have been manifestations of the immaturity of their cognitive and social development –having had little by way of opportunities to engage in relevant mentalizing processes. Either way, there was insufficient anatomical knowledge, and interest in such knowledge being generated, to convince me that the learners would go away with insights which extended beyond the use of penis substitutes. Irma could not have felt reassured by the class's responses, and this, I believe, was expressed when she suggested Mitch should touch her more gently next time. But it felt more like a put-down or a challenge than an encouraging invitation to learn some subtle techniques of exploring and

exchanging intimate pleasures. Mitch reacted defensively, and the scene ended somewhat disappointingly on a mechanistic, transactional note.

The whole discourse emerged as being constructed on certain underpinning assumptions. That Mitch wanted sexual contact more than Irma did and that she was conceding ground. The normative understanding being performatively reinforced was a situation in which Irma required some form of simulation of penetrative sex, hence the suggestions of the cucumber and the vibrator. There was little understanding that whatever the couple found themselves doing, antecedent to that activity should be a sequence of negotiated agreements on consent. On first presentation in the classroom there was no hint as to how they might communicate that to each other. A repertoire describing kinds of touch was never expressed.

What is impossible to ascertain from the video is what was actually being said amongst the learners and peer-educators during those scheduled interludes between scenes when they were invited to discuss something. Nevertheless, even if they had been talking in terms which were more suggestive of exploring mutually pleasurable forms of stimuli, the whole class feedback and hence the concluding scenario, did little to suggest Mitch and Irma were going to create the time to slowly discover what each other enjoyed.

Is it possible that we were working at the very limit of what might be achieved in this idiom of naturalistic, improvised theatre? At this stage in the developmental process the peers themselves, who had demonstrated their willingness to give up time for rehearsal, found it almost impossible to say, in any detail, what the alternatives to penetrative sex might be. They may or may not have had the vocabulary to explain what forms mutually pleasurable sexual intimacy might

take or whether their anatomical knowledge was adequate. Equally, when we attempted to create the back story to Mitch and Irma, I personally found it excruciatingly awkward to articulate the kinds of sexual activity they might have previously experienced. This was not because I lacked anatomical knowledge, but rather because I felt ambiguous about talking in detail with a group of young people who may not, within their normative expectations, have given consent to engage in such a conversation with someone over twenty years their senior.

The very function of using the peers' own sensibilities as the raw material for the exploratory improvisations resulted in a much more personalised and, possibly limited, spectrum of responses. There was never any attempt to create fictional names for the characters of Mitch and Irma, neither was there any effort to create characterisation through selective adjustments to voice or gesture. Nevertheless, through repetition, Irma and Mitch found ways of presenting aspects of themselves with which they could feel comfortable. This naturalistic theatrical style, which conspired to restrict the introduction of an explicit verbal language of sexual intimacy, was reiterated in the classroom action and learner responses. The verbal idiom had intrinsically limitations.

Get-WISE Classroom Phase 2

Following intensive reflections and explorations of themes and scenes during the laboratory phase, the second visit to the class on 21st October 1997 reflected the peers' more concrete understandings of negotiation, hence the workshop incorporated some new techniques, like writing on a flip chart the key terms of 'Intention', 'Prevention' and 'Bottom line'. These ideas were manifest in short scenarios which the class were encouraged to interrogate through questions posed by the Joker.

Transcript 8 Get-WISE Classroom Phase 2 – Negotiations re-visited

'Birthday Promise'

The first scene, called, 'Birthday Promise' shows Jake trying to explain to Irma that he is unable to join her for a birthday drink because he needs to complete a maths assignment. Jake offers a reasoned explanation and heartfelt apology. Irma launches an angry attack, disappointed that after promising weeks ago, he was now prioritising maths homework. The class agreed that this was an unsuccessful negotiation, but they were less clear as to the characters' intentions and preventions (Boal's will and counter-will). Many concluded that because Irma closed the scenes with, "I just couldn't give a toss!" it meant that her intention was to end the relationship, others thought that the homework was more important to Jake than Irma's friendship.

Working in pairs, nearly all the class are able to perform their own accurate restorations of the unsuccessful negotiation.

Negotiation Masks: will and counter-will

Next they work as fours using a basic line drawing of a face on a sheet of A4 paper. They fold the image in half with one half representing a characters' intention and the other half their prevention. Then they are asked to suggest some solutions. Working in fours and supported by the peers, they readily conclude that neither of them wanted to end the relationship, but, if Irma could calm down, maybe they could work out a solution. The class confidently call back to the actors, "meet later in the evening", "meet tomorrow", "help him with his

homework". The suggestions were built into the scene and when the characters agreed they could meet a bit later and Irma could help him with the homework, the class clapped and cheered.

Image Theatre: "Yes, but..."

During the laboratory phase we found an effective approach to a 'one night stand' was to use a version of Boal's 'Image Theatre' (Boal, 1992, p. 164). A 'freeze frame' is presented in which Lorna holds onto Mitch's hand whilst apparently pulling away at the same time, giving a strong physical and visual expression of her dilemma. Mitch says, "Come back to my place?" Lorna replies, "Yes, but...". Without releasing themselves from the strong visual image, the Joker asks the class what they think the characters' intentions are. "What does Mitch want?" The class are encouraged to ask the characters. One of the boys asks Lorna, "What are you worried about?" and finally it becomes clear that while Lorna wants to go back to Mitch's house, she is worried that it might lead to unprotected sex. The terms 'wants' and 'worries' were spontaneously used to supplant 'intention' and 'prevention'. Prompted by suggestions from the class, Mitch agrees to go and buy some condoms and the class is happy and applaud.

'Irma and Mitch': anatomical diagrams

Lorna then reminds the class of the previous week's scene in which Irma and Mitch struggle to find words with which to negotiate alternatives to penetrative sex. They run a short reminder version of the scene and the class is asked to make suggestions as to other ways the couple could make each other

happy. The class are barely any more forthcoming than at the same point in the previous week.

Following some playful negotiation which borders on bribery, to come up with some ideas, Lorna strikes a freeze-frame of referee and announces, "HAND OUT THOSE PICTURES !!"

The peers reward the learners by handing out some graphic anatomical diagrams of male and female genitalia. These are detailed enough to enable the peers to discuss the pleasure function of the clitoris. The five peers circulate among the small, self-select groups entering into discussions in which they are able to explore the idea that both male and female genitalia are capable of experience pleasure and orgasm. The peers had been briefed to explain that the most sensitive part of the female genitalia is the clitoris and that various forms of proxy phalluses inserted into the vagina are not likely give the most pleasurable stimuli. The class work in groups writing ideas on their worksheets about how the couple could please each other. These are noisy, clandestine interactions from which I am forbidden to participate or inquire, with one group snatching the worksheet away from the prying lens of the camera. Their ideas about what else the couple could do apart from penetrative sex are fed back as a whole class activity, praised enthusiastically by peers and learners and written on the board, forming an extensive list. In a brief, but tender, negotiation scene between Mitch and Irma some of the ideas are modelled. Anatomically explicit language is absent but their intention to please each other is clear.

The dialogue begins with Chas coming to the front to demonstrate his understanding and negotiation skills.

Irma: *(Sits to Chas's right with her left leg crossed over her right and left elbow on her left thigh and her right elbow on her left knee creating a shape in which her lower body is twisted and closed off to Chas with her head and upper body facing him) ...Ok...um...We've got on... you know quite well, there's nothing on telly, I was wondering if you would like to... you know...it was about time...you know we go and...we had sex?*

Chas: *(His elbows are on his knees and hands are clasped in a fist shape in front of his face which is turned slightly towards her. He answers in a quiet, straightforward tone) ...No.*

Irma: Well, c'mon why not?

ML10: *(Calls out) You would. (Chas turns threateningly towards the interruption)*

(The class "sshh sshh" the interruption and someone – possibly Jake - calls out assertively "Shut up")

Irma: Well, we've been together for ages *(almost inaudibly)* there's no one about...we could go upstairs.... *(maybe hinting at what Chas might say)* "There's loads of other stuff we can do" *(Irma has taken her arms away from her lap and opened her body up much more and is smiling in a friendly way. Chas appears to struggle for words and Lorna comes to support him by crouching down between them)*

Lorna: Remember what we said?

Chas: Oh yeah.... *(rubbing the palms of his hands into his eye sockets. He speaks softly)* ...Right...Yeah, but I don't want to have sex...we can do other things...

Irma: *(A pause, then in a gently interested, coaxing tone)*
...Yeah?

Chas: Do you want to put your hand on my cock and get a Mars bar? *(Irma smiles and opens up her arms at the same time the whole class bursts into laughter and the peers join in)*

Irma: *(Wagging her left finger in front of him, laughing)* I may well be up for that!! *(Puts her left hand on his back as if to usher him back to his chair and then waves him in that direction with her right arm)* Right, that's fine. *(Chas gets up smiling and starts to move towards his chair)*

Jake: Chas, choose someone else... *(To build suspense, Chas windmills both his arms around and pans his body, rotating it around 180 degrees. No one can guess who he's going to choose. Then he uses a strong, pointing gesture, leaning in towards the person he's chosen. This is a freeze frame of the 'referee', almost identical to the one used by Lorna when she announced triumphantly "HAND OUT THOSE PICTURES !!)*

Chas: TOM!!

(The whole class cheer and clap their approval and Irma, smiling appealingly, beckons Tom to the chair. Pressure is mounting on Tom but there is no sign of him moving yet. Shouts of encouragement build up and before we find out if Tom will succumb and make the journey towards the empty

chair, the tension is ruptured, the performance is interrupted by the bell signalling the end of the lesson. There is a sense of release with more cheering - especially from Tom. The video ends with the class noisily gathering up their belongings and heading for the door.)

The limits of verbal interactional competencies

Research by Professor Roger Ingham and colleagues of Southampton University suggests that approaching the close of the 20th and early 21st centuries interactions amongst UK teenage couples of a sexually intimate nature did not commonly take the form of verbal competencies. Dutch teenagers seemed to exhibit higher levels of interactional competency compared with their UK counterparts, the Dutch being more able to communicate affection and the value they attached to their relationships. These competencies extended to the anticipation and negotiation of contraception (Vanwesenbeeck *et al.*, 1999; Stone and Ingham, 2002; Popper *et al.*, 2005). Consistent with the findings of Ingham and colleagues, once Mitch and Irma had presented their negotiation, the only language the class could manifest reflected, amplified and normalised the limitations of their interactional competencies. Instead the experience of awkwardness and its ameliorative inverse of playfulness, became manifest.

I concluded that none of those qualities of tenderness and mutual gratification would be part of the theatrical representation while we were limited to naturalistic and verbal interactions. Somehow an expanded or alternative code needed to be introduced. We needed a vocabulary for kinds of touch, how touch could be presented, interpreted and judged to be acceptable or consensual, this alongside a more graphic understanding of parts of the body and their

physiological responses. For all these reservations, nevertheless, in the non-authoritarian occurrence of a peer-facilitated event, certain hidden transcripts became legitimised and in their more unguarded moments of play we might intuit the explorations of hitherto unarticulated social scripts.

This format of two workshop sessions was repeated with a second Year 10 group in the same Exeter high school and the video records evidence the peers became increasingly adept at facilitating the workshops with higher levels of learner participation in the Forum Theatre conventions and role-plays. An evaluation questionnaire was piloted and the whole package, including two workshops and pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, was put together. The programme was repeated later in that same autumn term. This time it involved one class of Year 11 students in the first school and a repeat of the programme with two Year 11 classes in a school just outside Exeter. Approximately eighty Year 11 students participated. Although this is a modest number for a quantitative evaluation it compares favourably with Elliott's study with around half that number (Elliott *et al.*, 1996).

The video recordings of this second cycle of sessions further evidenced Bandura's model of observational learning, confirming that once a scenario or role-play has been successfully modelled, the learners are quickly enabled to create their own versions. The psychological plausibility of the learners' role-plays were enriched by their analyses invested in the projective device of the negotiation masks which enhanced their enactive mastery of the will and counter-will dynamic. In all, there were three opportunities for the learners to demonstrate their mastery of a negotiation role-play, be it working in the privacy of pairs and small groups or coming to the front and presenting their pieces to

the whole class. The first was 'Birthday Promise', the second was "Yes, but...", the third was 'Mitch and Irma' in which they modelled the use of simple euphemisms for alternatives to penetrative sex, like 'take our time', 'have a shower together', 'find out what we both enjoy' and 'massage'.

The choice of Year 11 was significant because we wanted students who had had no prior experience of the Apause Peers programme and because we were concerned that the classroom responses of the Year 10s suggested the material was not age-appropriate to teenagers of around fourteen years. The quantitative evaluation of this second pilot was written up in Evans *et al* (1998).

See below:

[...] in all of the statements regarding perceived self-efficacy, there was a significant shift in the desired direction. [...] greatest change was in the students' response to the statement, "More than half of all teenagers have had sex before they are 16." [...] significantly fewer of them agreed or agreed strongly with the statement.

[...] 90% saying they enjoyed it, 96% saying they made comments in groups discussions, with 80% reporting making comments in class discussion and 80% taking part in role plays [...] 62% saying they thought it would help them in their relationships. (Evans *et al.*, 1998)

Despite these encouraging findings, increasing video evidence lent weight to my conclusion that this format would never constitute an idiom in which the actual negotiation process itself during the moments of sexual intimacy could be presented. The dialogue both between the learners and the actors and in the scene between the actors were always in the subjunctive tense, suggesting what *might* happen *should* the couple become more intimate. True, we saw negotiations that occurred in the present when Irma and Jake negotiated an

agreement on how he could join her birthday celebrations and when Lorna was able to persuade Mitch to buy some condoms, but the team, including myself, concluded that if we were really going to empower young people in their belief that they could negotiate in the 'heat of the moment', that is, whilst already engaged in acts of physical intimacy, they would need some presentational format which brought the action into the present tense.

Notwithstanding these perceived limitations, some important insights as to why a TfD process might be transformational emerge from the transcripts. Although the workshop structure adheres to certain theatrical conventions, simultaneously the conventions become blurred and diffuse. What we see increasingly, is a group of young people interacting spontaneously with each other as a social event, coping with the stress of awkwardness by exploring the metaplay within, and in defiance of, the recognisable and formally 'played' theatrical conventions. So, the *character* in the role-play called 'Irma' at times is indistinguishable from the charming, playful, coquettish *actor* called Irma who has given up her time to put herself through this ordeal and take part in a sex education project with young people. In facilitating the role-play with Chas, she ceases to be the character called Irma who does not want sex and takes on the role of an Irma who is trying to initiate sex with Chas whilst simultaneously coaching him in how to negotiate an alternative. At the same time, Chas has attended to and replicated physical actions initially demonstrated by Lorna and Mitch. So, Chas retains his ebullient, risk-taking, talismanic classroom persona whilst adopting Mitch's mannerisms of covering his face and rubbing his eyes, before revealing a childlike lack of understanding of what Mars Bar parties in the 1990s supposedly entailed. Nevertheless, to everybody's delight, he pulls

off a novel, but entirely unscripted, 'punchline' before replicating and adapting Lorna's highly theatrical 'referee' position when choosing Tom to come to the front.

The theatre idiom provides an initial vehicle and an expanding vocabulary for a spectrum of spontaneous but ordinarily taboo social interactions manifest in the metaplay and expressed through the hidden, and largely subversive transcripts of their performativity. The performed action has the quality of oscillating between aesthetic drama and social drama (Schechner, 2007, p. 192). Hence, although the theatre is providing novel possibilities and languages, this is not purely a fiction, or *representation* of their social realities. These interactions are citations and iterations of existing norms and social dynamics and the players are being themselves, and yet in the crucible of this performative and liminal space, potentially new social realities and identities may emerge, be explored and constituted through play and playful interactions. The quantitative finding that the programme resulted in a significant number of participants changing their minds and disagreeing with the statement, "More than half of all teenagers have had sex before they are 16" in fact, precedes by three years Mellanby *et al's* (2001) publication which provides robust evidence that peers are more effective than adults at influencing normative beliefs. This finding was replicated in several subsequent and larger pilots of the Get-WISE programme. The Tfd intervention on negotiation, however, produced findings which suggested this shift in normative belief was achieved in half the amount of contact time and without the peer-educators even needing to utter a statement which refuted that belief.

So, it is possible to highlight evidence of the activation of normativisation processes during the Get-WISE event by triangulating between the quantitative data provided by questionnaires and observational data of classroom action. Identificatory processes are less easily discerned in quantitative data, but in both Apause Peers and Get-WISE there are numerous descriptions of instances in which the learners seem to quickly replicate speech patterns and gestural mannerisms which have been modelled by the peer facilitators and their classmates. Does a willingness to copy a piece of action or speech automatically imply that the subject is identifying with the model? Perhaps not necessarily, but the capacity and willingness to reproduce previously modelled attitudes and behaviours is described by scholars as divergent in their disciplines as Butler and Bandura as being contributory to a subject's sense of identity (Butler, 1993, p. xiii; Bandura, 1969). Once such action matter is presented in a performance space and rewarded with social approval, such as clapping, laughter and cheering, it seems plausible that the participants are experiencing a sense of community and commonly held values contributing to a collective and individual sense of identity and communal norms. Theoretically, it should be possible to anticipate, within the regulative structure and content of the scripts, how certain processes are constituted and evidenced during the performative. The scripting process curates and codifies those spatial conventions, forms of words, gestures and presentational strategies which not only provide mechanisms with a track record of having prompted transformative interactions, but bring into play those carefully considered psycho-social parameters which are predictive of change towards desirable outcomes. Hence, role-plays are deemed successful if both characters ultimately achieve a negotiated outcome, by listening to each other, respecting each other's wants

and worries and achieving a course of action which keeps the relationship intact. Whilst such successful negotiations are not modelled from the outset, the regulative structures of the scripts, prompting interrogation, problem solving and performed solutions, have the causative effect of moving the action matter in that direction. The expressions of pleasure, such as clapping and cheering are not merely an objective and epistemic acknowledgement by the class of the negotiation having reached a successful conclusion, but are, in addition, an ontic expression of how they have subjectively identified with the performers and been affected by them. They are 'rooting' for them and have vicariously experienced their relief and pleasure at changing a situation where a relationship in jeopardy is transformed into one of mutual gratification. These observations would seem to be in concordance with the findings of those cognitive neuroscientists whose research into the function of 'mirror neurons' suggests that these particular nerve cells in the brain are responsible for empathetic responses in humans - the coupling in the brain of perception with action and aesthetic sensibilities (Keysers and Gazzola, 2006; Freedberg and Gallese, 2007).

Other intriguing transformations emerged from the cycle of laboratory and classroom phases. Because the peers never read their scenes from scripts, they were free to explore more physical, facial and gestural languages. Hence, despite the fact the transcription of the words spoken by Irma and Mitch failed to reveal much ostensible evolution of their verbal interactions over the period, in fact, the scene became richer, showing qualities of warmth and tenderness which were expressed through their facial expressions, bodies and vocal tones. The couple, through repetition of social scripts, appeared to be better able to

express their feelings of affection, even 'love' for each other, making the proposition that Mitch only wanted Irma for sex increasingly implausible. While the learners were engaged in the particularities of the negotiations between specific couples, the quantitative evidence suggests the process simultaneously brought about adjustments to their perceptions of what was generally normal, - namely, a shift towards adopting the belief that most teenagers had not had sex by sixteen. This finding gives further credence to Bandura's influential theory of observational learning and the dynamic of 'reciprocal causation' between the social environment and the individual (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1986). More importantly, in terms of achieving the desired intervention outcomes, the quantitative evidence suggested the learners' observations of performers in role and their own classroom interactions, both amongst themselves and in role, had enhanced their belief in their own capacity to negotiate. As Bandura argues at length, this belief in one's own capacity to perform the behaviours necessary to bring about a desired outcome, their SEB, whilst being largely context specific, is also highly predictive of ultimately achieving that behaviour (Bandura, 1997).

Unlike Apause Peers, Get-WISE set out to establish itself as a theatre making approach from the outset, specifically adopting a TfD model which was informed by certain techniques originating from fields as diverse as Forum Theatre, and drama/play therapies whilst remaining consistent with our incumbent psycho-social theory. But did it achieve anything beyond what was already occurring in the Apause Peers programme? The TfD model, I believe, was especially effective during the laboratory phase in its capacity for revealing the complexity of young peoples' lives. This anticipates the work of MacNeill who uses performance and theatre process as research tools in her work with young

people in care (MacNeill, 2011). Within the history of Apause, this was a 'first' since the original scripts or manuals of Apause Peers came from Atlanta and were merely Anglicised before being pressed into use and then later modified. Working within the TfD model meant it put young people in the role of investigative collaborators and asked them, "What are the lived experiences of teenagers, and can we find ways of exploring and presenting them through theatrical action?"

The power and performative mechanisms of social norms
Acknowledging young people as experts in their lives and attempting to restore their insights and experiences as theatrical action revealed an important understanding. Their practices, in terms of negotiating intimate relationships, are subject to the regulative influences of perceived social norms and, moreover, these norms achieve their regulatory force primarily through the sanctions and interdictions exercised through their *verbal* language. Hence, as the action of the Forum Theatre moved towards a point when the discourse appeared to require a verbal negotiation with an explicit vocabulary for sexual practices, for example when Lorna says: "Look, Irma agreed to give Mitch a hand job. What could Mitch do for Irma to return the favour?"; displays of intense awkwardness prevail. Suddenly, they appear not to have language forms, norms or social scripts at their disposal with which to contribute to the discourse, or if they do, they are unsure as to its permissibility. The classroom culture becomes one of hidden transcripts and acts of subversion expressed as playfulness. This intransigent awkwardness could be further interpreted as an absence of a norm that girls might be desirous, or capable of, receiving sexual pleasure.

Once an observer becomes attuned to the regulative function of norms, particularly as they are manifest in the classroom, it becomes apparent that they operate within a variety of parameters, most notably as the permissibility of acts of speech. Such normative constraints are often realised through the performative interdictions of contributions from girls. Additionally, the conventional norms of pedagogue/learner dynamics, spatial arrangements of furniture, movement around the learning or performance space, groupings, gendered roles and social hierarchies are all being enacted as oppressive social norms.

However, within the TfD practice these norms are also being manipulated and, to a greater or lesser extent, are either contested or blatantly reconfigured. All of these vigorously maintained norms, comprising a teacher's 'bread and butter' of classroom management skills, are violently disrupted once the peer-educators enter the space, ask for the furniture to be moved to form a circle of chairs and explain they are going to be doing some drama work on sex and relationships. Whilst the classroom practice of Get-WISE was originally described as 'Theatre for Development', once a playful classroom culture begins to emerge and assert itself, the practice reverts back to something more characteristic of Apause Peers and described as a 'Theatre of Applied Performativity'. In TAP the novel theatrical conventions often emerge and become contingent on the more immediate and substantively pressing performative social interactions present within the event.

The short scenario called 'Birthday Promise' is invariably compellingly acted by the peer-educators and quickly engages the learners who are familiar with the dilemma of having to choose between fulfilling an important promise to a friend

and completing a homework assignment. Indeed, they have little difficulty themselves in presenting similar scenes. In short, they are presenting action matter largely within the regulatory influences of existing and effective social scripts.

However, once the subject matter moves on to a couple agreeing to try something more sexually intimate and talking about finding out what Mitch might do for Irma, the familiar mask of normality is cracked and sheds light on a concealed set of norms and resultant practices which are more restrictive. The body language of the learners is protective, hands cover faces, arms cross over bodies, they turn in towards the safety of their groups and talk simultaneously. This subversive contrivance creates a single impenetrable body of noise, a collective mask, preserving the anonymity of utterances and disguising actions which might betray identificatory processes. These protective actions combine constituting a hidden transcript. When asked for feedback they were apprehensive and unwilling to disclose the nature of their discussions. The performance dynamic has moved from one of cooperative playfulness to one of risk averse, awkwardness.

The Creative Transmutation of Awkwardness

This awkwardness is a powerfully felt and restrictive phenomenon. The result, I believe, of a performative trajectory culminating in the exposure of the regulative forces of the prevailing norms. These are so oppressive as to render the participants unable to articulate any words or actions which might advance the discourse of the Forum Theatre. It would appear, however, that by presenting negotiated solutions using euphemisms such as 'take our time', or 'find out what we both enjoy', a less awkward and more comfortable norm with

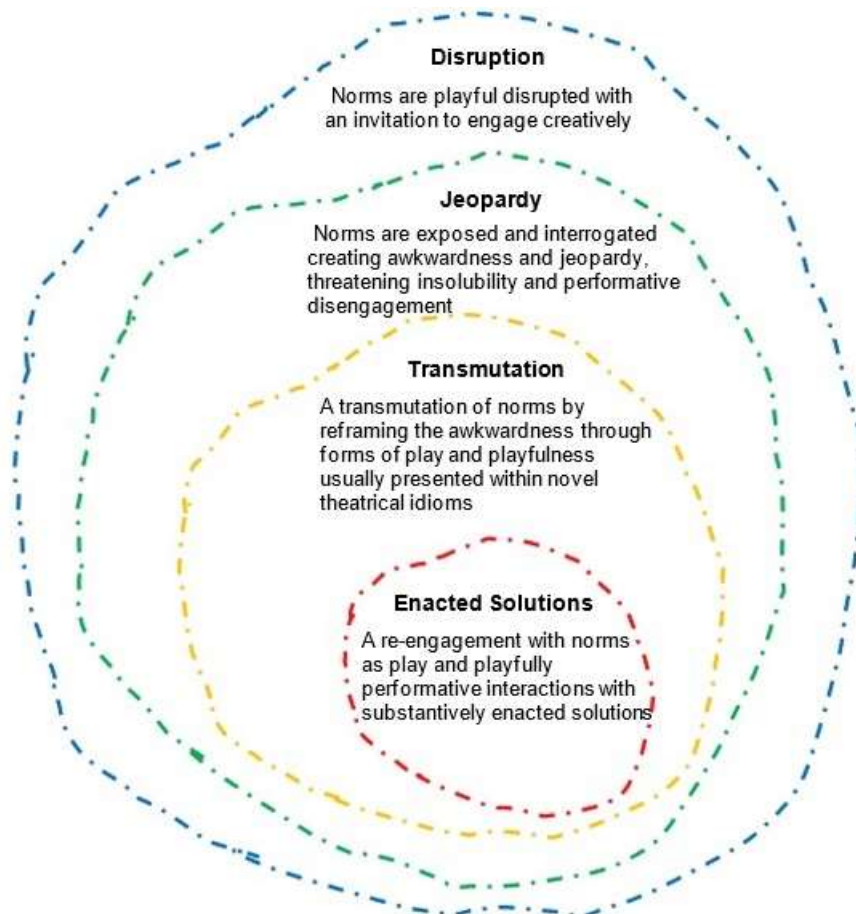
which the learners may identify is instituted, and the learners readily incorporate the same or similar phrases in their own role-plays.

More accurately, the rules of engagement within the theatrical form which had formerly demanded they used explicit verbal language describing physical intimacy to achieve a negotiated outcome, proved both unworkable and socio-culturally undesirable. Instead, as postulated by Burghardt, the workshops enabled play and playful interactions to create alternative coping strategies (Burghardt, 2014, p. 95). This observation of the normalised undesirability of verbally negotiated sexual intimacy, is borne out in 'The Art of Intimacy', Eimear McBride's two-part BBC Radio 4 programme. The novelist sensitively draws together insights from a range of scholars and artists to explore the challenges of presenting, as art, negotiations of sexual intimacy and consent. Situated in a variety of historical contexts, the cultural constraints, regulative norms and aesthetic limitations associated with framing such interactions within purely verbal discourses are poignantly revealed (McBride, 2019). Accordingly, the rules of the theatrical game were adjusted, and it became accepted that the process of negotiating the details of their physical intimacy would take place at a later time and may or may not entail the use of words.

In this sense, the solution-focused form of TfD generates both debilitating awkwardness by challenging participants to perform in ways which seem to contravene norms and then, through play and playful interactions, investigates the viability of alternative norms and ultimately sanctions them as acceptable new norms with which the participants may identify. Such transformations point to the reciprocal nature of normativisation and identificatory processes and offer a hypothesis as to how the aesthetic of *durable transformation* as metaplay may

be materialised. Exposing, challenging and reconfiguring social norms within the TfD model would seem to follow a sequential pattern of four-phases – ‘The Creative Transmutation of Awkwardness’.

Figure 10 The Creative Transmutation of Awkwardness



I am postulating that, theorised in this way, Okagbue’s TfD model was more closely allied with TAP than other, contemporaneous applied theatre practices. It may be uniquely effective at making clandestine and problematic norms explicit whilst simultaneously inducing a sense that they may be playfully flouted, interrogated or appropriately reconfigured if the presentational action matter contributes to consensus around a solution. In agreeing on a solution, a

new norm may be constituted with which the participants may identify, and which may inform their subsequent beliefs and actions.

Floor puppets, roll-out and script development

The first, exploratory, cycle of Get-WISE was concluded with the paper, 'Negotiating Sexual Intimacy: APAUSE Develops an Approach Using a Peer-led, Theatre for Development Model in the Classroom' (Evans *et al.*, 1998). At the time, there were a number of perceived shortcomings with the programme, some of which were theoretical and ethical considerations, while others were more pragmatic. These domains were not discreet. In practice, ethical and pragmatic issues often intersected, while underpinning theoretical considerations constantly presented the team with challenges.

Bandura's assertion that self-efficacy belief is largely context specific and most effectively acquired through experiences of enactive mastery posed a conundrum. Given that at no point did we actually present opportunities to role-play or even model the specific negotiation of in-the-moment, physical intimacy, we had no theoretical grounds to believe the programme would enable learners to achieve such competencies in their personal lives. The research team concluded we should attempt in-the-moment presentations of sexual intimacy.

On more pragmatic grounds, time requirements were a consideration. It had proved difficult to train peer-educators and normalise the use of anatomical and physiological terminology. If that information was never systematically communicated during the peers' interactions with small groups of learners, it could not become consistently established as a more normalised part of the discourse. Additionally, the peer-educators, even this small, highly committed and able group, required a minimum of three hours of laboratory time to achieve

one hour of classroom time. A protocol for script development was required to accelerate and disseminate the training activities, making it available to a much larger number of peer-educators. Over the next two years we continued to refine the programme. We used new peer-educators, ran numerous workshops, piloted sessions in schools and continued to promote the virtues of 'outcourse', negotiation, and giving young people the necessary factual knowledge.

During the workshop explorations I concluded that the notion of reaching agreements in acts of sexual intimacy as a series of *verbally* constituted negotiations or contracts was implausible and possibly undesirable. Influenced by Sue Jennings and her dramatherapy and playtherapy model of Embodiment, Projection, Role (EPR), we translated, or 'transmuted', the theatrical idiom from verbal interactions into experimentations with effigies and puppets (Jennings, 1999). By operating mobile hands and mouths, we found that negotiations could indeed be realistically presented as a series of non-verbal 'moves' made by a 'pro-actor', with consensual responses made by the 're-actor'. These often took the form of 'mirroring' a move e.g. as the pro-actor presents their lips for a kiss the move is mirrored with a similar adjustment of the re-actor's mouth to enable the kiss. 'Counter-moves' were devised to indicate a non-consensual response. Below is an excerpt from the transcript of the first ever classroom session, dated 4 July 2001, showing the use of our prototype 'Floor Puppets'. The interplay between a coded set of guidance notes, the floor puppets' action and the participants' responses remains in a protean state, each phase within the iterative cycle providing data to be assimilated and 'scripted' as an emergent classroom practice.

Transcript 9 Get-WISE Classroom Phase 3 - Floor Puppets

JASON = Male Peer 1, **GEORGE** = Male Peer 2, **Sharon** = Female Peer 1, **FL1** = Female Learner 1, **ML1** = Male Learner 1

JASON: Ok. So, to start with, they kiss. So how do we want to show that?

(No immediate response)

Any ideas how we want to show kissing? *(Giggling and muttering but unintelligible comments)*

FL1: Smack their lips all together.

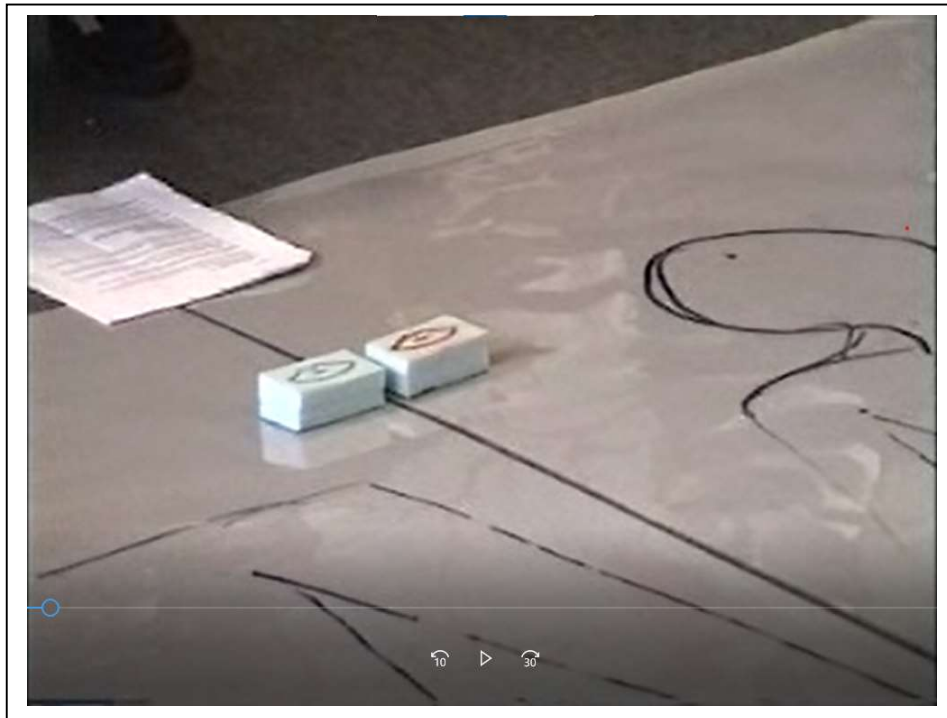
JASON: *(Kneels down, snatches the pink pair of lips from off the female face and plants them roughly down on the blue lips of the male face)...Like that? (The pink lips accidentally tumble off the blue lips)...Is that right?*

FL1: Nooo,..put them in the middle.

(JASON Picks up both mouths and brusquely plants them down equidistant between the heads of the two silhouettes and leans back squatting on his haunches. Figure 11 illustrates the positioning of the red and pink mouths between the two heads, representing a consensual kiss.. In front of Jason's knees, on the floor is an A4 sheet of notes he is following)

[There is a substantial cut in the transcript here]

Figure 11 Floor Puppets – Ken and Barbie kiss



GEORGE: So, it should be talked about in private then?

FL1: It's between them.

GEORGE: But do they talk about it in private?

FL2: I dunno, it depends what the relationship is like.

JASON: *(Brightly with a sense of purpose)* Quite right. We're going to move things on then a bit. Let's see what her reaction is to this.

JASON: *(Lifts the pink hand of Barbie away from the abdominal area of Ken and slaps it down emphatically on Ken's hand which is on her genital area. Then he lifts both hands up to indicate Barbie is moving Ken's hand and with two more slapping sounds first places Ken's hand on Barbie's waist before returning Barbie's hand to Ken's waist. These three moves give off light, percussive slapping sounds)*

FL1: She don't want it.

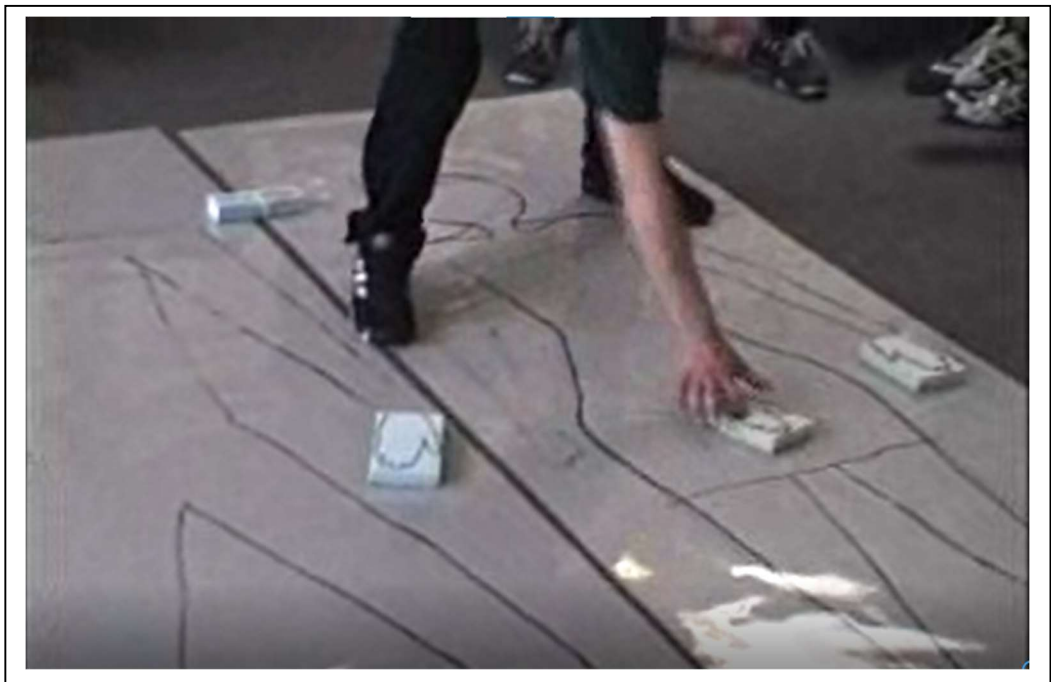
FL2: Right... She...she... moved his hand...

FL1: She removed his hand from there.

FL2: *(Impatiently)* Ok... Next step....next step!

JASON: *(Picks up Ken's hand and slaps it back down on Barbie's genital area. Figure 12 illustrates Jason 'slapping' Ken's hand on Barbie's genital area)*

Figure 12 Floor Puppets - Ken touches Barbie below the waist



FL2: Hmm.

FL1: He's carrying on... 'seeing'...her

GEORGE: No worries

FL1: He wants it up there, but she doesn't like it.

JASON: *(Picks up Barbie's hand, puts it lightly on Ken's hand and moves his hand two centimetres upwards in the direction of her pubic bone)*

FL2: AAhh

GEORGE: What's happened there?

FL1: She lets him...*(three of them smile and giggle nervously as they struggle to find a vocabulary)*

FL1: I dunno.

GEORGE: She lets him what?

ML3: Did she just let him go down there?

JASON: Let's run it again *(he re-arranges the hands to the point where Ken has put his hand on Barbie's genital area for the second time)* So, that's the previous one, we're starting again.

GEORGE: She's already moved his hand away.

JASON: *(Again presents the move again whereby Barbie moves Ken's hand slightly higher)*

FL3: *(Stammering)* Duh..duh...duh?

FL2: Does she let him?

FL3: Yes.

FL1: She moved it up.

SHARON: Not necessarily 'up', maybe to a different place.

GEORGE: Why might she have done that?

FL1: She might not have felt comfortable with it where it was.

GEORGE: Why...might...have been uncomfortable?

FL4: Might have hurt, first time.

GEORGE: What?

FL4: Might have hurt.

GEORGE: *(Overlapping with FL4)* Might have hurt, Yeah. What...might have been too hard or something?

FL2: He might have shoved too many fingers up.

(Five or more of the girls laugh loudly FL1 and FL2 covering their faces with their hands)

Non-verbal interactions

Strikingly, this convention of playing out the negotiation on the floor using these 2D images and no words, precipitates a variety of unsolicited interactions. Conventions for how to present moves are suggested, a parallel spoken commentary on the wordless action becomes a novel dimension of the discourse; this time the girls are much more vociferous than the boys and many more different individuals contribute. Unlike the previous negotiations around sexual intimacy, this one is in the present tense and one of the learners is impatient to find out what happens next. The 2D puppet action, however, is only one performative convention within a polysemic event. The sequence of moves goes beyond the presentation of a narrative. It engages the participants collectively in the puzzle of trying to interpret the non-verbal transcripts of the characters. The learners are mentalizing, testing the viability of their own social scripts through verbalised interactions with their peers. Having advanced them to an appropriate juncture in the narrative, the peers initiate a closer interrogation of the meanings and norms governing learners' interactions.

The sequence of moves described above were designed to suggest the female character, Barbie, wanted Ken to move his hand up from her vagina and pay some attention to her clitoris. This seemed to perplex the learners and cued the female peer to continue to ask why they thought she'd moved his hand to a different position but still in the pelvic area. Having primed them with the question, which the learners were either reluctant or unable to answer, the

diagrams of the male and female genitalia were presented to the learners. These were the same graphically as the originals from 1997, but the key pieces of information were now part of the anatomical labelling, enabling the peers to ask questions like, “So which is the most sensitive part of the female pelvis?” “What is special about the clitoris?” “Why might Barbie have moved his hand there?” “What is the most sensitive part for the male?” These diagrams still had an initial shock value, with learners flinching from them at first and passing them on to the next person rather than holding them in their hands. The learners’ reactions of shock and laughter, coupled with a reluctance to engage are captured in Figure 13 below. In the left hand photo is a blond girl holding the diagram and offering it to her friend, who draws back with a protective gesture of covering her face with her hand. Intriguingly, in the right hand photo they are all sitting on their hands. In both pictures they are clearly laughing.

Figure 13 Diagrams of male and female genitalia – initial shock value



However, once they started to interact with the peers, their attention became more focused, and it became clear that the information on the diagrams brought added meaning to the actions of the puppets. They settled to the task and showed intense interest. In Figure 14 we see a group of boys who, having

experienced the initial shock, are now studying the diagrams with intense interest.

Figure 14 Diagrams of male and female genitalia – intense interest



Their initial response of not wanting to be seen looking too closely at the diagrams could have arisen out of the taboo nature of the subject matter and normally clandestine activity of looking at pornography, but the peers' persistence legitimised their engagement, giving the anatomical knowledge a purpose within the context of a relationship.

Ken and Barbie -the negotiation game

The wants and worries of Ken and Barbie had been printed out on slips of paper, so that someone playing the role of Ken would know his wants and worries but not know the wants and worries of Barbie. Conversely, someone playing Barbie would know her wants and worries but not know Ken's. The learners played by performing the moves of the floor puppets according to the wants and worries of their designated character without using words. Simultaneously they were required to interpret the moves of the other character and succeed in the game by guessing what they wanted.

This 'game' was played very successfully in several permutations with apprehensive learners being playfully cajoled into coming up to present the moves of characters involved in negotiating a degree of sexual intimacy. In Figure 15 we see how the peer, Jason, stands beside the learners and gently teases them into participating in the game and manipulating the puppets. There were long periods during which the class were spellbound, followed by laughter and clapping as their friends guessed right.

Figure 15 Floor Puppets- Apprehensive learners being playfully cajoled



Aesthetic distance and durable transformations

The Ken and Barbie floor puppets served the primary performative function of exposing the existing norm or taboo which interdicted any verbal negotiation of sexual intimacy. This taboo was experienced as a tongue-tied awkwardness. Furthermore, the puppets facilitated a transmutation of the awkwardness by

creating a novel performative idiom and semiocity facilitating a discourse that, hitherto, had no means of being articulated in a classroom setting. The participants were enabled to successfully play a game in which, through their characters' moves, they could exercise their own capacity to mentalize by 'guessing' their partner's wants and thereby explore and test novel social scripts.

Its mechanistic qualities deprived the spectacle of a theatrical aesthetic. Performers walked over the images, rucking up the plastic surfaces suggesting little empathetic connection between the moves and the characters. See Figure 16 below. In manipulating the mouths and hands there was no attempt at animation, no hint of 'bringing to life' these most expressive parts of the human body. Rather, they remained quite abstract, detached from any human personas. They were often moved roughly and slapped noisily onto the effigies like a series of vigorous moves in a game of drafts. It seems paradoxical, then, that whilst playing the game, the binary distinction between actor and character remained intact, but the character and spectator binary became ambiguous as onlookers sometimes touched and squirmed as they transcribed or mirrored the puppets' moves onto their own bodies.

Figure 16 Floor Puppets – Performers walking over the images



Nevertheless, the puppet operators were clearly just that - people who showed the moves of Ken and Barbie. Arguably, the names 'Ken' and 'Barbie', borrowed from the famous and frequently mocked plastic children's dolls, contributed to the parodic aesthetic and the apparent lack of affective engagement or identification. This affective and aesthetic distancing, separating the subject status of the participants from the object status of the puppets, is a well-documented concept in dramatherapy and play-therapy (Jennings, 1998, pp. 115-117; Landy, 1986, pp. 98-100; Landy, 1996). It would seem, therefore, that this distancing process actually facilitated the engagement of the learners in two, otherwise impenetrable but necessary, dimensions of negotiating sexual intimacy. Firstly, by framing it as a sequence of *non-verbal* initiatives and responses through a series of game-like moves. Secondly, by introducing the anatomical diagrams with relevant biological information of male and female genitalia and their responses to stimuli.

Challenges and compromises of scaling-up

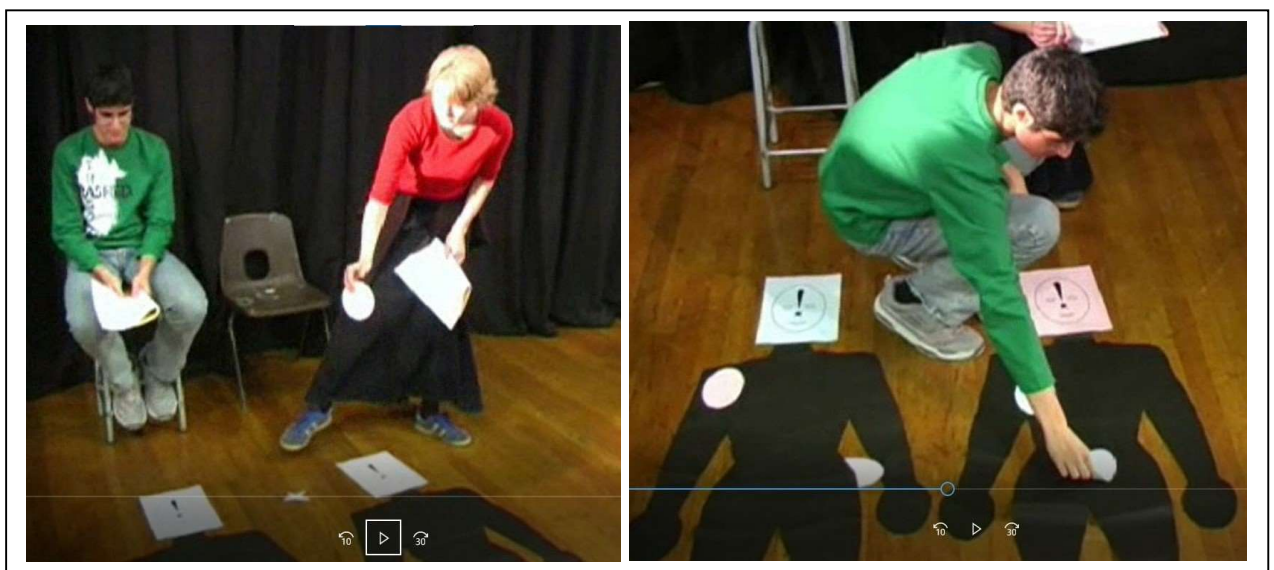
By 2003, a programme of three Get-WISE sessions had been formulated and systematised as peer manuals or scripts and was being piloted in six schools in Manchester, Wales, Devon and Somerset. Despite our pilot runs with sixth formers aged 17 – 18 years, we were compelled to work almost exclusively with Year 11 GCSE drama students aged 15 -16 years as facilitators, and in one school the peer facilitators were Year 10 drama students. The main reason for this lowering of the age of facilitators was that all the sixth formers had been recruited for the main Apause Peers programme. This lowering of the age of the peer facilitators was inevitably reflected in their being developmentally less mature with fewer presentational skills. This limitation was challenging enough, but it was compounded by the problem that the mentalizing and social scripts required to negotiate sexual intimacy demanded a higher order of interactional competency than the mere assertiveness skills in the Apause Peers programme and yet the latter were facilitated by the more mature sixth formers.

Improvisations give way to reading scenes and projective activities

Due to the pressure of coming up with a replicable and economic programme which did not make excessive time demands on the volunteer peer-educators and the schools, the tried and tested methodology of scripting seemed most expedient. This was only partly justified by the increasing success the workshops were showing by deploying the principle of aesthetic distancing. Accordingly, whole scenes were scripted and not improvised, learners were not expected to participate in role-plays, but build-up responses on 'Get-WISE' negotiation masks laid out according to pro-forma common to all negotiations under scrutiny. This system reflected our growing awareness that successful negotiations were rarely achieved purely in the moment but required a high

degree of anticipation and mentalizing, and so the Get-WISE mask was applied as a transition object, affording a degree of comfort and control in both the preparation and performance phases of a negotiation. The characters of Ken and Barbie became the more gender neutral 'Jason' and 'Sam' and the narrative followed their developing relationship as a series of stages, each requiring its own negotiation, with reaching agreement on intimacy requiring a distinctive, non-verbal approach. Hence floor puppets were brought into play but using a scripted format with the characters of Jason and Sam being represented as two operators sitting on chairs at the heads of two, gender-neutral, black silhouettes in fabric. Greater aesthetic distance was achieved, the performance of the 'moves' was much more nuanced, and we discovered they could be expressive of characters' affective state and cognitive processes. The floor puppets were never trampled on. See Figure 17 for this more conventionally theatrical aesthetic.

Figure 17 Floor Puppets – Illustrating greater aesthetic distance



This presentation of non-verbal negotiation included interludes for discussion, hot-seating the characters, examining their Get-WISE masks (See Figure 18, page 283 below), writing plausible responses, exploring an extended vocabulary of touch and introducing the much-improved diagrams.

Quantitative evaluation of the experiences of 1300 participants

The 2003 pilot also presented the opportunity to refine the quantitative evaluation instrument of pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. In accordance with Okagbue's TfD design brief, the peer-educators made significant contributions to the eighteen items contained in the questionnaire and the promising start of 1997 was reflected in the 2003 study involving 1300 respondents. These will be presented in detail for discussion shortly but suffice it to say there were statistically significant and large positive shifts in knowledge, normative beliefs, and, most importantly, in self-efficacy surrounding the respondents' beliefs in their capacity to manage their relationships through negotiation.

This systematising of the classroom protocols, the reliance on reading from scripts, modelling intimate negotiations (rather than offering opportunities to directly involve learners in role-plays) and aesthetic distancing, however, came with a price as it progressively broke away from Okagbue's TfD model. The classroom action lost its sense of fun, subversion and danger. Characters and roles were legitimately *played* and represented with the effective use of aesthetic distance, but the more the intervention was driven by the orthodoxies of applied theatre, and those 'serious' epistemic sensibilities discussed by Daniel (1996), Thompson (2004) and Gusul (2015) - particularly those of character and maintaining a narrative - the less facilitative of *metaplay* and its

ontic potential became the performance space. It was less liminoid, the collapsing of various binaries which seemed intrinsic to creating performative and playful interactions, was less a feature. Overall, the sense of autopoiesis was diminished. At the time, I did not have Fischer-Lichte's analytical framework with which to identify these deficits, but I was uncomfortably aware that the scripting moved the programme away from the fluidly, iterative process-based model of TfD which was *facilitated* by peers *with* the learners, towards a more stable, product and outcome driven theatre mode which was *delivered* by peers *to* the learners.

On the Get-WISE mask below, designed for private small group work, we see how Sam prepares and performs the act of offering to masturbate Jason, using the algorithm of Wants & Worries, Information, Solutions (performed as words and/or actions) and finally Evaluation. This mask has a counterpart for Jason with an equivalent detailed, labelled diagram of female genitalia for Jason to have the necessary knowledge and self-efficacy to masturbate Sam.

Figure 18 Get-WISE mask for preparing and performing a negotiation.

Sam needs to prepare

<p>WANTS</p> <p>& WORRIES</p> <p>Upsetting Chris by not taking things a bit further.</p> <p>Spoiling the relationship.</p> <p>Does not know how to do it right.</p>	<p>To keep the relationship going and make Chris happy.</p> <p>Wants to take the physical side of things a bit further.</p> <p>Touch Chris below the waist and make him "come".</p>	<p>INFORMATION</p> <p>Sam needs to know that Chris is happy about being touched below the waist.</p> <p>Sam needs to know about the male sex organs (genitals) and know the sensitive areas.</p> <p>Sam needs to know some ways to touch Chris that will make him happy.</p> <p>Needs to be prepared for him to "come" - maybe have some tissues ready!</p>
<p>EVALUATE</p> <p>Sam knows enough about the male sex organs and how to touch Chris.</p> <p>Sam thinks Chris is up for it.</p> <p>Sam is happy about taking things a bit further.</p> <p>Sam is not going to let her embarrassment stop her.</p>	<p>SOLUTIONS</p> <p><i>Write here all the things Sam could actually <u>do</u> which do not require words.</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p><i>Write here all the things Sam might say, the actual <u>words or phrases</u> she could use</i></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

By around 2005, I was eventually able to restore some of the original, more performative and playful processes to the programme by extending it into a four-session intervention and thereby introducing a game based on mini-scenes

for a very wide range of negotiations performed by couples. See Appendix 6 for a synopsis of all four sessions.

In retrospect, I think I may have offered a more effective convention for situated learning combined with greater potential for playfulness if I had re-instated variations of the floor puppet negotiations that were so successfully performed by learners in the first trial session and described above. This should also have facilitated negotiations between same sex couples. The learners worked in six teams of around four per team; every player was required to perform in a negotiation in front of the class at least once. There were three 'rapid-fire' rounds so, in all, eighteen different negotiations were performed. Each performance was scored, with three points given for simply reading the scene, four for memorising it, and five for presenting an improvised scene based on the script. Bonus points for effort, overcoming shyness, entertainment value, novel solutions and any other special qualities could be awarded according to the jurisdiction of the peers.

This format brought back to the performance space the serendipitous character of earlier pilots, as the peers' conspicuously subjective judgements resulted in controversial scores on the white board, with learners contesting or applauding the points. Suddenly, it was a playful experience again. As the learners' confidence and commitment increased, they would be emboldened to take greater risks with each round, improvising for more points and gaining bonus points for novel solutions or pure entertainment value. The classroom had become a liminoid and playful space, owned by the young people in spite of the scripts and the presence of a teacher. Learners moved between presentational

tropes as actors, characters and their own personas, frequently taking pleasure in parodying the scripts and reversing gendered roles.

The unique achievement, afforded by the forensically investigative approach of TfD, was the uncomfortable revelation of the normatively imposed constraints on our discourses around sexual intimacy. Moreover, by application of the same principle of yet further interrogation but re-framed or transmuted into an alternative performative or theatrical convention, the negotiation is advanced and ultimately a resolution is achieved. According to our behavioural theory, it is reasonable to extrapolate that if the learners do not have adequate words or actions to demonstrate their agency in the relative safety and fictional context of Forum Theatre, then that lack of agency could be an impediment to performing protective behaviours in their real-life encounters, exposing them to regretted if not risky outcomes. So, whilst TfD exposes the normalised limitations of verbal discourses, it has an emancipatory function of constituting novel discourses, offering alternative codes, symbols and social scripts which the subject might draw on in the citational and iterative processes of 'real-life' encounters.

In subordinating the primacy of an authorial, script-led ethos to a collaborative and exploratory approach, Okagbue's TfD was at its most effective when it became manifest as play and playfulness in a Theatre of Applied Performativity. It gave license to transform and reconfigure the verbal discourse into novel theatrical idioms. Such a play-orientated, almost transgressive, ideology disarms the restrictive influence of gendered and sexual norms as instituted through daily verbal language forms. It sublimates the debilitating awkwardness by facilitating the emergence of novel theatre making practices in which the regulative function of prevailing norms is rendered inoperative and lacking any

immediate social purchase. The process of releasing the participants from the tension felt as awkwardness is met with a sense of relief, and a more relaxed and playful range of responses, such as laughter, greater freedom of movement, freedom to talk and a willingness to enter into the next phase. This phenomenon of shapeshifting deadlocked discourses and sexual impasses between theatrical idioms had already started to emerge in the earlier, exploratory stages of Get-WISE. It was characterised as a sequence of four distinct phases, dubbed the 'creative transmutation of awkwardness' (see Figure 10, page 266).

At its most effective, this sequence of processes is materialized initially as an epistemic application of theatre forms being antecedent to more ontic performative realisations as play and playfulness. Accordingly, the Get-WISE explorations consolidated and became increasingly codified around a series of theatrical practices. These comprised three, then four, Scripted Performance Workshops which revealed the scope of, and challenges specific to, adolescent negotiations. Such practices, not dependent on verbal idioms included facilitating the class in an embodied experience of working in pairs and experiencing a physical negotiation as a mirroring exercise. Having encountered and explored the parameters of the negotiations as visual projection and inscribed on the negotiation mask, the moves are presented through the floor puppets. A series of mirrored moves is quite reasonably interpreted by the two actors (and the spectators) as a sequence of consensual sexual gestures of increasing intimacy which require little or no verbal interaction. When a move is not mirrored, when the re-actor removes the hand of the pro-actor from that part of the anatomy, the action is understood to be

non-consensual and the observers are unanimous that a verbal explanation is not necessary for the pro-actor to get the message.

Okagbue's TfD model with its emphasis on process over product was, and remains, the most powerful means within the Apause research practices of creating a sequence of theatrical and performative moments which reveal and interrogate the constraints of prevailing norms. Without having first engaged with Okagbue's model, the TAP model, which theorises an interplay between the regulative and constitutive parameters of play, could not have been conceived.

Durable Transformation – achieved at the performative interplay between social norms and awkwardness.

Whilst acknowledging the risks of grandiosity, if pushed, I would posit that both quantitative and qualitative evidence points to the performative interplay between social norms and awkwardness within which play and playfulness achieve their durable transformation. Hence 'normativisation processes' emerge as the most influential of the regulatory psycho-social parameters. I would, however, want to qualify that assertion by suggesting that it is in the specific and taboo context of discourses surrounding adolescent sexual intimacy that norms exercise such a high degree of influence. This dynamic is time limited and further intensified by the 'experience-expectant plasticity' of the developing adolescent brain. It is entirely conceivable that in other areas of adolescent life, or in a demographic where socio-cultural norms manifest differently, play might be more demonstrably impactful on self-efficacy beliefs and affective states.

Get-WISE Evidence of Transformation and Discussion

There were three distinct cycles within the development of Get-WISE. The first cycle comprised just two sessions facilitated by peer-educators and was run in 1997 - 1998 (Evans *et al.*, 1998). The second cycle comprised three sessions, including the floor puppets and extending to scenarios contingent around the access and use of sexual health services. The third session of this second cycle was supported by visiting health professionals and ran between 1998 and 2003. The third and final cycle of Get-WISE spread the programme over four sessions. This was developed to reinstate the more playful, spontaneous qualities characteristic of the first cycle. Implemented from 2004 onwards, in this final version of Get-WISE the health services component was facilitated entirely by peer-educators in the absence of health professionals.

In assessing the evidence of transformation, I will be drawing primarily on quantitative data generated in the second cycle using pre and post-intervention self-report questionnaires administered during the academic year 2002 – 2003. The questionnaires were designed with the peer-educators and piloted with a sample of the learners. A series of statements were developed to ascertain changes in the respondents with regard to determinants of behaviour within the domain of managing intimate relationships and sexual health. Drawing on the theory base of Collaborative Goals, the determinants have been theorised, reiterated and reframed as the *regulative parameters of applied performativity*. The four core categories of determinants antecedent to subsequent behaviour were identified as knowledge; attitudes; normative beliefs; and perceived self-efficacy. Whilst attempting to report these quantitative findings as ostensibly separate categories, from the performative perspective of this thesis, it will be

also be seen that the distinctions between parameters are not always as stable as psycho-social theory would suggest.

Questionnaires were designed and administered according to the protocols described in Chapter 4 on implementation. Quantitative analysis was achieved using simple categorical statistics based on SPSS with Chi-square and the Mann-Whitney U Test to measure directional shifts. Eight schools were involved in the one evaluation cycle, including schools from Manchester, Powys in Wales, Somerset and Devon. The sample size was approximately 1300 students.

Gains in Sexual Health Knowledge

Unlike A pause Peers, Get-WISE was conceived as a theatre-based intervention. Consequently, any sexual health knowledge components were either intrinsic to the action of the role plays or could be inferred from them. Unlike in A pause Peer sessions, they were not presented as facts with slides of supporting information projected onto a screen. Almost all the knowledge was contextualised and constructed through the interpretation of short scenes performed in front of the class either by peer-educators or by class members themselves. This makes the statistically significant gains achieved in relevant sexual health knowledge particularly intriguing.

In presenting statistical analyses, wherever appropriate and possible, it is normal to express statistical significance as a 'P' value. The value of P is a numerical representation of the probability that the effect measured could be attributable to chance. Hence, the smaller the P value, the greater the statistical significance. Within our calculations any P value equal to or less than 0.05 is treated as significant, meaning there is less than 5% probability that the change

is due to chance. Where $P < 0.01$ the shift is regarded as highly significant and values smaller than $P=0.001$ suggest the possibility of the measured effect being attributable to chance is less than 1 in 1000, indicating an extremely significant shift. The data presented below is derived from an unpublished presentation I gave at the Peninsula Medical School, University of Exeter, Annual Research Event in 2005. For brevity, percentages were only included if it was considered they brought important additional insights to the presentation.

Probabilities in Knowledge Gains

Statement 5 *'Knowing what is normal and not normal for your body is more important than knowing the names of STIs'*. Combined girls and boys showed a significant gain in knowledge ($P = 0.013$)

Statement 7 *'If a friend needed Emergency Contraception, I would know where to take them to get free and confidential help'*. Combined girls and boys showed a highly significant gain in knowledge ($P < 0.0005$)

Statement 8 *'If a friend thought that they might have an STI, I would know where to take them to get help'*. Combined girls and boys showed a highly significant gain in knowledge ($P < 0.0005$)

Statement 11 *'Knowing when you've taken a risk is more important than knowing the symptoms of STIs'*. Combined girls and boys showed a highly significant gain in knowledge ($P = 0.001$)

Statement 12 *'Most people who have the common STI Chlamydia do not know they've got it'*. Combined girls and boys did not show a significant gain in knowledge ($P = 0.124$)

The first four statements evidenced significant gains in knowledge. Statement 12 did not. This apparently anomalous effect is hard to explain, as it seems unlikely that nearly 84 % of respondents understood that Chlamydia was

asymptomatic even before the intervention. The structure of the first session required the peers to perform an exemplar negotiation called, “No condom, no sex” in order to establish that the learners did actually understand what was meant by a negotiation prior to completing the questionnaire. On analysing the scripts more closely, the text did, in fact, imply that the characters might possibly have an STI and not know about it. Thus, inadvertently, the first scene shown immediately prior to administering the questionnaire also contained enough information to enable attentive and discerning students to answer that statement correctly - even if they had no prior knowledge of Chlamydia. This, I would contest, strengthens the case for the use of simple role plays as an effective medium for the social construction of knowledge and testifies to how closely the learners must have been following the action.

It could be contended that the questions that address accessing health care services do not actually measure a gain in knowledge since the respondent has no way of demonstrating that they actually are in possession of the requisite information. Apart from the fact that it would be hugely difficult to process and cross-reference all the respondents’ answers to open-ended questions against the actual service provision in their particular vicinity, the questions are designed to gauge something the team believed to be of more health value than factual knowledge gain in itself. The questions are framed to find out to what extent their knowledge would enable them to assist a friend to the local services. This belief in their having the requisite knowledge to carry out an action, again points to knowledge gain as having social currency with some implied health behaviour. It also demonstrates that even in the third session in which the learners are reading back their own prepared role plays of using

sexual health services which are not performed by the peer-educators but by their own class members, they still seem to have a confident recall of the requisite information. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that this particular application of performativity as theatrical presentations is very effective at generating relevant knowledge antecedent to improved health behaviours.

Attitudinal Changes

There were seven statements to establish attitudes on relationships, negotiation and risk taking. (Table 2 below) Two showed a significant change towards more conservative values which are reported in the NFER report as 'greater maturity' (Blenkinsop, 2004). These established that participants considered being prepared for a negotiation, and not leaving it to the last minute, as being of greater importance after the intervention than before. It appears that the intervention had a greater effect on boys ($P=0.006$) in both instances.

Four attitudinal questions established a high prevalence of positive attitudes towards sexual and relational health. These showed changes towards increased maturity but did not achieve statistical significance.

Data for the statement: 'Letting your partner know that you want to use a condom is more difficult than letting them know that you want to have sex' showed a significant move towards agreeing and agreeing strongly in the girls ($P= 0.008$) whereas for boys the shift was negligible ($P=0.839$) but in the opposite direction.

Table 2 Probabilities of Attitudinal shifts in: Relationships, negotiation and risk taking

(A) = shift towards agreeing, (D) = shift towards disagreeing **Bold** = significant

	OVERALL	BOYS	GIRLS
9. Letting your partner know you want to use a condom is more difficult than letting them know that you want to have sex	P=0.092 (A)	P=0.839 (D)	P=0.008 (A)*
10. For me it would be more important to keep a good relationship going than to have sex	P=0.594 (A)	P=0.765 (D)	P=0.348 (A)
13. If a young person is prepared to have sex they should be prepared to ask to use a condom	P=0.495 (D)	P=0.178 (D)	P=0.949 (D)
How important is...			
14. Being prepared for a negotiation	P=0.004 (A)*	P=0.006 (A)*	P=0.685 (A)
15. Controlling your embarrassment	P=0.066 (A)	P=0.383 (A)	P=0.308 (A)
16. Being in a good relationship	P=0.785 (D)	P=0.350 (D)	P=0.943 (A)
17. Not leaving it until the last minute	P=0.002 (A)*	P=0.006 (A)*	P=0.316 (A)

This is a challenging finding to interpret, partly because the programme was developed to effect an attitudinal move in the direction towards it being *less* difficult to let your partner know that you want to use a condom, but for girls, it

seems, that they have learned that it is *more* difficult than letting your partner know you want to have sex. If this finding was due to the initial 'No condom, no sex' role play depicting a girl who was prepared to ask a boy to have sex but apparently not confident or knowledgeable enough to insist on using a condom, then it appears the programme proceeded to reinforce that position. The boy was proactive in the negotiation and succeeded in persuading the girl they should go to the pub and buy some condoms from a vending machine. The scene might have strongly suggested that it was much easier for a girl to propose having sex than to bring up the subject of using a condom. This would have artificially elevated their belief that girls found it harder to suggest using a condom than to let their partner know they wanted sex. But this scene was performed *prior* to administering the pre-intervention questionnaire and should therefore have influenced the girls to agree with the statement. The programme design, it was hoped, would subsequently create learning opportunities for them to change their minds and thereby show a significant shift towards disagreeing with the statement in the post-intervention questionnaire. This does not appear to have been the case. It might demonstrate how difficult it is to change an attitude once it has been established through presenting a convincing model.

Apparently, in total contradiction to this explanation, when asked to consider the self-efficacy item 'I believe I could perform in real life a negotiation like the ones shown in the WISE sessions – and ask to use a condom', here there was no significant change and 93+% believed they could negotiate using a condom both pre- and post-intervention. Again, the pre-intervention self-efficacy scores seem unrealistically optimistic – since teenagers and adults alike are notoriously poor users of condoms. This suggests that modelling can have two effects; one

would seem to impact on a normative belief or perception of how a respondent thinks *most* people (but not necessarily the respondent) would behave, and the other which impacts directly on the respondents' personal assessment of their *own personal* capacity.

By the end of the programme there was one scene in which a girl was very strong at insisting on using a condom, and the floor puppets showed the girl being very effective at establishing a stopping point and initiating non-penetrative forms of intimacy. Both of these scenes modelled high self-efficacy in girls. Whilst the former showed no improvement on an already unrealistically high pre-intervention score, the latter (negotiating non-penetrative sex) achieved significant improvements in the post-intervention scores. The project did not have a deleterious effect on this belief in the girls whilst at the same time changing their attitude to a more realistic position, namely, that of acknowledging that it can be a difficult thing to do.

An unexpectedly mature or conservative attitude about the relative importance of sex in a relationship was not changed by the intervention, 'For me it would be more important to keep a good relationship going than to have sex.' In boys 85% agreed both pre- and post-intervention, whilst for girls it remained unchanged at around 97%. This was a curious and unexpectedly encouraging finding in the light of the peer educators' assertion that many male teenagers only want a girlfriend for sex. Once again, the more conservative attitude might have been modelled and inculcated in the opening scene – prior to the questionnaire.

Normative Beliefs and Self-Efficacy Beliefs Normative Beliefs

Three important normative beliefs were examined.

'For most teenagers, having sex is more important than keeping a good relationship going.'

This was treated as a normative belief because it attempts to ascertain the respondent's belief about most teenagers *in general*, as compared to a more personal attitudinal statement about their own *individually* held belief. This showed that the intervention had no negative impact with 68.5% disagreeing with the statement pre-intervention and 69.7% post-. We consider, by contrast, the figure of around 90% of 15 year olds who *personally* rate keeping a good relationship going as being more important for them than having sex (see attitudinal item above) to be a strong vindication of our conviction that they would attach value to learning negotiation skills in order to keep those relationships going. This is further corroborated by the figure of 68.4% agreeing in the post-intervention questionnaire with the statement that they, 'will probably find the sessions useful, either soon or at some time in the future'. This gap of around 20% between what individuals believe to be right for themselves versus what they think is a social norm might account for their reported experience of pressure to become sexually involved, as encountered in Apause Peers.

The erroneous statement: 'Most teenagers have had sex by 16', showed only 42.5% disagreeing pre-intervention rising to 57.5% post-intervention, with both boys and girls showing extremely significant shifts of belief ($P < 0.0005$). This normative belief has proved to be powerfully associated with postponement of sexual debut by 16 (Mellanby *et al.*, 1995; Mellanby *et al.*, 2001). We were initially concerned that showing three scenes in which teenagers negotiated using condoms would persuade them that most teenagers were indeed having

sex before 16. However, the prevalence of alternative scenarios, in which the processes of successfully negotiating non-penetrative sexual intimacy were modelled and explored through learner participation, must have had a very strong impact on this important normative belief.

In relation to the statement, 'Most teenagers would find it easier to agree on using a condom in a long-term relationship rather than in a short-term relationship or a one night stand', 83.4% agreed pre- and 80.3% post- suggesting that teenagers believe longer term relationships are better for managing their sexual health, the overall effect of the intervention is a slight but significant move from agreeing strongly to only agreeing. This somewhat unexpected effect of the programme was greater in boys ($P=0.025$) than girls ($P=0.789$) and may suggest a higher baseline among girls' in their self-efficacy belief of being able to negotiate using a condom even when not in a long-term relationship. Additionally, it could point to a perceptual shift in the boys towards anticipating situations in which they will not always be in a long-term relationship but may have the opportunity to have sexual intercourse - as in the scene, 'Outside the Club'. In such circumstances, it would be equally important to negotiate using a condom, but the effect of the intervention was to strengthen their belief that the performance of such a negotiation is something they could achieve even if, at that stage, they were not in a long term relationship.

Whilst this explanation remains little more than conjecture, once again it demonstrates how arbitrary the rubricizing of an item in a questionnaire can be – what might be designated a normative belief could just as easily also be an indication of an individual's self-efficacy. Indeed, as Bandura has demonstrated, a powerful source of self-efficacy information is the observation of a similar

behaviour successfully performed by another with whom the subject has some social connectedness or with whom they might identify. This was, in fact, what was being modelled in a scene called, 'Outside the Club'. Here a couple who had "sort of got off with each other a couple of times before, but they've never taken the physical side of things very far" (explanation read from a script by a peer) nevertheless, they successfully negotiated agreeing to buy some condoms before going back to Ali's place.

Self-efficacy Belief

Notwithstanding the limitations of categorising items as exclusive parameters, two questions were designated as testing for self-efficacy beliefs (See Table 3 Below). As discussed above, there is also a strong case for suggesting a third statement, *'Most teenagers would find it too hard to suggest there might be a risk of STIs before they had sex with their partner'* could also be a proxy measure of the respondents' personal belief in their capacity to perform such an interaction.

- a) Belief in ability to negotiate using a condom.

Here there was no significant change 93+% believed they could negotiate using a condom both pre- and post-intervention.

- b) The statement: *'If I did not want to have sexual intercourse but wanted to enjoy sexual intimacy, I believe I could let my partner know how far I was happy to go'*.

Here there was a significant shift ($P=0.02$) towards agreeing strongly, with a greater effect for girls than boys. Although both boys and girls had high self-efficacy belief (approx. 90% agreed with the statement both pre- and post-) the project appears to have strengthened the girls' belief that they could perform this kind of negotiation.

We consider this to be very important because at this age, proportionately more of the girls than boys are likely to be in a relationship which involves some degree of sexual intimacy, and the girls are therefore more likely to have a realistic assessment of their capacity to negotiate. Boys, it appears, simply believe that they can manage this kind of interaction, although a small minority will have been in a position to test their confidence.

Table 3 P values for items for self-efficacy beliefs (SEB) and normative beliefs (NB)

Agree = (A) Disagree = (D) **Bold** = significant

	OVERALL	BOYS	GIRLS
1. I believe I could perform in real life a negotiation like the ones shown in the WISE sessions – and ask to use a condom (SEB)	0.476 (A)	0.579 (D)	0.545 (A)
2. For most teenagers, having sex is more important than keeping a good relationship (NB)	0.541 (D)	0.257 (D)	0.986 (D)
3. Most teenagers have had sex by sixteen (NB)	0.0005 (D)*	0.0005 (D)*	0.0005 (D)*
6. Most teenagers would find it too hard to suggest there might be a risk of STIs before they had sex with their partner (NB) and/or (SEB)	0.016 (D)*	0.762 (D)	0.024 (D)*
18. If I didn't want to have sexual intercourse but wanted to enjoy sexual	0.020 (A)*	0.713 (A)	0.035 (A)*

intimacy, I believe I could let my partner know how far I was happy to go (SEB)			
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In our attempt to get immediate feedback on the usefulness, embarrassment, enjoyment and interest generated by the project, we put four questions in the learners' individual workbooks with the intention of collating the data from the workbooks after the third and final session. However, it was discovered too late in the project, that time constraints in the third session made the completion of these workbooks unreliable and so four items were put into the post-intervention questionnaire to be completed after the peer sessions and administered by teachers. For the data set in this analysis only the last two schools had the questions in the post-intervention questionnaire and therefore we only have reliable data for approximately 250 students on these four questions.

Importantly, one of the pilot schools which achieved the lowest league table rating in the Devon LEA (St Luke's High School, where I got my first drama teaching post) got very similar overall scores on the four questions on how it was received compared to the other school which was one of the highest rated schools in Devon. This demonstrated that a Year 11 drama group from a school with low academic attainment, who in addition were deemed to be unusually weak, were able to deliver the project very nearly as effectively as the drama students from a much higher achieving school.

Aggregating the data from both schools, 68.4% agreed the intervention would be useful either now or at some time in the future, 56.2% found the intervention interesting, 80.1% did not find the intervention embarrassing and only 40.4% found the intervention enjoyable.

Despite the relative paucity of this data, I conclude that the learners found the experience relevant to their lives and anticipated finding it useful. However, it appears that 60% of this sample did not find it enjoyable. This disappointing finding, I believe, reflects the lack of opportunity for the learners themselves to participate in unscripted or spontaneous role plays. I regarded this, at the time, as a serious shortcoming and, on reviewing the data, created the four-session version of Get-WISE which incorporated more spontaneous role plays.

As well as reporting less enjoyment than in previous surveys (both Apause Peers and Get-WISE), the respondents also reported significantly less embarrassment and according to the thinking underpinning the *creative transmutation of awkwardness*, which attaches great importance to the transformative interplay between social norms and embarrassment, these two findings are closely related. As discussed earlier in this chapter and in the review of the Apause Peers data, embarrassment and/or awkwardness, and a sense of fun and playfulness whilst being distinct affective states also seem to serve a function in an oscillatory dynamic. So, in relation to the regulatory or 'prescribed' participation in the performative presentation of intimate behaviours for all participants, it appears that the social drama requires the generation of all those feelings of apprehension, ambivalence and anxiety. Such feelings are experienced both collectively and individually. They are not affectations or simulations. Critically, there is always a degree of uncertainty of outcome – neither the individual nor the class collectively know if the negotiation as it is presented in the role-play will prove felicitous. As Schechner argues, uncertainty of outcome distinguishes social drama from aesthetic drama.

Again, differences between social drama and aesthetic drama are not easy to specify. Social drama has more variables, the outcome is in doubt – it is more like a game or sporting contest. Aesthetic drama is almost entirely prearranged, and the participants can concentrate not on strategies for achieving their goals [...] but on displays. Aesthetic drama is less instrumental and more ornamental than social drama. (Schechner, 2007, p. 125)

In *Apause Peers* - and the earlier more experimental iterations of *Get-WISE* - during the moments when performative interactions achieved their greatest intensity, such feelings of awkwardness, embarrassment and uncertainty, become finally assuaged by the playful achievement of a successful performance. This is rewarded with social approbation and elevated respect. With *Get-WISE*, after its early success, gradually, I moved away from a social drama and created a more aesthetic drama. The floor puppets were operated with control and clarity, the effigies were treated with respect, without being trampled on. However, most detrimentally, the learners did not get the opportunity to risk trying a role-play in which success was merely contingent. In creating a 'safe' set of theatrical fictions which *represented* clandestine and taboo behaviours, despite their verisimilitude, it appears I also diminished some of the embarrassment, avoided the sense of jeopardy and reduced the performative, *presentational* and constitutive agency for the participants. This 'improved' form of applied theatre enables the actor/facilitators to demonstrate high degrees of aesthetic and interactional competency and perform a convincing narrative and characters. However, the mitigation of the experience of awkwardness and jeopardy and depriving them the opportunity to risk failure at enactive mastery is, I believe, a structural weakness of much of TIE and

applied theatre. In this sense, my practice gradually deviated from a Theatre of Applied Performativity and in some respects was more allied with TIE.

The same cohorts of students who completed the pre- and post- intervention questionnaires in Get-WISE went on to Year 11 and completed the much more comprehensive four hundred item Apause Year 11 questionnaire. Whilst it was impossible to achieve appropriate and meaningful like-for-like demographic matching between Apause Peers and Get-WISE schools, on some important parameters the Get-WISE schools appeared to have made important improvements compared with non-Apause schools and on some questionnaire items were at least comparable with the Apause Peers schools.

This statistically less admissible evidence from the Year 11 questionnaire suggests that despite the shortcomings in terms of lack of opportunity to participate in role-plays, overall, Get-WISE was more effective than control schools in positively influencing the quality of relationships and sexual risk-taking behaviours. Additionally, there is evidence which suggests that the third cycle of Get-WISE, spread over four sessions with opportunities for more spontaneous role-plays, proved more enjoyable, and was at least as effective as Apause Peers at influencing relationships and behaviours and consistently demonstrated improvements compared with non-Apause control schools.

Get-WISE was funded by the Department of Health as a pilot investigation. It was set up to determine if it was possible to develop a theatre-based, peer-facilitated methodology in the classroom which could improve young people's understandings of, and capacities to, successfully negotiate a spectrum of critical relationship situations. Unlike sexual debut, an event which, for most people, represents a significant and memorable milestone and may be

meaningfully reported in a questionnaire as a binary option, successes in negotiations are far less amenable to recall with veracity.

Relationships, once conceived as a series of negotiations, also occupy multiple and often indeterminate points on a spectrum of interactional processes and competencies. No matter how sophisticated the design of items in a questionnaire, the processes they are trying to quantify and examine through statistical analyses are elusive constructs to frame in short, pithy statements to which responses are registered as a point on a scale of agree/disagree. Indeed, as the TfD processes of Get-WISE demonstrated, such negotiations are almost impossible to interrogate through verbal discourses. Items and groups of items are devised as an attempt to *infer* if successful negotiations might be part of the respondent's life. So, for example, a scale of questions was created in the Year 11 questionnaire to ascertain how long the respondent maintained a 'serious' relationship before they had sexual intercourse. The inference being that if they had maintained it for a long time or longer than other respondents from the control arms, they would have been exercising more effective negotiation skills and created a worthwhile relationship without the necessity of progressing rapidly on to sexual intercourse.

Investigating and establishing such elusive and indeterminate outcomes needed more time and resources than our Department of Health funding provided. Despite this, our findings were extremely encouraging, and we were confidently able to report that Get-WISE demonstrated the logistical viability of running such a novel and ambitious intervention. The investigation also demonstrated how far short of achieving transformational classroom interactions most contemporary pedagogies fell.

The Get-WISE intervention, albeit recognised as a somewhat compromised version of the original TfD model, was used in ten schools and was last run in 2015. It was overshadowed by incumbent Apause Peers and was never assigned the status of the 'flagship' Apause peer programme. However, the framework of the TfD model became the starting point for the RAP Project, the subject of the following chapter. This was conceived as another theatre-based, peer-facilitated intervention, this time aimed at young people not in mainstream education. RAP started out with a 'product' oriented approach with emphasis placed on highly developed scripts to be *delivered* by peers. Consistent with Get-WISE, again, it will be seen that it is the emancipatory 'process' of playfully investigating, restoring, manipulating and transmuting lived experiences into embodied games, exercises, masks, floor puppets and role-plays - the performative and theatre making activities themselves - which set the scene in which a transformative aesthetic could take root.

Chapter 7 – RAP: Autopoiesis, affective states and agentic play

Rationale

In 1998–1999 as part of a DoH research grant, a tranche of money was set aside to explore the potential of peer education in non-mainstream educational settings for under sixteens. Clients from this particular demographic have been variously described as ‘vulnerable and hard-to-reach’, having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and being emotionally and behaviourally ‘challenged’. Commonly, such teenagers also have life circumstances which intersect with their educational challenges; hence a significant proportion are in care and have suffered trauma and/or abuse and could be living with mental health issues alongside learning disabilities. Groups this project has worked with have included: teenagers in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and in SEND schools; specialist units for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers; care home settings; and a prison with young offenders.

The RAP project, in multiple iterations, has been awarded funding and been running until 2019. Hence, important elements of the theory I am attempting to articulate in this thesis were conceived and being explored within an ongoing practice with young people who were either in the care system or SEND schools or, more usually, both. This chapter draws on transcripts of a relatively recent RAP workshop and was chosen because I believe it is the most coherent account of Okagbue’s TfD model being fully realised. Paradoxically perhaps, it also lends weight to my argument that it is in the pursuit and application of performativity that the theatre form emerges. Hence, we see that exercises are presented which may indeed have their origins in theatrical and dramatic

practices but the success and aestheticity of their execution is not determined according to the technical accomplishments of the performers, but according to the extent to which the participants undergo some sort of transformation. The transformations may be observed or inferred according to shifts effected within the psycho-social parameters made explicit through the regulative and epistemic structures of the workshop guidelines. But they are constituted within the substantive, ontic phenomena of play and playfulness.

The RAP Project

PRUs were the educational institutions we could most readily access at the start of the project, and in consultation with a group of clients the project was dubbed 'Respect and Protect' (RAP). Consistent with Yeager *et al* (2018) this was what the teenagers reported that they needed from a project that was being developed in response to their most urgent personal and social needs.

Much of the early development and thinking of RAP is documented in Evans *et al* (2009). The peer facilitators, during these early iterations, all had experiences of being excluded from mainstream education similar to those of the client group. More recently peers have been a mixture of traditional RAP peers, sixth formers and undergraduate drama students. RAP drew heavily on the insights of Dr Sue Jennings, a RAP project advisor, and her work as an anthropologist and dramatherapist.(Jennings, 1995b; Jennings, 1999). Adding a layer of complexity to the creative process was the stipulation made by the project director, Dr John Tripp, that the programme needed to be fit for purpose as a public health intervention. This requirement demanded the classroom action be recorded as a series of scripts, hence the term 'Scripted Performance Workshop'. It was argued by Tripp that only by enshrining such detail in this

scripted format could subsequent peer facilitators replicate the learning processes with a degree of fidelity sufficient to systematically establish programme effect. Predictably, perhaps, such a stricture also threatened the spontaneous emergence of certain creative freedoms within the laboratory and classroom phases. Thematically, the aesthetic and constitutive dimension of *autopoiesis* will be developed, particularly in relation to the psycho-social parameters of *affective state* and *agency* and the thesis will speculate on how an interplay between those regulative parameters may be expressed in transformative nature of play.

The following transcripts are taken from a longer description of a workshop in a local SEND school. It was put together without the benefit of video recordings which are prohibited due to current child protection policies enforced in all state schools and the learners' names are fictional to preserve anonymity. By this stage in the development of RAP the 'script' was far less prescriptive and had become a 'workshop plan', providing a simple written framework referring to various previously developed scripts and resources. An audio recording with the peer facilitators immediately afterwards supplemented what I was able to record from memory. This description was also presented to one of the peer facilitators to confirm that it constitutes an accurate account of events.

A substantial part of the full description, which can be found in the Appendices, records the process of us arriving at the school, getting through the security systems and an incident in which a distressed student contravenes various boundaries and enters spaces which are normally carefully guarded by the enforcement of a range of explicit protocols and staffing procedures. This event is, I believe, significant because it allows the reader an insight as to the degree

of demarcation and explicit sanctioning of spaces and enactment of behaviour management regimes which are representative of these kinds of institutions. As explicit as these physical boundaries are and as clear as their safety functions might be, they can also represent, for some students, the fearful machinery of authority. Hence all such safety measures would seem, at times, to provoke disputatious behaviours, creating a pervading atmosphere of a febrile peace.

Consistent with all the RAP workshops, this one falls within the chronological framework of Sue Jennings' three phases of Embodiment – Projection – Role [EPR] (Jennings, 1999). A schematic account of these phases is provided in Evans *et al.*, (2009) describing how the developmental stages of the workshop encompass and facilitate the *affective landscape* of the participants' experience, enabling them to engage in Jennings' (1999) 'ritual-risk' cycle. In this same account I referred to the formalised practice of rearranging the performance space, creating a transitional process between its quotidian function to its more performative potential. Although I did not use the term *liminal* at that time, it is argued here that this account illustrates the liminal nature of the RAP workshop. However, the terms 'ritual' and 'risk' in the context of Jennings' ritual-risk cycle refers, I believe, more to her interpretation of Tambiah's notion of ritual (Tambiah, 1981). In his monograph, *A Performative Approach to Ritual*, Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah articulates a duality in the nature of ritual.

It is therefore necessary to bear in mind that festivals, cosmic rituals, and rites of passage, however prescribed they are, are always linked to status claims and interests of the participants, and therefore are always open to contextual meanings. Variable components make flexible the basic core of most rituals. (ibid.p.115)

Jennings (1995b) develops Tambiah's thesis and states:

[...] all rituals are performative and as such are subject to two different sorts of rules: regulative and constitutive, the former orienting a pre-existing activity and the latter created and understood within the activity itself. (ibid.p.16)

The reader, it is hoped, will see how the workshop proceeds through the three phases, the first of which is primarily concerned with the participants' engagement through their bodies. When explaining the regulative structure of the workshop to the peer facilitators, I usually refer to it as "physical play". A transition then ensues between *physical play* to, what I refer to as, "projective play". Here, the participants are less exclusively physically absorbed and more concerned with the projection of ideas, motives, spoken words and actions onto material objects or artefacts which are exterior to their bodies, such as a mask or a script which, I would argue, are examples of Winnicott's (2010) transition objects. Furthermore, I would argue, the wearing of a scarf in the form of a blindfold is equivalent to donning the mask or persona of a blind person and effects a transitional process or intermediate phase between *physical play* (embodiment) and *projective play* (projection). However, the projective play phase is not exclusively projective insofar as the participants use the mask and the script as means of transitioning into their performance of roles. The third phase of the workshop is completely appropriated from the visiting facilitators and is initiated and constituted by the learners themselves, who proceed to perform an unscripted role-play in which they fully commit themselves to designated roles and present a domestic conflict which achieves an aesthetically satisfactory, if unorthodox, resolution. When I describe this "role play" phase to the peer facilitators, I explain that, typically, it is not achieved

within the first four workshop sessions, but occurs, at best, as fragmented role-plays, and even then, only as part of staged scenarios involving the facilitators and the learners. In this particular account, I hope the reader is persuaded that while the whole workshop falls within a *regulative* structure which enshrines the prescribed, familiar and 'safe' dimension of the *ritual* in terms of 'embodiment-projection-role', the *constitutive* elements are a manifestation of Jennings' *risk* as the actors become increasingly agentic in a personalised, playful and transformative role-play and emergent theatre form.

The following series of transcripts were assembled from the third visit to a SEND school on 11th November 2015.

Transcript 10 RAP Classroom Phase – Physical Play: balloon games

On entering the room, we greeted the four learners whose names we'd learned from the previous sessions. Kevin (Male Learner 3) did not move from his seat on the edge of the chill-out area, but the others – Dan (Male Learner 1), Liz (Female Learner) and Paul (Male Learner 2) helped to clear the tables to the side of the chill-out area and then took up seated positions in the circle of chairs. They formed half a circle while the three visitors formed the other half. Liz sat on a stool which made her higher than everyone else. I asked if anyone wanted to blow up a balloon. Liz volunteered and I offered her a choice from a variety of balloons

[...]

The game was played in good spirits with laughter, plenty of mistakes, no one trying to impose or clarify the rules, and everyone involved. On every possible occasion Dan attempted

to hit the balloon with a part of his body other than a hand which often resulted in bringing it to a standstill and necessitated a restart. [...]The presence of the balloon lifted the atmosphere. It felt like a little party we had created for ourselves and its delicate, floating and benign quality seemed to be the catalyst to a playful and cooperative atmosphere.

I asked if we should try Dan's rule of never using our hands. This resulted in energetic movement, laughter and cheering as individuals contributed to the spectacle as they struggled and contorted themselves to use their heads, elbows, knees and feet. At other times, Dan and Paul just repeatedly hit it between themselves, excluding others until they messed up [...]

The liminal, 'set-apart-from-the-quotidian' nature of the performance space is achieved through the intersection of two sets of conventions. Firstly, there is the institutional demarcation of a room with a carpeted area and soft furnishings, as a place where clients know they can come to 'chill out' when they can't cope with the exigencies of their personal or school lives. Secondly, there is the practice, introduced by RAP, whereby furniture is rearranged to create an area enclosed by chairs on which all the participants are seated. The spatial conventions are reinforced by the break with normality effected by the arrival of myself and two undergraduate drama students. Once this privileged space is established, further novel conventions are introduced whereby the learners quickly grasp an understanding that the games to be played have rules which are almost entirely negotiable amongst themselves. So, for example, Liz chooses the colour of the balloon and seeks consensus from her peers as to the appropriate size. I pat the balloon into the air, call the name of a peer

facilitator and the game is started. They make an initial interpretation of the pattern of behaviour but very quickly institute new rules.

A particular, and deliberate, feature of this trope of liminality is that the learners' sense of their own agency is foregrounded and promoted. Whereas in their daily world where the tendency is for domestic circumstances and the school to contrive to act on them as relatively disempowered 'objects', in the world of RAP they are encouraged to become subjects and actors in which they interpret, co-construct and manipulate novel norms and identities. Here, in the RAP space, it is normal to laugh and have fun and choose what happens next and the admonishment of each other for perceived transgressions has a diminishing social currency. Hence, whilst the regulative conventions of EPR are explicit and enshrined in both the session plan and preparation of the peer facilitators, the action matter of the event is progressively constituted by the learners, affording them increasing degrees of autonomy and agency.

Transcript 11 RAP Classroom Phase - Physical Play: balance games

(Elsie stands with her feet firmly planted and reaches forward towards Paul who takes her hands and carefully places his toes opposite hers. Paul is short for his age, but his legs seem strong and support him well. He has a calm aura about him with a dependable centre of gravity around his hips and I quickly sense he will manage this with assurance. After leaning back and smiling, they slowly lower each other to the squatting position with no hitches or sticking points. They both look comfortable with the experience and, smiling, they rise to a standing position smoothly and easily. They do it two more times before Elsie suggests trying the seesaw. Again, they succeed with a sense of ease.)

David: Perfect. What do you think, Dan, do you fancy giving it a go?

Dan: Nah, it's all right.

Paul: She won't let go. It's fun.

Dan: If she lets go, it's your fault.

Elsie: You might let go of me.

Dan: *(Getting up)* I won't.

(Dan is almost the polar opposite to Paul. He is much taller, his movements are a series of contortions and lurches, and he rarely feels securely in balance. His eyes are constantly darting around.) [...]

(Elsie starts to bend her knees and Dan follows. Now his whole trunk seems to be twisting but he continues to consent to lowering himself. As he gets nearer to the ground his elbows bend more, which is a sure indication that he is taking his weight for himself and Elsie is less able to lean back. In a sudden movement he sits on his heels and almost immediately catapults himself back upright again. We all clap. He tries the seesaw but takes almost all his own weight using bent elbows to pull himself back up.)

Elsie: Well done. You did it.

Grace: Liz. Do you want to try it with me?

Liz: No.

Grace: You could just try leaning back.

Liz: No thanks.

The blindfold trust exercise that follows is ostensibly an *embodied* piece of play, but it also functions as a transitional exercise between embodied play and *projective* play, since the scarf becomes a transitional object, being both the physical mechanism and symbolic representation of the role of a blind person and someone whose status connotes a condition of vulnerability and dependency.

Transcript 12 RAP Classroom Phase – Physical Play: blindfold games

(I introduce a scarf as a blindfold and Grace and Elsie demonstrate a trust exercise.)

David: Who thinks they could do that?

Liz: I'll do it with Dan. He's the one who's blind.

David: You ok with that, Dan?

Dan: As long as I can blindfold Liz.

Liz: Alright.

(Liz quite gently blindfolds Dan who squirms and wriggles and touches the scarf and then they proceed to move around with Liz calling out instructions as well as poking and patting him. Dan gets confused and Liz shouts a bit louder and Paul laughs.)

David: Liz, do you want a bit of time to explain to Dan what your signals are?

Liz: Yes.

David: You ok, Dan?

Dan: Scared.

([...] Dan *never stops squirming, it is viscerally uncomfortable to watch him, but he never takes the blindfold off.*)

Dan: Can I stop now?

David: Yes, that was fantastic. Well done both of you. *(Everyone claps them spontaneously.)*

(We continue to explore various permutations of blindfold walking, including two or three pairs at a time.)

[...]

David: Excellent. You did that really well. Was it fun?

Liz: It was a laugh.

The session is now formally moved into a different phase of Jennings' ritual-risk' cycle. The blindfold scarf transmutes to a white neutral mask. This is a projective object and by the simple expedient of explaining the properties of the mask – how once a mask has been invested with a basic unifying motive it will cause its wearer to act in specific ways – then the improvisations can commence according to the authority of the mask.

Transcript 13 RAP Classroom Phase – Projective Play: mask games

David: So, Liz, you've done some work with masks before, but Dan and Paul I think this is new for you.

Paul: Yeah.

David: Well, in life people often say they need a mask to get through a difficult situation, like putting on a brave face or showing some feelings but hiding others. Does that make sense?

Dan: Yeah. People act hard. But it's just a mask.

Liz: I try to act nice.

David: It's the same when we make theatre. A mask can be a character and the mask makes that character do things. Things that the actor, as a person in real life, might never do. We're going to play something called 'One track mind.'

Liz: Oh, I remember this.

David: *(Pulling out a plain, white, 3D neutral mask and holding it by its edges with both hands, tipping the face towards the group so they can see it clearly)* So, this mask is called 'I want that.' That's the only thing this mask can do - as soon as an actor starts to wear this mask they can't help asking other people for their stuff – mostly clothes.

Liz: My sister's like that.

David: So's my daughter. She nicks her mum's clothes. So, Elsie, you go first. Put on the mask and we'll see what happens.

(I still hold the mask by its edges in both hands and pass it to Elsie with a slow, ceremonial gesture. Elsie puts it on with slow and deliberate movements. She turns towards Grace.)

Elsie: Oooh, Grace. I really love your sweatshirt.

Grace: Thanks.

Elsie: Great colour.

Grace: I always choose this colour.

Elsie: Could I borrow it?

Grace: Well ...I need it.

Elsie: I'll give it back, I promise. Please.

[...]

Liz *(takes off her glasses, puts on the mask and then repositions her glasses on the outside. The effect is powerfully*

disconcerting. Whereas with the previous masks the effect was to allow the spectator to project qualities onto the mask and see expressions, emotions even, these glasses gave the mask a singular purpose and focus. Liz seemed to grow in stature and the mask developed an aura. It seemed to have an almost statuesque density and filled the space).

Liz: (*Approaches Kevin, stands still in front of him*) Be my friend.

Kevin: No.

Liz: Kevin, be my friend.

Kevin: No.

Liz: I'm a good friend. Be my friend.

Kevin: What do you want to do?

Liz: Just hang out.

Kevin: No.

Liz: Hang out after school. Just be friends. Listen to music. Round my place.

Kevin: Maybe. Anything else?

Liz: Watch a DVD. Play video games.

Kevin: Yeah, alright.

Liz: Thanks. (*turns to Dan*) Do you want to be my friend?

Dan: Why?

Liz: I'm fun. We could do art and stuff.

Dan: Where?

Liz: Round my place.

Liz: I could look out for you round school.

Dan: Yeah.

(Liz takes off her mask and her cheeks are flushed. It is hot behind the mask. She looks around blinking, unable to focus. She puts on her glasses and seems a bit bewildered as she makes her way back to her stool. This is the only interaction she's had with Kevin and the only thing he's said throughout the session to anyone, apart from "No.")

David: Shall we leave it there and do something else?

Liz: Yeah

In this instance the mask never actually had anything inscribed on it, we simply agreed it had a 'one-track-mind', and, through measured gestures and deliberate enunciation, ceremoniously invested it with its sole motive. As with nearly all these activities, it was modelled first. That was enough to prompt the learners into wearing the mask and creating sequences of interactions which were driven by the mask's singularity of purpose. More typically, we would have dedicated time to the learners writing on and/or adorning their own personal masks which then get pressed into use according to various negotiated conventions. For example, they may say just one particularly salient line and keep repeating it, or they may take the form of complete characters ranging from the naturalistic to grotesque. In all cases, however, some quality or characteristic is symbolically projected onto the object of the mask which seems then to release its wearer and addressees, giving them permission to enter into the *role play* phase of EPR. The introduction, re-authoring and eventual jettisoning of the material object of the script serves a similar function to the mask of facilitating the transition into independent role play. Again, a substantial part of this transcript has been cut but may be found in the Appendices.

Transcript 14 RAP Classroom Phase – Projective Play: scripted readings

Paul: Yes. Can we go mad.

David: What do you mean?

Paul: Get mad with each other.

David: What, do you mean like really angry?

Paul: Shout maybe.

David: I've got a script here where someone gets quite angry. Do you want to hear Elsie and Grace read it?

Paul: No. I can read it. With Liz. Alright Liz?

Liz: I'll read it.

(I hand out the scripts, one each.)

Liz: I'll be A.

(Paul moves his chair to sit opposite Liz with their knees around fifty centimetres apart. They are both hunched over their scripts and read with a controlled intensity. There is little in the way of vocal variety. Liz is more fluent and by anticipating the sense of some of the lines, catches some of the mendacity of A. Paul's deliberate reading of B is imbued with his characteristic calm, but he can sense where the scene is going, and he releases the last line with surprising force.)

Bossy boots

A: You can't go out like that.

B: Yes I can. It's cool.

A: You look terrible.

B: What do you mean?

A: Your hair looks crap.

B: I think it's ok. I just checked it out.

A: Your jeans are all scruffy looking and that sweatshirt is really not cool at all.

B: Why should I listen to you? My friends think I look ok.

A: They just wouldn't tell you.

B: Yes they would. You're always trying to make me feel crap about myself.

A: I was being helpful.

B: No you weren't. You just act like you're better than me and keep bossing me around.

A: Well, I wouldn't go out looking like that.

B: Well, you're not me. My friends are not your friends. So just BUTT OUT!!

Liz *(looks up from her script through the thick lens of her glasses and smiles sadly.)*

Elsie: That was really good, you two.

Grace: Yeah, well done.

Paul: Do you want to try Dan. With Liz?

Dan: I'll read with you. You do Liz's part.

(Dan takes a script and tries to work out which letter corresponds to each character.)

Paul: I'm A this time, you're B.

Dan: I'm not very good at reading.

David: That doesn't matter. You know what happens. Start reading and see how it goes. Change the lines or make them up.

Paul: You can't go out like that.

Dan: Yes I can. It's cool.

Paul: You look terrible.

Dan: What do you mean?

Paul: Your hair looks crap.

(Dan squirms and looks up at Paul, then looks back down at his script)

Dan: Well, your jeans are all scruffy and that sweatshirt is crap.

Paul: Why should I listen to you? My friends think I look ok.

Dan: They just wouldn't tell you.
Paul: I was being helpful.
Dan: You just keep acting like you're better than me.
Paul: Well, I wouldn't go out looking like that.
Dan: Well, you're not me. So just BUTT OUT!!

Tracking their reading on our own scripts we became increasingly bewildered. Somehow, midway, they had managed to reverse the line allocations, so they were saying each other's lines. Dan had taken on a more confrontational role, Paul stood his ground, but Dan had the last word which he read loudly and triumphantly. The scene had a dangerous, unpredictable energy. Dan read the scene again with Liz, this time expanding it with more lines of his own. Then he suggested they try a scene of their own.

The script has served multiple functions. Firstly, it was developed with another RAP group to explore how one friend might exercise power over another by trying to exploit their perceived vulnerability to transgressions of social norms surrounding dress codes. It quickly became appropriated by this group. It represented a 'safe' transition object of projective play, but in its increasingly performative reading, it also gave them a sense of their own self-efficacy, to the extent they were able to reverse the line allocations, improvise their own lines and ultimately feel empowered to transition to the creation of the following scene, without recourse to any script. It enabled them to role play. This form of play, it will be seen, is executed with both intensity and a playfully transgressive disposition. It is autopoietic. Its liminality is realised through; re-designating the performance space, destabilizing the binary of actor versus character, embodying ambiguities of sexuality and gender, and then finally instigating violent oscillations of status.

The unabridged transcript is in the Appendices. This improvisation is arrived at after several gender changes and re-castings of the scene.

Transcript 15 RAP Classroom Phase – Role Play: ‘Couples Therapy’

Dan: Wait a minute. Am I your missus? I forgot. Right let’s start again. You’re the therapist, Paul. Liz, you be my missus.

Liz: Am I still controlling you?

Dan: Yes. You’re the bully. And you start off really angry.

Grace: The scene doesn’t have to start off angry. It could build up slowly. So we see how you make each other angry.

Dan: Yeah. That’s right. You don’t have to be so angry, Ok. Liz? Right, so let’s start again. I’m the therapist this time. Liz, you’re the bossy one, right, and Paul you’re the bloke.

Paul: Knock, knock.

Dan: Come in. Take a seat.

Liz: Sit there, Paul. No need to be on the other side of the room.

Dan: You can sit where you are comfortable.

Paul: I’ll sit over here then.

Dan: How’s it been this week? Have you been a bit more chilled with each other?

Liz: I have, but he seems just as snappy?

Paul: I’m not the snappy one!

Dan: Wait. Hang on. Liz you’re the bossy one aren’t you?

Liz: Yes.

Dan: So why is Paul being the angry one?

Liz: Because you told me not get angry straight off.

Dan: That’s right. Paul, you don’t be so angry straight off as well. Ok, start again.

Liz: Knock, knock.

Dan: Come in you two. Nice to see you. Take a seat.

Liz: Sit here Paul.

Dan: So, how's it been since last week? Did you try spending a bit more time apart?

Paul: I did, but she kept on texting me.

Liz: Because you were always late or never where you said you were going to be.

Paul: Once, that happened.

Liz: At least three times.

Paul: I'm a driver. That's what it's like. So, she's always having a go. And when I get home, she's even worse.

Liz: What do you expect? I try to cook you some tea, ready for 6.30 and an hour later you're still not home.

Paul: I tried to call you.

Dan: I can see you're both getting angry with each other now, just try to calm down and listen.

Liz: I am listening.

Paul: We're both listening.

Dan: Good. Let's start again, then. Without getting so angry. Paul, don't get stressed straight off. Act like you're the calm one.

Paul: I am being calm.

Dan: Good. Have you tried just giving each other a bit more space? Spending time without each other and with your own friends?

Liz: What's the point in that?

Paul: I don't want to spend time with my friends.

Liz: It's up to us. We've got to work it out.

Paul: When I get home, I'm tired. I don't want to go out. I like being with Liz.

Liz: That's right.

Paul: Except it's always a stress.

Liz: If I knew what time you were getting home, I wouldn't always be stressing and worrying.

Dan: Paul, have you tried phoning a bit more often or earlier?

Liz: What's the matter with you, you're supposed to be the therapist?

Dan: I am.

Liz: So why are you treating us like kids? All I've got to do is ask him and he'll phone me more.

Dan: I'm only suggesting...

Liz: Well don't! ... right...just shuttup.

Paul: I could phone you more...I just forget.

Liz: I know.

Dan: You seem to like talking a bit....

Paul: Shuttup.

Liz: We don't need you.

Paul: No

Liz: Get out.

Paul: Or I'll push you out.

Dan: Alright. I'm going... *(He stands up and walks out of the performance space to the chill-out zone)*

The whole room erupts with laughter. The three actors, Kevin, the visitors and Rachael, the teacher, are laughing.

David: That was fantastic.

Elsie: Excellent acting.

Grace: Brilliant. A great scene.

David: Have you done enough acting for today?

(They agree and we all start putting the room back into its normal configuration. The learners are still talking excitedly, and Dan says, "We could show our play around school." Liz agrees. Paul adds, "We could set up that music group and put something on.")

The sheer intensity, determination and resilience with which they set about the challenge of constructing, recasting and re-ordering the narrative of their role play scene until it reached a satisfactory conclusion was a powerful manifestation of their increasing sense of self-efficacy. This was, I believe, evidenced by their wanting to share their play with the school and feeling they could set up a music group. As an aesthetic dimension of the event, its autopoietic qualities were palpably and exhilaratingly manifest.

Bandura argues for clear and causative links between efficacy beliefs and positive affective states, stating that the subject can, through cognitive processes, martial efficacy beliefs and direct them so that emotionally perturbing states, such as anxiety, can be regulated and rendered less deleterious (Bandura, 1997, p. 137). Within the characteristically binary practices of scientific thought, affective state and self-efficacy are treated as separate parameters. However, in the action matter observable within the more liminoid space of a RAP workshop, such psycho-social constructs are less easily discernible as distinct phenomena. Is, for example, feeling playfully aroused (as Lyotard might argue) antecedent to the efficacious contribution to the rules of, and performance in, the event of a balloon game? Or, might it be the other way around, that is, having creatively collaborated in a game, a subject starts to feel more positively disposed towards the interactional requirements of the ensuing situation? Or could it simply be that feeling you can perform and feeling good are one and the same thing? Having participated in dozens of RAP workshops, my sense is that it is the oscillation between the relative dominance of the two constructs that is intrinsic to the transformative potential of a limonoid event. Bandura states:

Enactive mastery experiences are the most influential source of efficacy information because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed.(Bandura, 1997, p. 80)

The knowledge that one has accomplished, or is currently participating in, a successful performance, then, enhances a subject's belief in their efficacy and this, I would argue, contributes to a more positive affective state. Such a feeling of pleasure, or satisfaction or even mild euphoria, given the conditions of an appropriate performative context and opportunity, may prompt the subject to risk the challenge of a further enactive mastery experience. Consequently, provided the regulative structures - in terms of a progressive engagement with theatrical and performative devices - are in place, a pattern of accelerating reciprocity is set in motion between the three parameters of; performed interactions, positive affective states and enhanced self-efficacy belief. The continued participation in an enactive mastery experience, in the case of RAP when a subject successfully engages in a sequence of performative acts, causes an oscillation between the experience of positive affect and the perception of self-efficacy with increasing frequency, reaching such a pitch as to create a sense that it is all happening simultaneously and at such a rate as to be beyond 'normal' cognitive control.

Indeed, even without having directly inhabited a character in the learners' concluding role play, as a participant observer, I encountered personal feelings of intense ambivalence. These swung between two apprehensions, apparently at variance with each other. One was something akin to agoraphobia. It was experienced as the observation of an array of consciously sought and staged interactions emerging from a wellspring of (en)actable permutations which

materialised before me. This was an overwhelming, multi-sensate, experience of an 'out-flow' of action matter. This contrasted with a second, strangely vertiginous sensation of being inexorably drawn in, towards a vortex of protean and conflicting impulses and emotions. This experience was not one that arrived through the senses but was akin to an imagined act, more abstract, and anticipatory in nature and might be considered a perceptual 'in-flow' of symbolic potentialities. The overall sensation was one of a series of visceral shocks which, on the ejection of the therapist at the conclusion of their presentation, sublimated into a sense of relief and euphoria causing me to laugh uncontrollably. The terms 'in-flow' and 'out-flow' were coined by Peter Slade, the acclaimed pioneer in the application of theatre and play with children (especially those with special needs) for therapeutic and developmental purposes. Neither a psychologist, nor enamoured of technical jargon to describe the 'natural' habits of children at play, Slade defined the two terms thus:

In-flow – the taking in of ideas and experiences, which becomes easier after a balance with out-flow has been achieved. At moments when the child is prepared for or in need of out-flow [expressive play], or when this amounts to a general condition in the child, because of lack of opportunity, in-flow to a marked degree is virtually impossible to achieve.

Out-flow – the pouring out of creative forms of expression, a tendency which can be easily regulated and encouraged, and which by frequent opportunity becomes a habit promoting confidence. (Slade, 1995, p. 13)

To Slade, it would seem that developmentally important play is experienced as a dynamic interaction of two interdependent and yet oppositional flows, one direction might be thought of as a cognitive process of drawing in and reflecting on novel and existing symbolic codes and constructs, and then reconfiguring,

recalibrating and translating them. The other direction of flow is the playful and creative enactment of such codes as novel actions and interactions with other actors. Slade's notion that the cognitive insights of in-flow can only be achieved once a sufficiency of creative play – out-flow - has occurred and a level of confidence established, would seem to resonate with Burghardt's statement in the BBC documentary *Animals at Play* (Perowne and Whitley, 2019) that one of the pre-conditions of play is that the animal needs to be "in a safe, relaxed state". It is unclear as to whether my responses were empathetic, accurately reflecting an equivalent range of personal occurrences to those experienced by the learners, but all of us present laughed simultaneously and I believe all of us (certainly the four adults present) agreed to having feelings of euphoria. Once again, it is pertinent to speculate as to the veracity of the claims of those cognitive neuroscientists who claim that mirror neurons enable empathetic responses to the physical and affective states of others. They argue that it is this capacity of the brain to make links between the perception of actions and the sensations that accompany, or are associated with, those actions that form the neurological bases of our aesthetic sensibilities (Keyzers and Gazzola, 2006; Freedberg and Gallese, 2007). It is reasonable to suggest that the intense feelings of euphoria and 'connectedness' bear similarities to the term 'communitas' coined by Victor Turner (Turner, 1982, p. 47).

If one considers how the session started out with the learners finding it a challenge to merely participate in some of the physical play activities, the learners themselves seemed to have undergone something akin to van Gennep's rite of passage. The *pre-liminal* phase could be defined as starting with the re-arrangement of the space and their gradual participation in the balloon game. They transitioned to a point of departure by being led or directed

through a sequence of prescribed activities within which they had increasing agency, attaining a point of apotheosis during the *liminal* phase where they playfully negotiated amongst themselves, spontaneously presenting a role-play with a degree of insight, cooperation and autonomy. They arrived at a point of return, the *post-liminal* phase, as they rearranged the furniture, restored the quotidian functionality of the space whilst optimistically forming plans to share something of their newfound capabilities with their community. It is argued that the durable transformation, characteristic of ritual, is achieved through these playfully performative interactions. Furthermore, it appears that the actors are less engaged with the pursuit of representational aesthetics of theatre than the pleasurable and performative realisation or novel aspects of themselves and their capabilities.

So far, we have identified the active interplay of the two aesthetic parameters of *liminality* and *autopoiesis* and seen how these can be facilitated and instituted within the regulative, although negotiable, structures of carefully sequenced Scripted Performance Workshop practices. Consistent with my previous attempts of imposing definitions when trying to encompass it as a distinct performative phenomenon, the third of Fischer-Lichte's terminologies, the *collapsing or destabilizing of binaries*, invites ambiguities and defies certainties. Is, for example, the fluid casting and recasting of characters within a spectrum of gender stereotypes an example of dissolving gendered binaries or might it simply be a feature of how young people feel free to play and be playful within a liminoid space? Although Liz remained permanently cast as the bossy character, (which is the role she often assumes within the group) for a substantial period of time she was cast as the 'bloke'. She appeared equally as capable of playing a bossy male chauvinist character as a disgruntled

domesticated female character. This was consistent with her daily persona where at times, over a series of workshops, she could be playfully romantic with either of the male learners and at other times declare she was not interested in boyfriends or (presumably heteronormative) sex. It seemed that Dan found it impossible to maintain the role of a subordinate, either as a male, female or gay partner to Liz's bossy character. Seemingly, to Dan, a subordinate male of any gender or sexual orientation was not a meld which achieved theatrical or social plausibility. Accordingly, as well as acting in the roles of the male partner and the 'expert' therapist he also assumed a leadership role in terms of casting and directing the action. Whilst Paul was happy to be directed by Dan, he was very competent in the role of both therapist and subordinate partner. Again, these qualities were typical of his amenable and facilitative presence within the group. The one role function within the whole dramatic narrative on which the group agreed unanimously, without having previously discussed it, was the redundancy of the invasive presence of the expert and high-status therapist. What was intensely 'pleasing' about the diminution and eventual ejection of the therapist was that Dan sensed its dramatic necessity and agreed to play the fall in his character's status. This I take to be the execution of an aesthetic choice on the part of Dan and one which achieved both a resolution within the dramatic fiction but also contributed to the wellbeing of the group. I am persuaded that this voluntary fluidity of status and destabilising of binary opposites, performed by all three actors, corresponds with Keith Johnstone's postulate which defines friendships in terms of the modulation of status.

Many people will maintain that we don't play status transactions with our friends, and yet every movement, every inflection of the voice implies a status. My answer is that acquaintances become

friends when they agree to play status games together. (Johnstone, 1979, p. 37)

In trying to articulate one possible mechanism of transformation effected by the playful character of TAP as expressed in the RAP aesthetic, it is reasonable to argue that it is achieved through the highly indeterminate and changeable status of the character/actor dyad that all the participants exhibited. This enables the players to test the possibility of alternative identities, get a 'feel' for them and gauge them for social acceptability. These new, hypothetical, identities and social scripts are 'spontaneously' created and played out with a certain aesthetic imperative. In this instance it seems that it was to find a way that a troubled couple could be agentic in solving their communication barrier without being disenfranchised from the process by the invasive role of the therapist. In finding their solution, they simultaneously achieved a satisfactory aesthetic requirement as well as consolidating their social bonds as friends.

Amidst this vertiginous and ambiguous concoction of fictional roles and daily roles, the extent to which the learners totally relinquish or permanently transform their daily roles remains a matter for conjecture. It seems plausible that the loosely termed 'theatre making processes', many of which were unplanned and emerged with little conscious reference to a framework of regulative parameters, afforded the opportunity for them to be playful. Through the constitutive and substantive action matter of the event, they could make explicit the daily work of constructing their kaleidoscopically gendered identities and statuses. It is perhaps this sense of *doing* multiple identities as is articulated by Frosh, Phoenix *et al* in their work *Young Masculinities* in which the subjects are reported as actively co-constructing their identities with their interviewers as well as their peer interviewees during the *performance* of the

interviews, that we can see how the application of a set of performance conventions, not necessarily recognisable as theatre can generate a theatre of performativity (Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman, 2002). This kind of performance which may be framed as 'theatre' is transformative and has the potential to reinforce as well as dissolve binary distinctions.

Moving the focus away from the binaries of gender and the character/actor distinctions, one thing seems consistently unequivocal about the TfD components of this model of theatre making, and that is the dissolving of the spectator/actor divide. Within just a few minutes the learners move from passively watching the facilitators demonstrating a game or exercise to becoming active players, rule makers and self-regulators. Having set up an emancipatory space in which all subjects are, more-or-less, equal stake-holders in the theatre making process, a figure, such as the therapist, whose role it is to establish an objective viewpoint on the private lives of a couple, creates a paradigmatic as well as a feeling state of dissonance. This incongruity presents itself as an opportunity to challenge the assumptions of any such expertise and authority. Accordingly, the rejection of the expert voyeur is so comprehensively realised in the manner in which he was ejected from his own office, as to redefine the physical boundaries of his own therapeutic space. The playfulness here serves to legitimise, through its aesthetic realisation, the learners' emancipation from the 'normal' subordinate and disempowered roles of their daily lives and transforms what might ordinarily be thought of as a hidden transcript into a publicly sanctioned transcript of empowerment.

Having now presented descriptors which attempt to capture the character of the most salient and typical moments of A pause Peers, Get-WISE and RAP, is it possible to discern, within the feeling states of the events, any consistencies or

commonalities that are shared between the three interventions? The regulative similarities between the interventions are readily identified. These include reconfiguring the space, supplanting teachers with peer-educators, and instituting those discourses which, through normative processes, are commonly interdicted. Specifically, this process opens up discourses which encompass sexual and relational practices, gender and identity. But are there any other constitutive phenomena or occurrences that are not adequately accounted for in the performance or psycho-social theories already cited?

Within Social Learning Theory, references to play as a phenomenon that might be intrinsically enjoyable are little more than inferential. Bandura's 'Bobo Doll Experiment' was game-changing in that it provided evidence that human behaviour was neither predominantly a response to negative or positive feedback stimuli as postulated by behaviourists, nor purely an expression of inherited factors, but included a substantial component of behaviours learned and performed as repetitions or restorations of observed behaviour. Bandura describes how young children copy adult aggressive actions as 'modelled' or 'observational learning' *behaviour* tropes and appears to make no distinction, aesthetic or nominal, between the liminality of play and playfulness and a more quotidian and functionalist views of behaviour (Bandura, Ross and Ross, 1961). This strikes me as intriguing since on viewing a selection of film footage of Bandura's experiments and his spoken observations (Mosley, 2011), even though Bandura himself used the term 'play' to describe the aggressive behaviour, he did not acknowledge any paradox in their play - that 'it is and is not what it appears to be' (Bateson, 1956). Having cited Turner (Turner, 1969) in identifying the liminoid nature of play, Sutton-Smith develops the idea of play as paradox.

Animals at play bite each other playfully, knowing the playful nip connotes a bite, but not what a bite connotes. In turn, Richard Schechner (Schechner, 1988) dramaturge, suggests that a playful nip is not only not a bite, it is also *not* not a bite.(Sutton-Smith, 2009, p. 1)

My interpretation of Bandura's film footage is that the children, albeit sometimes with a serious demeanour, were *playing* at beating the Bobo Doll toy and were having fun, furthermore when exposed to TV violence they could see that the actors in the films were acting a fiction and in response they imitated by play fighting. Again, the footage shows that they seemed to be enjoying themselves. They had indeed learned how to *play* the behaviour, but surely their socio-cultural contexts would determine whether the play responses become viable social scripts. In other words, whether they are motivated to reproduce such responses in their more quotidian interactions is dependent on whether or not such behaviours are socially sanctioned and rewarded. By playing with an 'audience' including peer facilitators and their own classmates, their pro-social play behaviours get instant social endorsement and respect. Whilst all three Aopause interventions deploy Bandura's principle of offering explicit models of pro-social behaviour with opportunities to rehearse them, in all of them there is, additionally, a palpable sense of play and fun which is encouraged in the training of the peers, enshrined in the guidelines, and given a free rein in their facilitation. Although it is not quite the 'innocent', 'unmotivated' make-believe play of early childhood, it does nevertheless have much in common with the kind of play so engagingly captured by Huizinga.

We have only to watch young dogs to see all the essentials of human play are present in their merry gambols. They invite one another to play by a certain ceremoniousness of attitude and gesture. They keep to the rule that you shall not bite, or not bite

hard, your brother's ear. They pretend to get terribly angry. And – what is most important – in all these doings they plainly experience tremendous fun and enjoyment. (Huizinga, 1949, p.1)

Much of the fun described in *Apause* is somewhat akin to acts of 'naughtiness' and attaches as much importance to recognition of the regulative force of normatively imposed rules as to the wanton breaking of those rules. In all three of the interventions, specific social norms which exert regulative pressures in the participants' lives are made explicit and interrogated as to their potentially deleterious effects. For example, in *Apause Peers* it could be the belief that most teenagers will have had sex by sixteen, in *Get-WISE* it might be the anticipation that all acts of sexual intimacy lead inexorably to full sexual intercourse, in *RAP* it is often the assumption that participants have low expectations of, and reduced opportunities in, realising their capacity for self-determination in their lives. In all instances, these norms and accompanying beliefs and practices are exposed through varying degrees of awkwardness, and performative conventions are instituted which potentially challenge them as fallacious. No matter that the subjects may adhere to such regulative forces, even to the extent of engendering personal approbation, at some point the novel conventions of the theatre and performative practices reveal the social norms and invite their playful transmutation, presentation and re-evaluation. A playful enactment of the recognition, deconstruction and reconstruction of these norms might ordinarily be deemed 'naughty', disrespectful, deviant or even dangerous, but within the designated play space it seems permissible even if, at times, it feels clandestine. I am suggesting that it is something of the sheer 'buzz' of naughtiness, as identified by Thompson (Thompson, 2008, p. 71), the dislocation and transmutation of awkwardness, the gleeful unshackling and

playing with the chains of normative constraints, although most conspicuously revealed and articulated in Okagbue's TfD model is what, at times, characterises all three of the interventions as theatres of applied performativity. In the context of creating performative experiences which address our understandings of, and relationships with, those social norms which are regulative of our intimate behaviours, our gendered interactions and identities, the degree to which the programme is capable of provoking awkwardness could be considered a measure of its salience. No awkwardness means no transformation. Conversely, as much as it is incumbent on the performed event to catalyse a state of awkwardness, if it is to enhance a sense of agency and bring about positive affective states, it must present opportunities to resolve those same dissonances. The play character of the event would seem to contribute to both sides of the equation. In the first instance by creating a set of rules and theatrical conventions which facilitate the uncomfortable exposure of societal norms and taboos to which we are all subject. Secondly, it reminds the players of the essential paradox of play - 'it is and is not what it appears to be'. Consequently, whilst they are in the game of subverting or inverting those norms, the conventions of the played and liminoid event protects the players against their played actions being judged in the context of their more quotidian presentations of self.

In creating this account of a specific RAP session, I was attempting to illustrate as persuasively as possible, how the underlying regulative structures and practices of the EPR conventions and the TfD processes intersected to create a framework which enabled the participants to playfully take control of their theatre making and devise a novel scene. Additionally, I hoped to impart a sense of how such a process might have the potential to effect a durable

transformation in their lives. Indeed, Liz and Paul went on to enrol on a BTEC course in performing arts and Dan enrolled on a BTEC course in construction. It would be presumptuous to assume that those transitions could be solely attributed to their participation in RAP, nevertheless, both the staff and the learners themselves reported their improved self-confidence and communication skills afterwards.

It would be misleading to suggest that the session described above was representative or typical of all RAP sessions. It was not even typical for this group of learners. During the first three or four visits, most of the successful participation was achieved through their engagement in the embodied play components. Whilst from the outset they seemed to enjoy reading the scripts, looking at masks representing feelings and projective activities like floor puppets, these projective play components did not always lead on to role-play. Often, the 'sex education' elements of the curriculum, whilst engaging them, also imparted a certain heaviness or turgidity which was not amenable to stimulating transitions into role-plays. All of the sessions prior to the one described reached points which could have been described as playful and creative, but those spells were ephemeral in nature and the playfulness did not readily transmute into the next phase of creative autonomy. However, the session described did constitute something of a turning point and over the ensuing weeks the group managed to maintain their playful creativity across the three phases of embodiment, projection and role.

Up to and including the time of writing, it has been part of our procedure to run a digitally recorded audio debrief of between ten and thirty minutes with the peer facilitators immediately after running a RAP session. Each debrief contributes to the fieldnotes and reflections on that session, and those guide the structure and

materials of the next. This would often lead to the practice of developing novel scripted scenarios for them to play with, such as 'Bossy Boots'. These might reflect or contain elements and themes they had brought up in their role-plays. Alternatively, we might choose from existing scripts which we judged to be pertinent to some of the issues that were emerging in the group. Accordingly, the structure of the sessions and the materials would be built into the 'scripted' guidelines and these were highly variable as to the degree of regulative detail. I think it would be a misrepresentation of their function to conclude that they were purely prescriptive. Nowadays with RAP, the guidelines are never repeated from one group to the next, rather each new session requires a new set of guidelines. These may include short, scripted scenarios or pieces of codified action cut and pasted from other RAP sessions or even other Aopause programmes. These may not even be cut and pasted, but simply printed off as a section from the original word document. It is with this highly fluid and contingent relationship to scripting in mind, that I am suggesting that these guidelines reflect a process of co-construction with the learners and facilitators and in that sense are more akin to an artefactual product or tool of the theatre making process itself, rather than a rigidly prescribing rubric.

All the RAP sessions were 'sold' to the institutions' gatekeepers on the basis of their contribution to the relationships and sex education curriculum. Consequently, we were obliged to introduce those components, much of which were adaptations of what had been developed in Get-WISE. The floor puppets proved an invaluable device, particularly if we started off by using the 'set' script and moves from Get-WISE and then challenged them to come into character, sit on the seats and create novel negotiations of their own.

In some respects, this was a constraint and ran counter to the TfD sensibility because at times it felt like it was an agenda that was being imposed on the group. Certainly, their initial receptivity to issues of negotiating sexual intimacy and anatomical responses was highly variable. Nevertheless, it was considered neither ethical nor consistent with their educational entitlement to deny access to sex education for young people with special educational needs. So occasionally, we risked introducing material that was highly inducive of awkwardness, and this did not give rise to a playful atmosphere but rather one of initial embarrassment followed by absorption.

Does this kind of 'serious' engagement undermine claims to the play character of the event? Scholars across the fields of anthropology and performance, including Victor Turner, Richard Schechner, Stanley Tambiah and Osita Okagbue have argued that no matter the importance of the event there is a reciprocal relationship between the playful character of an occurrence and its more 'serious' cultural endeavour. Huizinga dedicates an entire book to developing his thesis that play cannot be separated from culture and uses copious historical and contemporary examples to subsume the reader in a compelling experience of culture as a phenomenon which has both an essential play element and is predicated on the play impulse (Huizinga. 1949). Huizinga argues that no matter how 'seriously' participants are committed to such events as competitive sports, the performing arts, ritualized fights to the death, even warfare, the fact that they are framed as phenomena that are set aside and privileged as separate fields of activity from the day-to-day and governed by a set of rules, often including metaphysical ideologies, qualifies them as play and not 'ordinary' or quotidian behaviours.

The psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has written numerous academic and more popular texts which lend credibility to his highly influential theory of 'flow', the eight parameters of which bear many similarities to Huizinga's characteristics of play. One of the eight characteristics of flow is a sense of absorption, whilst another is the absence of self-awareness, a third is a feeling of being in control and a fourth is having achievable goals, a fifth being one in which 'normal' perceptions of the passage of time become distorted to the point of losing track of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 49). Several, and often all, of these experiences are reported by athletes and performing artists as being present when they are at the top of their game, none of them necessarily imply the experience as being one of fun and laughter but rather one of commitment to the moment and another version of self. I am arguing that all three interventions, during those moments of particularly intense engagement, allow participants to experience Csikszentmihalyi's phenomenon of flow, but that paradoxically, those moments of flow run alongside, or perhaps in an oscillatory relationship with awkwardness. Hence, just as all athletes and performers experience uncertainty, discomfort and degrees of acute self-awareness in their preparations, they are also trained to sublimate those experiences through 'ritualized' practices which bring them into a state of focus and flow which facilitates maximal performance. Within the RAP session just described, this 'awkwardness-flow' pattern of transition, is equivalent to Jennings' ritual-risk' cycle and reveals how, by structuring a sequence of playful engagements with various material objects such as the balloon, the blindfold, the mask and the script, the participants can transcend their awkwardness and fulfil their performative and transformative potential.

RAP - evidence of transformation

Respect and Protect (RAP) has been through multiple iterations and each cycle generated its own body of evidence supporting its effectiveness. For the purposes of coherence and emergent themes in this thesis, I will be theorising a range of evidence generated during the most recent tranche of funding. This funding allowed me to implement six cycles of ten visits to institutions providing a combination of educational and caring services to young people who were either in care or had specific behavioural and learning challenges. All three of these criteria applied to the majority of participants. By 2005 I had devised an observation scale for use when assessing learners' progress in the role play aspects of the intervention (Evans *et al* 2009).

Figure 19 RAP Guided Mastery Observation Scale for role play

The RAP project: building perceived self-efficacy through peer led guided mastery using a drama based intervention									
									K - Successfully draw upon modelled interpretations and solutions in novel, real life situations
								J - Create model scenarios; Anticipate problems and solutions; Act them in the learning environment	
								I - Acting out solution with other learners	
							H - Coming in to role and acting out solution with peer educators		
						G - Directing the actors			
						F - Creating possible form of words or actions			
					E - Offering potentially successful solution				
				D - Offering reasonable solution. Getting involved in a warm up					
			C - Answering questions, offering ideas and viewpoints						
		B - Involved through listening							
A - Acknowledging and looking									

At the time of publication, the scale served more as a theoretical exercise to assist myself, the peer-educators and adult stakeholders with a set of reference

points which might help us gauge any progress made by the learners, but by 2013 I had built it into a more formal protocol. In keeping with an ethos of

collaboration and transparency, the scale was introduced as an A4 sheet for the examination in the first or second session by the learners. It was estimated that by this time, they would all have made some progress around the first two or three steps and therefore could already see that they were achieving. More frequently, learners had already made excursions onto steps E and F, and this typically gave them a strong sense of satisfaction that here was a learning experience at which they were already excelling. By giving the peers responsibility to talk with the learners about their progress, they would arrive at a mutually agreed level of self-efficacy with some targets for further improvement.

Appendix 13 shows the case-study which was co-constructed with a male learner called Jezz (fictional). This was an iterative process and developed over several weeks and at least four conversations involving, Jezz, myself, a peer-educator and one of Jezz's carers. We read the account together and Jezz signed it off and dated it.

It is possible to see that the scale was used to develop a chronology of Jezz's increasing involvement. Hence, we can see that early on Jezz was operating at levels A and B. *'From the very first session Jezz always observed the workshop action closely but didn't always want to participate.'* But the observation scale allowed us to register his development both for the sake of the peers, who felt ineffectual as practitioners, and for Jezz - *'He was, at first, slow to offer his opinion in discussions and reluctant to read. However, given the opportunity, gradually it became clear that Jezz was good at improvisations and was confident and expressive in his movement work'*. The scale also gave us a prompt to ask if anything about RAP had impacted on his daily life, and he

reported an incident in which he had anticipated a conflict, walked away, and returned having managed his anger effectively. We all agreed that by the end of the series of around fifteen visits, Jezz had achieved Level K, the highest step on the self-efficacy scale. The process of writing his case study was both creative and mutually rewarding, enabling both the peers and their friend, Jezz, to acknowledge the reciprocal nature of building agency.

One year later, I visited Jezz in his care home to get some reflections on his experience. An excerpt from the transcription of that audio recording is in Appendix 14.

In considering Jezz's case study as a whole, including his follow-up interview, it is evident that he had suffered some early childhood trauma which he reported as his not having had a childhood. Indeed, I was taken aback and moved when he stated, "I was getting my childhood back a bit, I never really had one, so..."

Maintaining self-esteem and managing emotions would appear to be an ongoing struggle for Jezz over which he progressively achieved greater cognitive control. His account of the RAP experience was one of progressively building self-esteem. This, he clearly links with the variety of kinds of social interactions afforded during his RAP sessions and his sense of being agentic in operating within the rules of the 'club'. These rules he did not perceive as being extrinsic or as being imposed by an authority figure on the social event itself, but rather saw them as a necessary feature of being part of a functional group, or club. Nonetheless, he also believed he was within his rights to change a rule provided it met with general consent.

As traumatised as he might have been, he was quite definite about the importance of play and was a champion of fair play and the sense of the group

being responsible for the maintenance of the aesthetic qualities of its own games. So, for Jezz, sustaining his positive affective state and building his sense of self-efficacy and maintaining the autopoietic integrity of the workshop experience would appear to be the aesthetic parameters in which he was most actively engaged. However, none of these were experienced as aesthetic phenomena separate from the personal and social dynamics of the event. He articulated the view that it was the presence of the peers which made it worthwhile.

Throughout this eleven-minute interview, Jezz never referred to the role plays or dramatic conventions, even though these were activities in which he excelled. One might conclude the experience was one of meeting an urgent personal and social imperative. His efforts were orientated around utilising Jennings' conventions of embodied play, projective play and role play in pursuit of a personal therapeutic agenda. He intuitively understood that the performative activities were barely fictitious at all, but rather intensely socialising vehicles through which he could redeem or restore the interactions denied through his childhood trauma. In this sense, Jezz was agentic both *within* the regulative theatre conventions of RAP whilst reciprocally being *constitutive* of them – feeling enabled to alter and defend where necessary the rules of engagement. This achieved a therapeutic effect or function without the presence of a therapist or any formal therapeutic practices.

The sheer intensity and absorption with which Jezz and his peer group participated in the physical play prompted me to think more carefully about play, not merely as a precursor or overture to the main body of the work, but rather having the performative potential to bring about transformations in its own right.

Consistent with the observation scale and Jezz's account of having a sense of agency in mastering both his affective state and his efficacy in engaging in play, this scale attempts to systematize, as a set of observations, how the interplay between autopoiesis and affective states may be modulated with increasing degrees of complexity as the player achieves mastery.

Below is an excerpt from the case study that was developed for Paul during the RAP Project in the local SEND school described above .

Paul was always quick to understand the rules of the games and able to participate and contribute with a sense of fun. He was often able to see how to adjust the rules to make them fairer and make the game more interesting and enjoyable. Often, he helped other people to join in a game or would find a way of accommodating the way they played to make sure it was an inclusive experience. For example, when Dan repeatedly hit the balloon at him he simply hit it back rather than stop the game and try to play it 'properly'. When the sessions progressed to exercises that required a lot of focus, trust and physical control, Paul increasingly brought something special to the experience. Each week he showed a greater sense of ease and assurance when working with the peer-educators which had the effect of encouraging the other learners to have a go. In fact, at times I felt it was the quality and control of his movement which gave the activity a kind of credibility such that others wanted to emulate him. This was a major contribution to the development of the group.

Arguably, it is inappropriate to make a judgement as to the nature of RAP as a kind of dramatherapy intervention, since the contract of engagement between RAP and the participating institutions was merely to use peer-educators and theatre processes to help the clients be more effective at managing their relationships. Indeed, it was a RAP policy never to require insights as to the

medical character of learners' emotional and behavioural challenges. That is not to say that engaging in the theatre making processes did not effect therapeutic processes or bring about therapeutic affects in the participants, but there was no theatre/dramatherapist orchestrating the events. If transformations did occur in the clients, it was because they were manipulating the conventions to meet their perceived developmental/therapeutic needs, but even these may not have been conscious decisions but rather responses to certain aesthetic imperatives and possibilities – such as the simple pursuit of fun.

Over the years and multiple cycles of RAP, different groups and individuals have prioritised different aspects of the experience, with some seemingly only capable of functioning socially within role play conventions and finding physical play and projective activities too awkward or requiring too much 'stillness' or focus for them to participate. Others have found the projective play activities more absorbing, being most interested in masks, reading and writing scripts and the floor puppets. The 'art' of facilitating the sessions is to find the particular arsenal of activities with which to activate the group and use those as vehicles for meeting their entitlement to relationships and sex education. There would seem to be a risk in playing it too safe and allowing the clients to remain in their 'comfort zone' for too long and not challenging them to consider and present novel aspects of self and alternative behaviours for group appraisal. As with mainstream children, this is anticipated with apprehension and awkwardness, but can ultimately result in the mastery of skills as well as emergent, perhaps more emancipated personas and associated feelings of *communitas*.

RAP clients represent too small and diverse a group to make generalised statements about the effectiveness of the intervention. But on the basis of a

range of aesthetic dimensions and a sense of progression through increasing levels of complexity, modulation and competency in performance, it might be possible to infer that these young people are at the very least experiencing feelings of their growing viability as socially adept beings.

RAP and TAP – a brief overview

Consistent with the other two Apause interventions, analysis of the transcripts evidence the enactive manifestation and interplay of the six regulative parameters of TAP, (Figure 8, p.174) foremost of which in RAP is agency or self-efficacy belief (SEB). This thesis seeks to draw analogies between the action matter of an Apause event and the performativity of ritual. Alongside ritual, Austin's explicit performatives are set in socio-cultural contexts which connote the transformative power of the action matter. Critically, like ritual, the transformativity at stake in TAP is *applied*. There is intentionality. Hence the event is designed to instigate change in the individuals in concert with their socio-cultural contexts. What distinguishes RAP from the other Apause practices is a realisation of the play aesthetic of TfD through a markedly less conspicuous use of formal scripts. Here the play imperative relegates the scripts to contingent artefacts and thereby potentiates far more opportunities for the participants to realise play within the aesthetic parameter of *autopoiesis*. What becomes apparent through an analysis of RAP, is that the Theatre of Applied Performativity, is not necessarily 'theatrical'. The performed action privileges the engagement of the participants with their personal agendas, often prioritised over orthodox theatrical aesthetics. Viewed through the lens of constitutive parameters, such interactions generate an aesthetic of play and playfulness. An analysis of RAP reveals that, like ritual, a TAP event, or moment, can manifest

without strict adherence to the practices of a Scripted Performance Workshop. It is argued that TAP, once theorised as two complementary frameworks – the regulative and the constitutive (Figure 6, p.137) – the aesthetic parameters of *liminality*, *destabilising of binaries* and *autopoiesis* can intersect in such a way as to plausibly bring about *durable transformations* without always showing deference to a scripted rubric.

Chapter 8 - Discussion and Conclusion

An overview of findings

At stake in this thesis is an interrogation and rudimentary taxonomy of the performative and aesthetics phenomena that constitute the Apause Peers, Get-WISE and RAP events. It theorises how play and playfulness might be constitutive of durable transformations and identifies where these phenomena share commonalities across all three interventions. Notwithstanding that caveat, when creating interventions funded with public health money, the investigators are obliged to aim to achieve indicators of positive health outcomes. It was therefore incumbent on the team, as programme developers, to devise evaluations of the population-based Apause Peers and Get-WISE projects which were predominantly quantitative.

Having its genesis outside the disciplines of applied and socially engaged theatre practices, in the thesis I have argued that Apause and its method called the 'Scripted Performance Workshop' is an instance of particular kind of theatre – 'a Theatre of Applied Performativity' (TAP). TAP emerges from an imperative to instigate specific kinds of social interactions deemed to be novel, transformative and potentially healthful. Such interactions may be thought of as the *curricula* of Apause which emerge through creative and collaborative processes informed by expertise from the fields of adolescent health, behavioural science, sociology, education and performance theory. These interactions accommodate the interests and perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including educationalists, public health commissioners, parents, the community, religious leaders and most critically, the adolescents themselves.

This thesis deviates from the original Apause theoretical model by explicitly theorising these interactions as acts of performativity which are achieved predominantly as manifestations of play and playfulness. The imperative to prioritise the manifestations of specific kinds of interactions through play and playfulness over the orthodoxies of education and applied theatre induces a persistent response of embarrassment and awkwardness. It is theorised that this is an appropriate and necessary reaction to the exposure and interrogation of social norms which regulate and interdict our discourses around sex, sexuality, intimate pleasures and sexual and relational health.

The idioms through which such debilitating awkwardness are manifest are not immutable. A process I have dubbed 'the creative transmutation of awkwardness' introduces the possibility of novel idioms with which the norms may be reappraised, reconfigured and re-prioritised through play and playful interactions.

Within such a model of applied performativity, it is the making and aesthetics of play which takes priority over the realisation of theatrical forms which may emerge as either contingent on, or antecedent to, play. The 'theatre' of applied performativity provides a means of framing and focusing on a specialized form of action within the broader socio-cultural context of Apause performances, but the making of a theatrical event is not the primary purpose of applied performativity. Play and playful interactions are theorised as the substantive material of transformation.

In the description and analysis of Get-WISE, we see how the creative transmutation of awkwardness initiated the novel practice of using floor puppets to present and play with non-verbal negotiations of sexual intimacy. In its

protean form, the floor puppets with the mobile hands and mouths were crude, their performative manipulations were mechanistic and lacking in aesthetic appeal. Paradoxically, the responses they induced in the players, however, moved from embarrassed awkwardness to the spontaneously ontic engagement in playful, inclusive, frank and joyous interactions. On refining the floor puppets to a more aesthetically conventional set of theatrical practices with more of an epistemic emphasis, including character and story, whilst they held the attention of the participants, only the actors had the opportunity to actually role-play with them. The original 'crudeness', awkwardness, thrill of jeopardy and uncertainty of outcome visited upon the participants themselves (rather than the fictional characters) gave rise to novel solutions and ultimately a collective sense of wellbeing. This *communitas*, characteristic of social drama, had been sacrificed in the pursuit of a more orthodox theatrical aesthetic.

It is postulated that one reason why school-based health interventions, including applied theatre, are so rarely evidenced as effective, is that whilst play might be present, it is not prioritised as being central to transformation. In the rare instances where play is deployed, it is theorised as an adjunct to more epistemic appraisals of health and health behaviours through discussion and 'conversation' (Brodzinski, 2010, p. 70). Theatrical productions, rich in aesthetic accomplishment, may arouse feelings of empathy and stimulate cognitive insights, but the audience or learners are rarely afforded the opportunity to achieve enactive mastery, build self-efficacy, re-appraise and re-prioritise their social norms through a complete engagement in play or playful experiences.

The use of peer educators, as opposed to professional actors or adult facilitators, appears to achieve greater engagement within both the regulative and constitutive parameters of the TAP event. A TAP occurrence is not

theorised as an isolated social phenomenon. It is constituted within a relationship of triadic reciprocal causation (see Figure 9, page 175) (Bandura, 1997, p. 6). Hence, not only is it sanctioned and facilitated by the socio-cultural environment, but the action matter of the event has an effect on that environment.

Theorising Scripts

One function of this thesis has been to engage with a theorising of the Apause use of 'scripts'. The spectrum of what have been dubbed 'scripts' has extended from the essentialized fragments of dialogue presented so haltingly by the RAP learners in which characters, gender, the allocation and sequence of lines are highly contingent and mutable, to the rigid and formalised reading of scientific 'facts' by the Apause Peers. In this context, I am extending the term 'script' to also include the brief set of guidance notes drawn up and shared by the facilitators of RAP which sketch out a loosely connected set of activities following a chronology, for example, the EPR sequence. Between those extremes lies a kaleidoscopic range of performer-with-script and performer-with-performer interactions which, in some sense, have a consistent and functional relationship to the physical artefact dubbed the 'script'.

Given that I have deployed the term 'script' to encompass such a diversity of applications, what do I mean by it? Running through this thesis I have linked the terms 'social' and 'cultural', for example, in using the word 'socio-cultural', suggesting they were synonymous or contiguous. For the purposes of this analysis I now intend to explore the lead given by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz and delink them by treating them as separate systems. Geertz writes.

One of the more useful ways – but far from the only one – of distinguishing between culture and social system is to see the former as an ordered system of meaning and of symbols, in terms of which social interaction takes place; and to see the latter as the pattern of social interaction itself.(Geertz, 1975, p. 144)

He continues:

The nature of the distinction between culture and social system is brought out more clearly when one considers the contrasting sorts of integration characteristic of each of them. This contrast is between what Sorokin has called “logico-meaningful integration” and what he has called “causal functional integration.” (ibid)

Geertz provides examples of the two distinct systems of integration.

Examples of “logico-meaningful integration” include a Bach fugue, a Catholic dogma, the general theory of relativity – it is a unity of style, of logical implication, of meaning and value. [...] “causal functional integration” e.g. a social system, [is] the kind of integration one finds in an organism where all the parts are united in a single causal web [the empirical action matter of that system](ibid).

Geertz assimilates Sorokin’s analysis by explaining that the symbolic codes of a culturally integrated system are neither identical to, nor imply the pattern of the social interactions to which they give rise (Sorokin, 1937). They are separate systems and often there are incongruities between the two.

Following Geertz’s analysis, then, for this thesis I have ascribed to the scripts a status which corresponds to his notion of a ‘cultural system’. In this sense they are the material and artefactual repositories of the symbolic codes, the meaningful framework of values, contextual cues, phrases and signs within which the social interactions are materialized as the performed action.

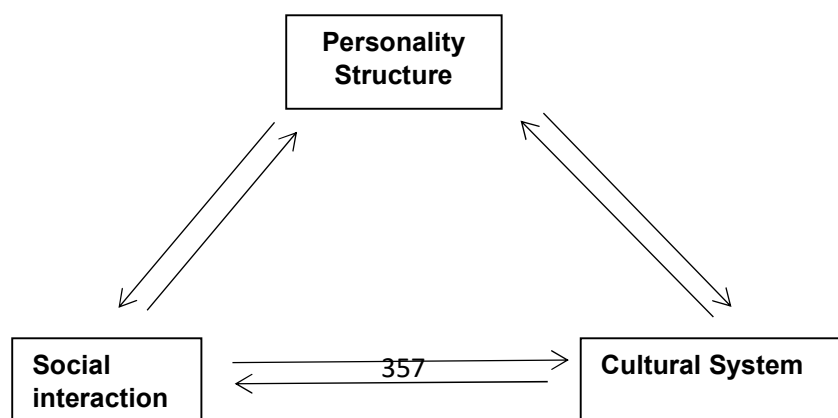
Just as importantly, Geertz introduces a third element, namely, the 'personality structure' of the individual actor. Whilst he sees the personality characteristics of the individual subject as being a component distinct from the other two, these individual factors function reciprocally as part of the triad. Geertz's states, 'Thus conceived, a social system is only one of three aspects of the structuring of a completely concrete system of social action.' (Geertz, 1975, p. 144) My understanding is that whilst these three elements are not materially reducible to each other, they are nevertheless reciprocal. Hence, whilst the cultural code or script is effectively abstract, symbolic and artefactual, its counterpart can be processed in the millions of synapses making up the neurological structures within individual actors' brains. Those synapses generate meanings for the individual subject and in due course can activate motor responses such as language and movement. The motor responses materialize as the behavioural interactions which constitute the social system, specifically the performed classroom action. The scripts are not immutable; Apause scripts can flex and evolve according to the social systems, and the characteristics of the individuals with whom they interact.

Within the complex set of symbols used in Apause Peers and Get-WISE, scripts are codes not confined merely to the indication of sequences of performed actions and their contingent affective states. Additionally, there are words intended to be enunciations of scientific insights, notions of morality, rights, responsibilities and statements designed to challenge those existing norms judged to be inaccurate or antithetical to the cultural sensibility, or programme theory, of the project. In short, an examination of a script would allow the reader to construct an insight as to, '[...] its logico-meaningful integration...unity of

style, of logical implication, of meaning and value'(Geertz, 1975, p. 144). This is the *cultural* element of Geertz's tripartite model and by implication the script cannot be *constitutive* – the script is *regulative*. It is the embodied materiality of social interactions which arise from the script which are *constitutive* of the event and hence define the second corner of the triangle. The performed actions, however, may only be mediated through the myriad factors which comprise the personality of each individual performer.

In considering the TAP model presented in the Theory and Methods chapter, within its six regulative parameters, the scripts of Apause Peers and Get-WISE contain symbolic codes necessary to create a regulative framework consistent with the cultural sensibility or overarching programme theory of the whole Apause Programme, including RAP. Somewhere, either in the explicit formats of Apause Peers and Get-WISE scripts, or in the more inferential notes and sketches of RAP, these six regulative parameters are accounted for and integrated. Certainly, in my roles as facilitator and developer of the interventions, I was aware of creating and operating within symbolic codes representing various combinations of these six regulative parameters. Notwithstanding its iconic status within behavioural science, Bandura's triangle of reciprocal causation bears a striking resemblance to the anthropologist, Geertz's tripartite analysis of social action (see Figure 21).

Figure 21 Diagram representing Geertz's Tripartite Model of Social Action



If one accepts that Geertz's 'Personality Structure' corresponds with Bandura's 'Personal Factors' and 'Social Interaction' corresponds with Bandura's 'Behaviour', the only contentious part of postulating their equivalence is the extent to which Geertz's 'Cultural System' is synonymous with Bandura's 'Environmental Factors'.

It is cogently argued by Scott Simon (Simon, 2001) that by foregrounding the agentic nature of the individual through the learned activation of processes of cognitive control, Bandura's Social Learning Theory is more correctly situated in the tradition of social constructivists. Simon cites numerous examples in which he judges Bandura to be incorrectly rubricized in textbooks of psychology as a 'behaviourists' or 'neo-behaviourist'. He argues correctly, I believe, that behaviourists take a reductionist view of learned behaviour as being primarily responses to sensory cues of positive or negative feedback, largely unmediated by cognitive processes, individual choices and judgements. Once Bandura is aligned with the social constructivists, in Social Learning Theory the individual actor is now understood to be the agentic constructor of their reality and meaning based on the reception of sensory cues as they are encountered through behavioural interactions. Social Learning Theory posits that cognitive processes enable these cues to be referenced against, retained and interpreted as cultural symbols. I am arguing that it is the negotiated and mutable nature of the patterning, meaning and construction of reality attached to these symbols that constitute Geertz's 'completely concrete system of social action'.

According to this paradigm the scripts, then, do indeed achieve the regulative function of creating a symbolic framework of cultural cues. Within the privileged and prescribed liminal space of the Scripted Performance Workshop, I therefore interpret scripts as contributing a powerfully influential but not exclusive

component to Bandura's *environmental* factors. Within this thesis, the cognitive, mentalising processes of the individual actor imply Bandura's 'environmental factors' have an equivalence to Geertz's 'cultural system'.

The scripts, as cultural artefacts then, serve to combine certain regulatory and curatorial functions. They can provide a chronology and a meaningful framework of symbols and codified practices within which the action matter of the event occurs. Simultaneously, they can be a repository for a range of alternative or additional 'social scripts' which the participants can observe, practise and assimilate as part of the citational and iterative processes which underpin their choice of subsequent behavioural responses.

Inevitably, the methodology of deploying scripts is vulnerable to certain criticisms of illiberality. These include their being a vehicle for the iteration of hegemonic values and practices - particularly heteronormativity, the virtue of conserving one's virginity and pursuing an 'adultist' agenda. All of such criticisms are worthy of serious consideration. The first thing to note is that the scripts cannot possibly anticipate and encompass all the other cultural/environmental factors which inevitably come into play in the life of adolescents – even if it was the intention to do so, which it is not. As Blakemore, explains:

A social script is a series of actions and outcomes that are common to a particular situation, so that when you next encounter the situation, you know what to expect.(Blakemore, 2018, p. 126)

Apause scripts then, whilst creating opportunities for participants to explore and practise novel behaviours, are only really offering a restricted range of protean social scripts, because the learners themselves each individually bring to bear their own ongoing and evolving repertoire of social scripts and are themselves

constantly engaged in the process of independently developing their own neuro-cognitive strategies. Hence, the cultural or environmental factors that are experienced by the learners in an Apause peer-facilitated session are a combination of engagement with the symbolic codes of the artefactual scripts and the experimentation with their own personalised, developing and emergent social scripts experienced predominantly as play and playful interactions. It seems implausible that the mere exposure to the cultural processes enshrined within the Apause scripts would be sufficient, in themselves, to permanently prescribe a set of behaviours, no matter how healthful, as if ready for replication should life circumstances prompt them. This would be antithetical to Bandura's cognitive behavioural model, evidences derived from cognitive neuroscience and from various anthropological, social constructivist and post-structuralist analyses of the action matter. All of which practices attach central importance to the increasingly agentic and self-modulating nature of the meaning-making processes of the developing adolescent brain.

Having, I hope, dispelled the notion that the mere exposure to the cultural processes of the Apause scripts can powerfully indoctrinate subsequent behaviour, nevertheless, the scripts must, of necessity, gain some meaningful traction on the personal factors or personality structure of the individual and their reciprocating social interactions during the Scripted Performance Workshops. In common with NiteStar, the scripts, in order to stimulate novel social cognitions, must sufficiently reflect significant elements of the participants' incumbent social realities (Brodzinski, 2010). Thus, from a methodological, aesthetic and ethical standpoint, the scripts must be developed both as a collaborative and, as in the TfD model of Get-WISE and RAP, a

performative undertaking which assimilates both the social realities of adolescents and the cultural and health prerogatives of the adult researchers. Do such creative assimilations enshrined in the scripts *automatically* give rise to the performative aesthetic that this thesis attempts to describe? Numerous hours of observation suggest both high degrees of variability between the action matter of different workshops alongside inconsistencies in the aesthetic topography of the events. Notwithstanding such apparent variability, a persistent quality of playfulness emerges as it infiltrates the lacunae between the regulative structures provided by the scripts and the potential interactions which the scripts attempt to anticipate and codify. Perhaps the state of playfulness only comes into existence as a function of the social interactions. Or is it intrinsic to the cultural sensibilities encoded in the scripts? It appears to me that the quality of playfulness, once activated, actually dissolves or destabilizes the three theoretical binary distinctions between: a) individual factors versus behavioural factors; b) behavioural factors versus environmental factors; and c) environmental factors versus individual factors. This was readily exemplified in the way the RAP learners performed the scripted scene called 'Bossy Boots'. Arguably, the 'Bossy Boots' script is a functional element within the larger script of Jennings' EPR model, sitting as a transitional artefact somewhere between the projective play and role play phases. In turn 'Bossy Boots', with its absence of gendered roles, facilitates and is a manifestation of the overarching set of regulative guidelines adopted from Okagbue's TfD model which stipulate the material is developed in collaboration with the young people. This collaborative ideology of Okagbue's model seems to allow for, or indeed promote the qualities of play imperative to adolescent development. In no small part, Bandura's emphasis on building agency or self-efficacy belief (SEB) and its

interdependence with positive affective states, has also informed an emerging set of practices in script development. Indeed, the whole principle of social learning being based on opportunities to critically observe, symbolically retain and physically reproduce patterns of behaviour is built into how the exercises are sequenced into the scripts. The freedoms to observe and personalise the protective behaviours of assertiveness exemplified in Apause Peers, also admit ample opportunities for the adolescent facilitators and learners to play and be playful within the regulative codes and boundaries as inscribed in the scripts, effectively negotiating and redefining them.

Once framed as the cultural component within Geertz's tripartite construction of social action, the scripts themselves become vehicles, and carry a large responsibility for the realisation of the Scripted Performance Workshop (SPW) aesthetic. Although the class of learners do not actually read the scripts or manuals, it is imperative that the phrases they hear impinge on their existing constructions of their social realities. There needs to be a sense of the urgent social relevance of what the peer facilitators are doing and saying. In Get-WISE and RAP, for example, the cognitively challenging abstract ideas surrounding negotiation are embodied through read and improvised role-plays which also interface with the Get-WISE mask and can transmute into the action matter of floor puppets. Additionally, the scripts not only need to reflect something of the recognisable challenges of adolescent relationships, but present models or frameworks within which meaningful and achievable novel patterns of behaviour may be based. So, in Apause Peers we have the mnemonic of the 'Three Rs' (Refuse, Reverse and Remove) in Get-WISE and RAP we have a visual

codification using the W.I.S.E (Wants-and-Worries, Information, Solutions, Evaluations) algorithm on a mask.

But herein lies a balancing act of ethical and pragmatic dimensions. Whose solutions are they? A pause Peers was sometimes misrepresented by 'experts' as being an abstinence programme in disguise, implying that the scripts were being used, instrumentalised by peer facilitators, to impose an adult authority and solution on young peoples' lives. Certainly, there are phrases in the scripts which, with very minor adjustments to the syntax and read with a particular dramatic emphasis could create an experience of zealotry. However, analyses of the action matter of the events present an account of a consensual, rather than coercive aesthetic. The scripts are structured in such a way as to invite too many opportunities for the performatives to 'misfire'; it is too easy for the learners to engage in a playful mockery of the behavioural algorithms, and for them to express their own autopoietic sensibilities to concur with the criticism of the scripts and, by implication the programme, being authoritarian and coercive. Moreover, having experienced A pause in Year 9, on reaching the sixth form, students have continued to sign-up to be unpaid A pause peer educators. This cycle has been repeated in some schools for up to twenty years which, consistent with Brodzinski's analysis of NiteStar and Nalamdana, suggests the intervention is not perceived by the participants as adults indoctrinating children, but rather a reflection of their own needs and identities.

In addition, audiences for the THE performances demonstrate themselves to be insightful readers of cultural texts who are able to detect and resist attempts at indoctrination. (Brodzinski, 2010, p. 86)

That said, a scripted format does indeed have the potential to be influential in an illiberal manner. It is true that the scripts only pay lip service to an increasingly topical and important LGBTQ + agenda. In concentrating on the mechanics of assertiveness, the authors of the scripts appear to have overlooked the fact that the couples were almost invariably represented as being heterosexual. This thesis presents a case that strongly suggests the SPW can influence normative beliefs even without the necessity of explicitly stating a revised norm as a scientific fact. An analysis of the Get-WISE data has suggested that it could make a significant difference, in the role-play model presented by the peers, as to whether the boy or girl is proactive in negotiating condom use. There were no models of two boys negotiating condom use in Get-WISE. Although the names, Jason and Sam, were chosen because of their gender neutrality, there was insufficient suggestion that the floor puppets could have been same sex. So, whilst the negotiation algorithm might have been applicable to same-sex relationships and the learners might have taken the algorithm as generic and configured it to novel situations in their own lives, including in same sex relationships, nevertheless, a serious discourse in which heteronormativity is challenged was, by virtue of the scripts, prevented.

It may be argued that there are places, in all three interventions, where the texts state that these assertiveness or negotiation skills and values surrounding the consensual progress through stages of relationships and intimacy apply equally to any kind of relationship, including same sex. Nevertheless, they are not explicitly modelled, unless the peers take it upon themselves to do so, and same-sex relationships are unlikely to be included as an explicit and performatively experienced phenomenon within an Apause workshop event. This is a shortcoming that is being addressed as we review the scripts and

develop new resources and is already evident in some of our latest RAP scripts and adult-led resources. Intriguingly, however, despite the positive impact on the norm relating to beliefs of the prevalence of under sixteen sex, Mellanby *et al* (1995) and subsequent analyses have consistently shown a reduction in stigma or intolerance of those who have had sex by sixteen. Additionally, despite heteronormative depictions of negotiations and assertiveness, there was no significant change detected in attitudes towards same sex relationships. Scripting, as a tool for assisting peer facilitation, on ethical and ideological grounds could be seen as a methodology which is both potentially powerful and open to abuse. Conversely, the material contained in the scripts is explicit and therefore may be readily scrutinised, and the authors held to account. The scripts are contestable and mutable. Indeed, if they are developed with young people to reflect the social realities and concerns of their constituents and enshrine a play aesthetic in which the learners are encouraged to exercise their cognitive judgements and be creative in their role-plays, a script should have internal checks and measures which ensure the mutability of its regulative function and variability of the action matter it propagates.

Such emancipatory mechanisms are not always readily discernible to the uninformed interlocuter. They can be easily interpreted as literary works reflecting adult authorial authority. As such, successive readers, particularly those lacking in performative sensibilities, have proved themselves to be incapable of visualising the potential for performed action matter beyond the familiar conventions and norms of didactic pedagogies. It is therefore incumbent upon exponents of the SPW methodology to discover ways of illuminating the practice in such a way as to demonstrate its responsiveness to the zeitgeist

(even if this means challenging it) and its functional role in stimulating playfully creative, personalised and diverse solutions to the developmental and relationship challenges in the lives of young people.

The scripts, understood as cultural artefacts rather than a series of educational exercises designed to have behavioural outcomes, have the potential to penetrate and influence the wider culture of the school and community. Successive year groups anticipate volunteering to become peer facilitators. The school serving my own community had either A pause Peers or Get-WISE virtually uninterrupted for a period of over twenty years and I remain friends with both peer facilitators and learners, some of whom are now in their early forties and have started families with each other. They remember the performed components well, accompanied by the intense sense of anticipation, engagement and relief, often recalling who were their fellow peer facilitators or classmates. Given this sense of the play and playfulness of A pause being culturally sanctioned, rather than seek ways of describing the intervention as being an external phenomenon imposed on its socio-cultural context, it would be more meaningful to adopt Huizinga's understanding in which play and culture are coterminous, instituted through numerous collaborative interactions in multiple loci.

It [culture] does not come *from* play like a babe detaching itself from the womb: it arises *in* and *as* play, and never leaves it (Huizinga, 1949, p. 173).

So, it is fair to conclude that the first three aesthetic of the four parameters identified in the introduction, (liminality, autopoiesis, collapsing of binaries) when fully operational, are consistent with a cultural event which "arises *in* and *as* play". The fourth and arguably the defining parameter of the proposed applied

theatre aesthetic, that of durable transformation, is both potentiated and constituted in the play and playful interactions of the event itself. Throughout this thesis I have tried to develop an argument which posits that the transformations attributable to A pause occur in multiple loci. If one considers, for a moment, the recent findings of cognitive neuroscientists, an event, or series of events, combining experiences of such personal and social intensity will almost inevitably activate neuro-cognitive strategies which stimulate the physiological processes of myelination of axons and the strengthening of synapses (Blakemore, 2018, pp. 87,96). Depending on the utility and frequency of these neuro-cognitive strategies, neuroscientists present evidence that there are corresponding durable transformations occurring in the structure and functioning of the brain (ibid). So, whilst the SPW experience may not render participants permanently transformed with novel behaviours fully codified, programmed as if ready to be pressed into service, it is nevertheless postulated that if the action matter manifests a 'tipping point' or 'critical mass' of sufficient social and personal traction, it can engender a neuro-cognitive 'scaffolding' with which the subject can subsequently be agentic in constructing meaning, languages and actions. As Bandura's model of triadic reciprocal causation encapsulates, transformations of personal factors interact reciprocally with environmental and behavioural factors. So the activity of play generates a superfluity of nascent social scripts as well as creating opportunities to enact novel identities, norms and behaviours whilst impinging on the socio-cultural environment (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p. 222).

The concept of the 'scaffolding' of learning is attributed to the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, who lived during the Russian revolution but whose work was only translated into English in 1962 (Alexandra, 2018). Vygotsky's

ideas are formulated as the 'sociocultural theory of cognitive development'. His thesis is that all symbols, codes, algorithms, values, knowledge, language, motor skills and affective states are actively and collaboratively constructed through social interactions embedded within the wider context of the subject's culture. These are learned by imitation of the behaviours of more skilled exponents and through imaginative play. Seeming to anticipate the work of Bandura and the social constructivists, Vygotsky argues that we should not think of play as being primarily the individual's cognitive processes of making symbols but, rather play should be understood as a realm of activity which is more globally encompassing. It includes all the substantive action matter itself as performed by the child within the event and, as such, involves imitation, imagination, affective states, desires, motivations and the creative recombination of existing cultural codes and practices (Vygotsky, 1978).

From the field of biology, Burghardt argues that play may serve the important function of managing stress (Burghardt, 2014, p. 95). The creative processes of play, rather like my 'creative transmutation of awkwardness', enables players to exercise some degree of control over perturbing stimuli in a playful context such that when they encounter them in real life they are better able to cope. The Theatre of Applied Performativity may, in part, achieve its behaviour effects by enabling adolescents to creatively and 'subversively' engage in play and playful expressions of behaviour which the adult hegemony sanctions as taboo. This helps adolescents to anticipate and manage stress whilst generating coping strategies in much the same way as Capurso and Pazzaglie (2016) see it functioning for younger children.

Critically, whilst Aopause deploys presentational and theatre-based conventions as antecedent to the play and playfulness of the event, it differs from most other

applied theatre practices by using peer educators and not actors as facilitators. This means that all the socio-cultural influences are mediated through other young people from the same school and community, enabling the necessary function of enhanced social status, respect, agency and autonomy to be situated within the interactions of the adolescents themselves rather than being conferred upon them from outsiders and an adult hegemony (Yeager *et al* 2018).

Does the SPW have any current applications and what does this analysis imply for future interventions?

Operating under the aegis of the charity Health Behaviour Group, the SPW methodology continues to have practical applications. It is estimated that locally adapted versions of the Apause Peers programme run in at least ten schools in England and Wales. Classroom resources, including scripts and an audio-visual training package are purchased by schools. Activities from the original scripts have been 'lifted' and incorporated into at least two peer-facilitated programmes run by local authorities and the same activities have been incorporated into other, commercially available, curricula and no-doubt can be found in curricula developed by teachers and health professionals who have had contact with the original Apause Programme when it was widely commissioned by local authorities.

The SPW technology using peer educators is being adapted for 'period poverty' projects in Kenya, Scotland and England, whilst in Malawi it is being adapted with local leaders and peers for projects serving urban schools and rural communities.

Call them what you will, 'scripts', 'manuals', 'guidelines', 'classroom notes', they are neither immutable nor indispensable. The fact, however, that so many of these practices, once codified, seem to reappear in curricula of individual schools, authorities and commercial providers is a testimony to their durability and their amenability to assimilation into other visions of RSE.

The two complementary frameworks, the regulative and constitutive, can for the purposes of achieving a cursory understanding and practical applications, be described as distinct, but in practice they reciprocate, and intersect. It would, for example, be absurd to suggest that an attempt to influence 'affective state' is the exclusive concern of a regulative framework and is incommensurable with the constitutive and aesthetic endeavour of achieving autopoiesis. Furthermore, certain binaries, such as 'observational processes' and 'motor reproduction processes,' whilst remaining distinct in their formulation in psycho-social theory, during the constitutive event often seem to be one and the same thing. Hence, we see learners mirroring the action matter of the floor puppets as they observe it or imitating with precision the body language of a classmate as they resist unwanted sexual pressure. The peer-facilitators are not solely actors representing and modelling the behaviours of fictional characters but are simultaneously fulfilling an alternative social function of being themselves. So, throughout the accounts of all three interventions we experience a necessary and creative ambivalence. There is vital fluidity between the science-based, prescribed, chronological and objectively observed regulative functions versus the constitutive processes which are performative, paradoxical, playful and, often wilfully, unpredictable.

The SPW, as facilitated in schools by peers, is the culmination of efforts to coordinate mechanisms and permissions from local authorities, community and religious leaders, parents, senior management, trustees, classroom teachers and the consensual participation of the young people themselves. That degree of integration points to the SPW as a cultural event with the potential to achieve durable transformations on a wider stage than the classroom. In endeavouring to establish the performative interactions of the classroom as the epicentre, a corollary of various and reciprocal interactions is precipitated. The loci of such necessary interactions may be situated in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development (Bronfenbrenner, 1981) and Bartholomew *et al's* intervention mapping system for theory and evidence-based health promotion (Bartholomew, 2000).

Many of the challenges facing the health of our species and the ecology of our planet are viewed in terms of how we make the necessary adjustments to our behaviour. In this context, applying the critique of 'behaviourism' to health technologies such as SPW which attempt to influence behaviour, is misleading and unhelpful. Rather, behaviour needs to be framed as a series of interactions mediated by personal processes involving affective states, cognitions, individual and collective agency, within a reciprocating framework of cultural influences. Within this thesis I have attempted to map out some of the processes that occur in the uniquely privileged time and space of peer-facilitated performance workshops. These spaces are necessarily performative in nature, set aside from the quotidian and have identifiable aesthetic parameters arising *in* and *as* play. Evaluations of empirical evidence suggest that they can be impactful on the determinants of health behaviours and actual, reported health behaviours.

After a spectacular uptake of Apause across England and Wales during the late 1990s early 2000s, politically driven health priorities changed, and the original technology proved hard to sustain and 'sell' in the neo-liberal economics of educational and health funding. In recent years, there has been a tentative renewal of interest in the SPW methodology as RSE becomes statutory and schools are seeking effective, responsive and economically sustainable ways of meeting their students' and staff needs. By moving the discourse from one of defining SPW in purely psycho-social terms into one involving more aesthetic and cultural sensibilities, it is hoped this thesis will offer a framework for a new generation of practitioners to explore the potential of SPW as an urgently needed transformative methodology. Pressing issues such as domestic violence, non-consensual sex and negotiating sexual intimacy, adolescent mental health, internet safety and cyberbullying are often personal experiences that are not amenable to disclosure through purely verbal vocabularies and discourses. The SPW offers alternative idioms, potentiating the creative transmutation of awkwardness.

To finish this section on a more cautionary note; whilst the SPW has transformative potential, like the Imùlè ritual cited in the introduction, its adherents need to be aware that its performance also implies a degree of jeopardy. The invocation of a play aesthetic, the somewhat contingent relationship with authority and the casting of adolescents as authors and actors of the action matter is a volatile mix which can induce both exhilaration and anxiety in the observer and participant. It is easy to imagine how norms, attitudes and beliefs may be enacted which are deemed not to be pro-social and healthful. Situated in a poststructuralist discourse, this thesis concurs that

there is no transcendent moral code which will 'naturally' emerge and instate itself to protect participants in such a combustible mix of reactants. It is therefore fortuitous that the SPW is not a 'quick fix' formula, but requires substantial investment of time, creativity and resources. Poorly crafted scripts simply do not work. They fail to capture and codify, in a communicable style, effective practices and adolescent realities. Whilst appearing simple in format, the processes of their creation are necessarily complex and challenging. Accordingly, the SPW, as an instance of 'Applied Performativity' inevitably has the potential to misfire with 'more or less dire consequences'. There have been occasions when the use of scripts have been misinterpreted. Peers have been inappropriately recruited and their deployment both in workshop development and training has fallen short of the programme theory and application. As well as inducing perturbation for peer-facilitators and learners, the programme risks falling out of favour with commissioners and collaborators.

Conclusion

Cautionary invocations aside, this thesis concludes that the performative conventions manifest in the Scripted Performance Workshop is a serious attempt to integrate aesthetic with psycho-social, health and cross-cultural sensibilities. The practice is worthy example of the descriptor, 'A Theatre of Applied Performativity'.

No single transcendent theory of the transformative power of play has emerged. Rather, this thesis has demonstrated how play and playfulness may facilitate the processes of Bandura's observational learning and build self-efficacy. Additionally, they can potentiate novel interactions and behavioural responses. They can be emancipatory by interrogating, subverting and instigating new

norms and may serve as a response to, and a coping strategy for, stress. Finally, play as a socio-culturally sanctioned event, may transform the very culture in which it is embedded. These postulates need not be mutually exclusive and in the moment of intense engagement within the 'flow' of a play event, the subject experiences them not as discreet phenomena but as a complex and ambiguous aesthetic, oscillating between multiple affective states such as awkwardness, empowerment, euphoria and *communitas*. Most importantly, perhaps, it enables participants to generate feelings of fun and pleasure.

Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings support the claim that the SPW has a robust theoretical framework with a growing evidence base of impact. Using theatre and performance to engage young people as both researchers and facilitators is particularly suited to opening a window and shedding light on the time sensitive issues of adolescent wellbeing and has the potential be a uniquely effective approach in public health.

TAP functionalised through the SPW technology can make an important contribution in the discovery of innovative systems for young people to present, explore and transform their lived experiences. Creative processes invite young people to materialise and confront those socio-cultural impediments to their wellbeing, transmuting them *in* and *as* play. Novel semiologies and solutions are enacted and mastered, emboldening participants to become more agentic actors in the theatre of their lives.

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Appendix 1 E-mail from Marion Howard PhD

Professor Emerita: Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics
Emory University School of Medicine

Subject: Peer Education and Adolescent Sexual Health

Date: 25/09/2014

Hello again!

I do apologize. I have been out of state on a family emergency. I just returned to Georgia.

As you may know, most U.S. health-oriented programmes used in schools have a "shelf life" of about five years. The fact that interest in and use of the *Postponing Sexual Involvement Educational Series* lasted for more than two decades is quite remarkable. Over that time we continually tried to better our understanding of adolescents and the social and peer influences that affect their behavior. Some of our notions were rooted in theory and some came as a result of our clinical experience in serving over 1,000 sexually active adolescents age 16 and younger each year in our family planning clinic. As a result of our studies and our experiences, the programme was revised a number of times throughout the years and its visuals were enhanced or changed. Our training of teen leaders for the series also was modified over time.

Starting out we looked to Piaget and his understanding of child growth and development for guidance. In particular we were influenced by the notion that as youth moved from concrete operational thinking to a formal operational mode, programmes needed to foster this transition while recognizing that youth are not yet fully capable of reasoning in the same manner as adults and the

absorption and application of knowledge may differ significantly. We were further influenced by Lawrence Kohlberg and his understanding of moral growth and development. We were particularly interested in the role peers play in these various models. In relation to social influence, we reviewed Gerbner's Cultivation Theory which focuses primarily on television as the dominant cultural story teller of the age and predicts that viewers who watch a great deal of television are more likely than those who watch less often to accept the worldview most frequently depicted on TV. We also studied Bandura's Social Learning Theory and its successor, Social Cognitive Theory which further predicts that viewers will be more likely to assimilate and perhaps imitate behaviors they see frequently depicted by attractive models who are rewarded and/or not punished. The Social Learning Theory also predicts that imitation is more likely if the media consumer thinks the portrayal is realistic and identifies with or desires to be like the media character.

One initial help we received in tackling how to develop such a programme was the fact that a smoking prevention programme using teen leaders and dealing with social and peer pressures had been developed and successfully researched a year before we started. We contacted the study's author, Alfred McAlister, and received permission to adapt some of his materials/techniques to the human sexuality field – thus we started with a proven model rather than from scratch. However, there were many changes needed—one can smoke by him/herself, sex requires interaction with another; the smoking curriculum urged young people to encourage their parents not to smoke; and while it is hoped young people will never begin smoking, it is hoped that all young people will grow up to have rewarding sexual lives etc.

Speakers, presenters, workshop leaders, trainers etc. all need presentation skills in order to communicate effectively with their audiences. There certainly are crossovers with "performance traditions and practices." As time went on, I think we became more skilled at helping teens be effective in their roles as "influencers" both in and out of the classroom.

At the beginning of this summer, the Jane Fonda Center for Adolescent Growth and Development moved from its University location to the Grady Hospital campus. As such, a high proportion of the old materials were not kept. I looked but did not find the PBS video you mentioned which showed the programme being delivered in the schools. I did find a video on training teen leaders but I remember that last time I sent a video to England it was not useable because it required conversation to something called PAL. I don't know whether there is still such a difference because most programmes are now on CD and not VHS.

Perhaps something in the above will be useful to you. Again I apologize for the delay in responding. Give my best to your colleagues.

Marion Howard

Appendix 2 Marion Howard's Conference Address - On adolescence

Conference on Strengths and Potentials of Adolescence.

Since the focus of the effort has been low income black youth throughout this presentation, one must keep in mind that poverty and racism are both pervasive and invasive in our society. These social ills place additional burdens on such youth when it comes to handling almost any aspect of their lives. [...]

REDESIGNING THE OUTREACH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Common sense said that no one operates intelligently in a vacuum and that once they became fertile, young people needed to be given information about their bodies and care of their reproductive capacity. But, also, it was clear that the kind of information currently being given young people, although necessary, was not sufficient. Ultimately, the Teen Services Programme decided that it needed to give young people skills to support their potential for better use of such information. Further, such skills needed to take into account that adolescents are not just short adults, that there is something inherently different about being an adolescent.

[...] Young people who are in the eighth grade, when thinking ahead, most often are thinking "What am I going to do on the weekend?" If they are really farsighted, they may be thinking "Am I going to make it through the eighth grade?" They generally are not thinking in ways that enable them to ask themselves, "If I have unprotected sex, how might my life be affected five years from now?" Young people become very egocentric in early adolescence. They have the feeling of being "on stage"- everyone is watching me, everything I do, everything I say. In trying to fit in and to belong, often young people will use behaviors to try to fit in if they cannot do it other ways.

[...] adolescents are more likely to take into account the intentions or the behavior of their peers in making moral choices, as though that excuses a behavior. "We didn't mean to have sex: we just got

carried away." "I didn't mean to get pregnant." Young people often say, "Everybody is doing it [having sexual intercourse]. It's just a part of a dating relationship. It's just a part of growing up." In the low-income population served by Grady Hospital, young people also say, "My mother had her first baby at 15 so why can't I?" The "everybody's doing it" is part of their immediate environment.

[...]Decision-making involves weighing alternatives, conceptualizing the future at a time when young people, naturally, are focused more on the immediate. Also, knowledge by itself most often does not change behavior.

In our society today there are doctors and nurses who still smoke.(Howard, 1991)

Appendix 3 A Descriptor of Apause Peers

Engaging year nine students (13 – 14 year-olds), the Apause Peers programme comprises a cycle of four phases facilitated by sixth form students aged between 16 and 18 years. Each phase, or session, lasts approximately one hour and they are typical one week apart. The peer-facilitated component is sandwiched between two blocks of three, adult-delivered Apause sessions, one block taking place earlier on in year nine (13-14 year-olds) with a second adult block being delivered after the peer cycle and taking place in year ten (14-15 year-olds).

The Four Phases of Apause Peers

The first peer session is entitled *Risk Appreciation* and after the peers have introduced themselves, explained their role and what Apause is about, the 'Ground Rules', as originally introduced in the adult-led sessions, are re-visited and a new consensus is established. The bulk of the session is dedicated to an exercise in which small groups list all the common reasons why teenagers start to have sex and all the reasons they might wait. The learners organise themselves into self-select groups of between three and six and, with the informal support of peer-educators, the groups write their ideas down as two columns on an A4 worksheet. The peer-educators move around the groups crouching down beside them or sitting on the edge of the tables chatting, joking and giving encouragement and, if necessary, writing the learners' ideas down for them. These exchanges provide the first opportunity for spontaneous, informal peer-facilitator and learner interactions. They help create a sociable context to the activity, ensuring everyone in the class has engaged both with the task and the peers and that every group has something written down to feed back to the board. This also enables peers to form judgements as to the range

of 'maturity' and social confidence of their group of learners. Through a formalised procedure in which one peer does the board writing while the others gather ideas from the groups using the 'Repeat and Praise' technique, every group has one of their ideas written on the board before groups are invited to offer more reasons. Eventually, around eight to twelve ideas for reasons why teenagers start having sex are written up. The same procedure is repeated for reasons why they might wait. This usually results in around five to ten reasons. The social dynamics surrounding these procedures are of great significance as the spokespersons for the groups express a sense of ownership of their ideas and, at times, take certain risks in offering up their ideas. So, there might be a degree of uncertainty as to whether they can legitimately suggest, 'for fun' or 'boredom' or 'for money' or 'love' or 'feeling ready'. As more suggestions are forthcoming, so their classmates cannot resist making comments or laughing. Nevertheless, all suggestions are positively sanctioned by the peers by being praised and written up. Occasionally, individual learners realise the playful potential of the situation and call something out that may not have been previously written down on the worksheets, such as, 'feeling horny'.

All the ideas are written up on the board as two lists side-by-side and, through a series of provocative questions designed to elicit refutational arguments (McGuire, 1964), class discussion and vote taking when necessary, the peer-educators enable the class to reach the conclusion that most, if not all, of the reasons given for teenagers starting to have sex, although common, are not 'good enough', - the ultimate test being, "Would you tell a friend or sibling that a particular reason is a good idea?". Typically, although not always, all the reasons for waiting are judged to be good reasons. It is quite common for a

class to say 'being in love' is a good enough reason to start having sex and despite the peers' efforts, even with a vote, the classes rarely have a change of heart.

The peers then go on to read some of the biological, medical and social consequences of early sexual involvement. These are illustrated using projected images on a whiteboard or screen for visual stimuli and occasional humorous juxtaposition. The session is finished off with a case study of a girl who fears she is pregnant by a boy who is now having sex with her best friend. This is presented as a story-reading performed by a peer in the first person, illustrated with an image of an anxious looking teenage girl. Questions are put to the class by different peers such as: 'Do things like this happen in real life?' and 'What do you think of what the boy did?' and 'What difference does two-timing make if it involves sex?' The peers use the responses of the learners as springboards into further lines of questioning and discussion, with the general conclusion being that while the boy's behaviour was selfish and irresponsible, ultimately the girl had the choice of whether she had sex or not. Moreover, both of them were equally culpable in failing to use contraception.

The second session, called *Pressure on Relationships*, looks at the ways in which advertising and media promote gender stereotypes and cause many young people to feel inadequate if they don't live up to these expectations, thereby leaving them vulnerable when they experience pressure to become sexually active. An early exercise involves two gender-neutral, stick people. All the ideas from the class are collated on the board and the conclusion is drawn that there are many things that go into making a good relationship which do not include sex. Projected images are used to describe of a continuum of different

kinds of relationships, and a spectrum of different ways in which physical 'closeness' is expressed is presented as a series of steps. An exercise is set up whereby the students write on a piece of paper the level of sexual intimacy that they believe is right for their age. This is done in private and on a cue all the class members are asked to move to a sign in the room which corresponds to the level of intimacy that they wrote. Typically, we see several students being highly indecisive as they are torn between going to the sign that corresponds to what they wrote and the sign where they see their friends are standing. The class is reminded just how easy it is to be influenced by our friends and the social pressures going on around us, moreover those people who are easily influenced are most at risk of doing something they might not have chosen for themselves. The session rounds-off with the presentation of three short pressure scenarios with projected illustrations of young people interacting. Formulated as short pieces of dialogue read aloud by the peers, brief scenes are presented in which teenagers find themselves being put under pressure to have sex. The class initially work in small discussion groups. Less forthcoming classes are commonly encouraged to write down their ideas first, before individuals call out what their group think the characters might say. Prompted by the peers' questions, the class discusses the feasibility of various solutions and the peers are fulsome in their praise of solutions and effective refutational arguments. The session ends as the class is congratulated on their work and reminded of the forthcoming session.

The third session, *The Power to be Me*, recaps on the pressures young people face before the peers present to the learners three assertiveness techniques. Each technique is first carefully described and illustrated with effective phrases

and body language, whilst a bullet-pointed summary of the method is either projected on to a screen or written on the blackboard or whiteboard. Finally, the scene is set by the scene manager and the parent exits the house leaving the young couple alone. Without referring to scripts, the first assertiveness method is modelled as a very short scene. There is never any attempt at characterisation or back story. Having modelled the first pressure resisting technique, one of the peer-educators takes on the role of 'pressurer' while another, the Scene Manager, selects learners to take on the role of 'resistor'. Around six girls and six boys come to the front and demonstrate their capacity to resist unwanted pressure, then the second assertiveness technique is introduced using the same routine of first explaining and bullet-pointing, then modelling a short scene. Again, the cycle of bringing uninitiated learners to the front is repeated, first another three boys then three girls are required to demonstrate their mastery of the techniques. In most, but not all, instances the relationship is between a boy and a girl and the applying of pressure is presented as something both boys and girls do in equal measure. In same-sex classes or classes which are predominantly one sex, these interactions are often presented with members of the same sex, even if the group of peers is mixed. Also, it is quite common for the class to contrive to get their classmates to come to the front and perform same-sex negotiations. Such entertainment is rewarded with much laughter, clapping and general approbation. Using the same procedure to introduce the third technique, the pressure is accumulative with increasing numbers of pressure lines. This enables the learners to be coached into using all the three methods of assertiveness – the *Three Rs*.

In brief, the first method, *Resist*, is to say 'No' and keep repeating it, the second, *Reverse*, is designed to put pressure back onto the 'pressurer' by first saying how the pressure is making the resistor feel (uncomfortable, frightened, bad etc.) and then asking the pressurer why they keep applying pressure after they've said 'No'. The third method, *Remove*, is to simply get up and remove themselves from the situation. This is done in a non-confrontational manner and is not designed to signal the end of the relationship.

The session closes with the peers challenging the learners with a range of pressure lines and situations and asking them to call out what they would say to diffuse the situation without giving in. These are presented as novel refutational arguments or reiterations of established ones, often coupled with subjunctive forms of the assertiveness techniques. Typically, a pressure line might be, "Everyone is doing it – why not us?" and a learner might call out, "Well, I'm not everyone and how do you know everyone's doing it?"

The fourth session, *Final Session*, begins with a simple quiz show. With support from the other peers, the 'Quizmaster' organises the class into approximately six groups and the peers show the class brief dramatic presentations of pressure scenes. Working in small groups, the class write down and are encouraged to call out, how they think the characters should respond. Game show protocols are observed, with one peer picking out groups in turn to feed back their answers, the same peer amplifies and relays the answers to a second peer, the 'Scorer', who awards a score while a third peer records the score on the board. Typically, excitement escalates as teams accuse each other of copying successful responses. The Scorer can be challenged for being mean or overgenerous with marks, and the awarding of bonus points can

become highly contentious. All these spontaneous interactions have the effect of intensifying the sense of play and the more subversive and entertaining acts of playfulness, so that groups become emboldened to strive for ever more elaborate answers, 'copycatting' off other successful groups and arguing with conviction for the superiority of their answers. After about twenty minutes, the session moves on with the same small groups presenting short scenarios of pressure situations. By means of worksheets, the background and the setting of each scene is already prepared for the teams of learners. They then have to work for approximately ten to fifteen minutes and prepare a scene in which they perform how the protagonist is put under pressure and how he or she deals with it without destroying the relationship.

Whilst the gameshow is universally successful in its presentation, there is much greater variability in the execution of the scenarios. In some classes the groups do not come to the front of the class, preferring to read back their solutions from where they are sitting. Some groups are sufficiently well prepared and confident to come to the front and having read the background and the scene setting, freely improvise their scene without referring to any of their written preparation. Others are painfully script-bound, and spanning those extreme positions, there are degrees of independence. Some groups need a lot of help from the peer-educators both in writing and performing their pressure scenarios. Peers are aware that this is their last activity and, typically, are concerned that everyone achieves a successful presentation. It is commonplace for the peers to give sweets to their year nine learners and report that they are going to miss running the sessions.

Appendix 4 Transcript Apause Peers

Transcript: Apause Peers: Phase Three – The Power to be Me

Because the recordings were made for the purposes of assisting in peer training and accreditation, the last exchanges of the session were recorded episodically rather than as a continuous unbroken sequence. Nevertheless, the video record gives a representative account of a typical session. Unsurprisingly, at times the class appeared subdued due to the intrusive presences of cameras and additional adults.

The venue is a biology classroom furnished with wooden benches which, although heavy, are not attached to the floor or fitted with permanent sinks and gas taps. All the walls are shelved or have cabinets and store the typical bottles of specimens, skeletons, models of organic molecules and textbooks. Posters, designed by students, decorate other areas of wall and the large window extending across the entire back of the class makes the space bright and friendly with an easy informality, characteristic of many local authority-maintained schools of that era. Dominating the front of the room is a traditional science teacher's lab bench. Large, with built-in shelves packed with books, the top is tightly cluttered with textbooks and students' work. Behind it, and matching the size of the bench, is a chalk-dusted roller-style blackboard.

The mixed group of year nine students are predominantly aged fourteen. The summer uniform code permits the wearing of standard issue school sweatshirts or white, short sleeved polo shirts. A large number, including boys, are wearing conspicuous items of jewellery such as necklaces. The four peer-educators are wearing casual summer clothes.

It is notable that, unlike the learners, the peer-facilitators are not in uniform and will have been very deliberate in their selection of clothes and fashion items. As performers, these represent judgements about their presentational roles, and are functionally equivalent to their costumes.

Ros (female) is wearing purple, loose-fitting linen culottes. Her top is black, medium cut, square necked, sleeveless and laced at the back like a bodice. It is slightly cropped, with very thin straps accentuated by translucent bra straps. Around her neck are three beachwear-style chokers, while on her left wrist is one large and one small bracelet made of shells and beads. She is slim with long dark hair, dark complexion, brown eyes and is among the most conventionally attractive of all the girls in the sixth form.

Del is wearing blue jeans and a very loose fitting, branded sweatshirt with nothing underneath it, thereby exposing his neck and upper chest. He wears a heavy silver necklace, a ring on the third finger of his right hand, a large silver watch on his right wrist, and a couple of 'surfy' or hippie type bracelets on his left. Above average height and slim, he has short, dark hair. With his strong, straight nose, and 'beach' dress code, he would be regarded as good looking.

Angie is wearing a top similar to Ros's. With slightly higher cut and wider straps, her bra straps or vest straps are clearly visible. Wearing a thin gold necklace and pendant, simple gold earrings, her short, swept back hair is held in place with several decorative butterfly clips. On her right wrist is a wide bracelet. She wears blue jeans.

Sam (female) wears blue jeans with a short sleeved, black rugby top with a very large embroidered crest on the left breast. She is not wearing any jewellery or

makeup and has medium length, light brown hair parted in the centre and pulled behind her ears.

The video recording begins with the learners having already entered the classroom and nearly completed the procedure of moving the benches towards the back and sides of the room to make enough space to form a circle of chairs. This is a violent and haphazard operation with the benches being vigorously pushed and dragged across the floor with the resultant screeching of table legs on lino. The learners appear to be enjoying the noise and disruption of the normally ordered calm of the science lab and one girl, taller and stronger than average, while still remaining seated, in one movement reaches sideways to shunt three adjacent tables towards the back window. Ros smiles a lot and takes a lead in these proceedings, being friendly but firm in her instructions, trying to ensure the benches are pushed far enough back, and a regular arc of chairs is formed. She coaxes various recalcitrant individuals to bring their chairs into the circle. Her aim is to prevent learners sitting behind, between, or on benches, avoiding the creation of little enclaves incongruous with the main circle. Chairs are manoeuvred into place with more scraping and banging. The learners are chatting and laughing.

The learners gradually take to their seats and, for ten seconds or so, the peers totally ignore them with their heads down studying and discussing their scripts before eventually re-introducing themselves. They had delivered the previous session the day before and the learners were already familiar with their names. Manuals are folded and held in one hand, enabling ease of navigation and engendering a more informal, less prescient relationship between scripting and the ensuing action. Smiling and asking if everyone is ready, Ros begins.

Introductions are quickly completed with occasional glances at the scripts. Ros jokes about the last time they met being only yesterday and some learners laugh. Although the introductions are scripted, the peers are not reading from the manuals and seem relaxed, making eye contact and smiling. Their vocal qualities are confident and upbeat.

Sam, Ros and Del are positioned in a line in front of the teacher's bench, while Angie stands behind it, getting prepared to write on the blackboard. Ros asks the class if they can remember the Ground Rules from the day before and, after some hesitation, several members of the class put their hands up concurrently and one mutters something. Ros and Del simultaneously point and wave their manuals across each other, picking out separate learners. Del says, "Who said that?" while Ros smiles and says, "Yes?" and asks the contributor to say it out loud. As members of the class raise their hands, Ros points with her hand and smiles while Del swishes his script in their general direction. She is quicker at picking up the contributions and repeating, praising and elaborating on them with the assistance of Angie, who is writing them on the board. Del is quieter and slower to interact and adopts a subordinate role. These exchanges are interspersed with short giggles from the class. Angie writes the Ground Rules clearly on the board.

Ground Rules

No put downs

No Personal comments

LISTEN

Ros asks the class if they all can agree to stick to the Ground Rules and they quickly consent by calling out “Yes” enthusiastically. Smiling, she says, “Yes. Thank you very much.”

The peers take it in turns to read from the scripts explaining some of the problems of understanding and managing our sexual feelings and how we have a right not to be pressured into sexual practices that we are not ready for, or happy about, adding that neither do we have the right to pressure others. The variable quality of reading here is notable. Del frequently stumbles, misreads and sometimes makes no sense at all of a line. All four of the peers manage the technique of taking their eyes off the script at the end of a line, but Sam is the least animated, sounding somewhat mechanistic and distanced. Angie reads with clarity and energy. Ros is more personally connected to what she is saying, as if she has encountered and considered the sense of the lines. This makes her the most compelling of the four peer-facilitators, while Del gradually grows in confidence with his male voice sounding richer as he gets to grips with the less demanding lines. Possibly due to the presence of the video cameras, almost all of the class seem self-conscious and disengaged. With the exception of one boy, who is playing with a white belt that dangles provocatively between his legs, a group of six boys sit slumped in their chairs with their pelvises and legs thrust forward, their arms are uniformly crossed tightly in front of them. They smile surreptitiously amongst themselves. This uniformity of posture extends round to the next three girls.

Swiftly, the session moves to the peers explaining that they are going to learn some useful ways of saying “No” to unwanted pressure to becoming sexually involved. It is implied that ‘sexual involvement’ means sexual intercourse. They

take it in turns to read 'pressure lines' and on each rendition one of the peers responds by saying, "No" – the first of the assertiveness techniques. As the techniques of how to *Resist* are explained (make good eye contact, don't shuffle about, be firm and self-assured, don't give any reasons or excuses), Angie starts to write them up on the blackboard. Attempting to write these out at length she realises it involves too much writing and copies the words off the script which has a 'thumbnail' of a transparency showing a synoptic version of the *Resist* technique. It appears on the blackboard in large, clear print with a misspelling thus:

RESIST

Say know (sic) x 3

Then Del and Ros introduce the first technique by turning to each other, looking into each other's eyes and saying simultaneously, "No" firmly and clearly. They have a playful and upbeat tone, and both smile and chuckle briefly afterwards. The class require no further prompting and suddenly become extremely animated and quickly repeat it in pairs, saying, "No" loudly and laughing before turning to someone else and again trying the technique. Despite the peers' efforts to encourage the learners to create extra clarity and emphasis, the class carry on and appear impervious to Angie as she reads from her script, "You can do it a bit louder and a bit clearer." The class continue saying "No" amongst themselves, apparently oblivious to the peers until the peers ask them to be quiet now and begin to invoke the Ground Rule of "Listen".

The class stop the repetition of “No”, but a sizeable minority still continue to chat, and the peers read aloud from the scripts further instructions which seem to be ignored.

Angie, without the assistance of the script, begins to assume the role of Stage Manager (SM) and attempts to calm the class down in anticipation of the more formal role play demonstration.

Angie: Could you be quiet over there. You all did really well, but now we want to move on. OK. *(She places her script on the science bench and moves round to the front while still twisting her torso to allow her to check on the words. Meanwhile, Del and Ros are adjusting the two empty chairs and are negotiating who sits where).*

SM (Angie): Guys, could you settle down please... *(With more authority, still glancing at the script over her shoulder)* OK, so now we're going to put this... into practice.

SM (Angie): *(Still checking the script she points out, with loose, floppy-wristed arm gestures).* OK, That's Anne, and this is Tony. *(The script remains on the bench and Angie continues to read over her right shoulder while holding her hands together and playing with her fingernails).* Now, Ton *(Correcting her misread)* ...Anne has invited Tony to her house after school and her mum's going out, OK? So, they're listening to music, OK. OK, I'm Anne's mum *(Both hands pointing floppily to herself. Now she is fully in the role of mother and improvising)* OK, bye guys, I've got to go out, you brother's left his football kit at home...stupid boy. See you later.

(All this section is done without the scripts in hand and the learners quickly settle down and become attentive, focusing

closely. Del, in the role of Tony, with his fingers interlocked is thoughtful for a few seconds, Ros's hands are relaxed, resting in her lap).

Tony: Yeah.... You know.... there's no one in the house, do you want to go upstairs?

Anne: No.

Tony: Oh go on!

Anne: No

Tony: It will be really good fun – go on.

Anne: No. I don't want to.

Tony: Oh go on!

(The scene is quickly interrupted by Angie who is now in the role of Scene Manager)

SM OK. That's brilliant, well done. You see how she said "No". She looked him firmly in the...he...she...oouck *(sticks tongue out, acknowledging her misfire)*...I'll do that again....she said "No", looked him firmly in the eyes and just said "No". She didn't wriggle, she didn't fidget, she didn't look away, even though Tony kept pressuring her. So, well done. Really good. *(Searches through her script to find her place having improvised for the last few minutes)*

Ros: OK, so, shall we get...?

Angie: Yea, shall we swap?

Del: OK *(Gets out of his seat and moves towards a learner in the circle)*

Angie: No.

Ros: Tony, you have to stay here. *(Del returns to his seat, laughing, wagging both index fingers in parallel to acknowledge his mistake. The learners are much more alert now. The recording does not show any of them in the previously observed slumped position. Most still have their*

arms crossed in front of their bodies but are leaning forward attentively.)

Del: Oh right... I've got to stay here.

(Ros gets out of her seat, moves towards a girl in the circle and points)

Ros: Ok, how about you? *(She points to a girl, who seems to be well known by the sixth formers, called Gerri. Most of the girls in the class laugh loudly, the boys seem to laugh less.)*

Gerri: I don't particularly want to. ...I don't want to

Friend: *(Makes a barely audible goading comment/sound)*

Gerri: No, I won't.

Ros: Oh come on. Then you can say "No".

Angie: You've just got to say "No" Gerri.

Angie(SM): So, we're going to do the scene again. *(Gerri is very self-conscious. Her left leg is crossed tightly over her right causing her to sit sideways to Del. She covers her face with her left hand, almost completely obscuring it. She is wiping her left eye as if her hair is falling in front of her face, but it is already tucked well behind her ears. She sweeps it to one side with her left hand and clutches her stomach with her right arm, then switches arms sweeping her hair with her right hand and clutching her stomach with her left arm. She appears to be smiling then clutches her stomach with both arms. At this point the class is still laughing.)*

SM(Angie): OK, remember the ground rules. OK, Same situation. I'm mum. Going to go out. See you guys later. Bye.

(Moves away, leaving Del and the new Anne alone.)

Tony(Del): Hey, there's no one in the house. *(Gerri sweeps her hair again with her right hand)* Do you want to go upstairs?

Anne(Gerri): *(Leaning forward)* No.

Tony: Aw go on.

Anne: No.

Tony: Go on.

Anne: No.

Tony: *(More persuasively)* Oh. Go ON.

Anne: *(More emphatically)* NO!

SM(Angie): Well done *(Leads the class in applause. Del and Ros also clap warmly. While the class are still clapping, the girl sweeps the hair away from her face and quickly returns in the direction of her erstwhile seat.)*

SM(Angie): So, do you want to pick someone else ...someone else you want to.... *(Without hesitation Gerri picks the friend who had goaded her in the beginning. The whole class laughs.)*

SM: Aw...It's not difficult is it.

(The next girl starts to come towards the chair, nervously adjusts her orthodontic brace and then changes her mind and returns her shades to Gerri. She returns to the chair at the front of the class using both hands to sweep the hair from in front of her face. She sits with both arms folded across her lap. She seems more self-assured and contained than Gerri had done.)

SM: Same situations. Get it out. Just say 'No' three times, alright. It's up there, if you get stuck. *(Pointing to the instructions bullet-pointed on the board)* Alright guys? Bye!

Tony: Hey, you know there's no one in the house, do you want to go upstairs?

Anne: *(Sitting relaxed with her legs together and arms crossed comfortably in her lap. She shakes her head dismissively)* No.

Tony: *(Quickly)* Go on.

Anne: *(Sharply)* No.

Tony: *(More forcefully)* Oh, go ON.

Anne: *(Undermining his vocal energy with a dismissive tone)*
NO!

SM: See...well done. *(The girl goes back to her seat)*
You going to choose someone else?

Girl: Yeah... Charmian! *(The girls in the class laugh loudly.)*

SM: Well done. Well done Charmian. *(Charmian moves confidently and quickly into the seat while there is still quite a lot of laughter.)* Same...Ok. Everybody? Say 'No' three times, look him in the eyes and say 'No'. Right... off you go...bye.

Tony: Hey, there's no one in the house, do you want to go upstairs?

Anne(Charmian): *(The most relaxed of the girls, Charmian sits with her knees slightly apart with her left arm hanging by her side and her right arm lying loosely across her lap – she is smiling widely. Using a similarly dismissive or mocking inflection)* No!

Tony: Go on.

Anne(Charmian): *(Laughing and in a higher pitch)* No.

Tony: Oh... GO ON!

Anne(Charmian): *(Treating his proposition like a silly joke – in higher pitch still)* NO!!

SM: Well done. *(Leads the clapping but the class is uncharacteristically unresponsive.)*

Despite the script's explicit protocol of six girls coming to the front, the peers decide after three it is time to try the scene on some boys. Running counter to

the guidelines of the script, the scene is not modelled first with the roles reversed, that is with Anne pressuring Tony. Instead, a boy, Arthur, is named by Charmian. He is identified by the peers and brought to the front amidst a great deal of kaffuffle, shuffling of seats and laughter. He is smiling broadly, perhaps cheekily, and sits in the empty chair beside Ros. Ros is more mature and self-assured than Del which seems to give Arthur considerable kudos and his male friends are watching with keen anticipation to see how he copes with the invitation from Ros to come upstairs to have sex with her. It is mostly the boys of the class who are laughing now. Angie asks the class to quieten down and says, "Come on, give him a round of applause for coming up." The class clap loudly and a few make a high-pitched "whoop."

(Angie briefly reminds Arthur of the technique of saying "No" three times and then in the role of Anne's mother leaves the couple alone in the house).

SM: Ok, I've got to go out now. I'll see you guys later.

Anne: (Ros): *(Her palms are together and squeezed between her thighs. She is smiling and talks confidently)* So Tony, we've been going out for a long time and I think it's time to take our relationship to the next level.

Tony: (Arthur): *(Arthur is clutching his stomach with his left hand and his right hand has gathered up part of his T-shirt. He smiles, nods and hesitates for four seconds. During this time members of the class start to laugh. He takes a big, quick breath, smiles and says:)* No *(Most of the class find this very funny and laugh loudly and Arthur starts to laugh)*

Del: No Laughing.

Angie: No Laughing, come on. *(Arthur looks over his left shoulder in the direction of Del and stops laughing)*

Anne: *(Appealingly)* Well, you never know, you might like it.

Tony : No *(He says this with a look of nervous uncertainty. No one laughs)*

Anne: Go on.

Tony: *(Laughingly)* Hummm *(The whole class laugh loudly. He tips his head to the right and releases his right hand from his T-shirt and lifts and opens up his hands and forearms slightly in a gesture suggesting, "I'm weakening, my defences are opening up". He rolls his eyes upwards three times suggesting he is giving serious thought to the proposition then gathers himself and in a lower, more decisive tone says:)* NO *(The whole class laugh very loudly, and clap spontaneously without being prompted by Angie. Arthur quickly leaves the chair and moves back to his place)*

SM: Well, done, give him a round of applause. *(The class continue to clap enthusiastically)*

The session progresses with Angie reminding Arthur he can choose the next boy to come up. John is quickly named, he stands up and Arthur gets into his seat. John has a crew cut, or what would have been called locally a 'skin head'; he comes to the front, smiling while at the same time staring quite hard, perhaps threateningly, at Arthur.

(John rubs his nose with his left hand then clutches both his arms tightly around his chest. Angie touches the back of his chair, and squats beside him, to his downstage left)

SM (Angie): So you know what you're going to do? *(John nods, involving his head, neck and upper body)* Say 'No' three times. *(John moves his hands, so his left arm goes across his body*

and clasps his right elbow. His right hand is now thrust between his legs where it is locked by his thighs. He starts to chew gum. This would probably be against school rules and would mark him out as a bit of a rebel or 'hard case').

SM: Bye

Anne (Ros): OK, Tony. Would you like to come upstairs with me?

Tony (John): No. *(Smiles and laughs nervously, two or three class members join in the laughter. He rubs his right elbow and adjusts himself in the chair)*

Anne: Are you sure? It might be fun.

Tony: No. *(Same class members laugh. Continues to rub his right elbow and wriggle in the chair)*

Anne: Go on.

Tony: No. *(Continues to rub his right elbow and wriggle in the chair)*

SM: *(Class clap spontaneously, prompting John to stand up. Applause is reinforced by Angie)*

SM (Angie): *(To John)* Well done. Do you want to pick another one?

John: *(With little hesitation)* Umm ...Yeah, Seb. *(class laughs and claps. John also claps to give Seb encouragement)*

Friend: Go on.

SM: C'mon... c'mon. Give him a round.

Seb: *(Seated with his left hand folded across his lap Seb protests, and sounds as if he's just been discovered in a hiding place)*

Aww.

(His classmate to his left pushes Seb from behind his left shoulder. This is not forceful enough to dislodge Seb, who is

quite tall and strongly built, but enough to signal that it is his turn and there is no getting out of it. John sits in Seb's vacated seat as Seb smiles and moves across the circle tugging down and smoothing his T shirt twice, in a manner similar to that displayed by Gerri. While all this is happening the class clap, laugh and we hear another whooping call. He sits down beside and to the left of Ros, and Angie moves beside him to his 'downstage left'.

SM: It's on the board what you're going to do...you know what you're going to do?

Seb: No. *(Smiles and laughs at his mistake and nods in affirmation several times)*

SM: Yeah...that's it, say 'No.'

Seb: No.

SM: Right... that's it...off you go then... Bye.

Anne (Ros): Bye...*(Pause)* So, we've been going out for a long time... and I think we should go upstairs.

Seb: No *(Smiling with his jaws and lips held firmly and both arms crossed tightly in front of his abdomen. He thrusts his hips forward in his seat making his face lower than Ros's, so he is looking up at her. He licks his upper lip.)*

Anne: Well... go on.

Seb: No. *(Smiling and licking his lip again)*

Anne: Go on.

Seb: No.

Anne: Are you sure?

Seb: Yes.... NO! *(This is a classic theatrical double-take but executed with a total absence of contrivance. He covers his face with his right hand and laughs. The whole class join in, laughing loudly. Seb folds himself over completely so his face is resting on his left knee.)*

SM: *(Moving in beside him)* She caught you out there, but don't worry about it, so you still said, 'No', so that's really good, well done. *(Placing her hand on his shoulder for reassurance and possibly to indicate he's succeeded, and he can go back to his seat. Seb moves back to his seat while the class claps before Angie has time to prompt them.)*

Since Ros has taken over the role of 'pressurer' and boys have been coming to the front of the class, the atmosphere within the class has shifted away from being tense and awkward to more playful. The tempo and excitement have increased and there is no sense of the scenarios losing their interest or momentum. Clapping and class approbation expressed in support of the 'resistors' arises without being prompted by the Scene Manager or peer-educators. The boys are quick to 'volunteer' each other, are quick to give encouragement and gently coerce each other into getting out of their seats to cross the circle and take a seat at the front, and they anticipate with relish seeing how their friends will cope with the pressure lines from Ros. Simon, the last of the 'resistors', is compelled to leave his seat and take the empty one beside Ros and performs in much the same manner as his predecessors. His interactions simultaneously acknowledge the entertainment he is providing his friends whilst remaining in the character of Tony and resisting pressure from Anne. A hiatus follows. Learners laugh and talk loudly amongst themselves in an undirected manner while the peers ignore them and organise themselves for the next stage - introducing the second assertiveness technique. With minimum expenditure of energy, the class is brought back into focus and Sam resumes formalities by reading the link between the *Resist* and *Reverse* assertiveness techniques, before Ros takes over.

Ros: Reversing the pressure has two parts to it. First you say how the pressure makes you feel. (*She looks up from her script as she addresses the class with the question. Her eyes are wide open and her face has a look of questioning and expectancy*) So, how do you think, you know, pressure would make a person feel?

(*She rotates clockwise scanning the whole class from her left to her right. Having a less declamatory quality, this next line is not read, and is a more personalised iteration of the previous question.*) If your girlfriend or boyfriend is pressuring you, how you... how you gonna feel?

Male Learner: Scared?

Ros: Yeah...you might feel scared. (*Slightly turning up her nose and curling her upper lip in distaste*) You might feel like... you might feel like...(*turning back to the other half of the class*)...uncomfortable do you think...anything else?...

Female Learner: Awkward.

Ros: Yeah...it would make you feel really awkward, wouldn't it? So, you could say (*touching her necklaces protectively*), 'You're making me feel really awkward. Or you're making me feel really scared or uncomfortable...'

Angie: If the person continues to put pressure on you, use the second part of reversing.

Ros: Ask them why they keep pressuring you after you've said No. So, you could say, 'Why do you keep pressuring me after I've already said No?'

Del: Or, 'Why do you keep going on at it, I said, No?' Or 'Which part of no do you not understand?'

Sam: Remember that reversing the pressure has two parts. Say how the pressure makes you feel and why do you ask...asking (*stumbling on the words, smiling and laughing briefly*) why do you keep pressuring me after they have said No?

Angie: Ok, so we're going back to the pressure situation with Tony and Anne. This time we're going to use the Resist and the Reverse method. (*She has already written the methods up on the board*) So Tony's going to be pressuring Anne and Anne's got to say no three times, say how it makes you feel and then ask why. Ok? (*Del and Ros look over their shoulders to check the notes on the board*) See you later...alright?

Tony (Del): So, your mum's gone out, do you fancy going upstairs for a bit?

Anne (Ros): No.

Tony: (*In a rather juvenile, pleading tone*) Oh go on.

Anne: (*More matter-of-fact and self-assured*) No

Tony: It would be really good fun.

Anne: No

Tony: Oh c'mon.

Anne: (*Looking over her left shoulder at the guidance notes on the board*) Look...you're making me feel really uncomfortable.

Tony: (*High pitched whine*) Oh go on.

Anne: (*Glancing over her left should at the board*) Why do you keep asking me, when I've already said, No?

Angie: *(Leading applause with Ros and a few of the class joining in)* Guys well done. So, she said no three times, and he kept going again, *(looking over her right shoulder to check the board)* and she said, 'Why do keep making me feel so bad?' And he went on again and she asked, 'Why are you making me feel bad?' So that's all you guys got to do *(As she talks, trying to underplay the difficulty of reversing the pressure, she comes from around the back of the bench towards the class. These highly inaccurate reiterations of the action are accompanied by floppy and imprecise gestures and wringing of hands)*. So, we're going to try it again, and we're going to put one of you in the hot-seat, alright? Any girl wants to go, or are we going to have to pick someone?

Ros: Ok. Let's pick a girl this... from over here this time... *(Ros gets out of her seat decisively and walks in front of Del to the left-hand half of the class having already picked a girl)* How about you? *(pointing, then walking across until she's right in front of a small, slightly pudgy and apparently shy girl. She's fiddling with her fingers, something appears to be wrapped around them – elastic bands or Sellotape)*

Angie & Ros: Yeah

Ros: C'mon. be brave

Female leaner: When I get my hands sorted.

Angie: It's alright, I'll stand next to you...C'mon give her a hand everybody. *(The girl gets out of her seat smiling and still fiddling with her fingers. Angie, Ros and the class start to clap. The girl sits in the empty chair beside Del and Angie squats down close beside and speaks conspiratorially)* Say 'No' three times and if he keeps asking, and then say 'No, no, no' and

then say...ask him...and then say ... oh...say how you feel . and then tell him you feel really bad and if he keeps going, do what it says on the board and ask him why. (*Angie is pointing out the methods on the board and the girl is looking over her left shoulder*) Ok...same situation...guys... Joe...alright...See you later, bye. (*The girl is sitting with her legs squeezed tight with both her hands locked between her knees, in a position almost identical to the one shown by Ros in the demonstration a few seconds earlier. She is smiling sweetly at Del*)

Tony (Del): Hey...my mum's gone out...for a bit. D'you want to go upstairs?

Anne: No.

Tony: (*Smiling and in a warm tone*) Go on.

Anne: (*More assertively*) No.

Tony: (*In an encouraging, lightly persuasive tone*) It will be really good.

Anne: (*Quickly and more assertively still*) No.

Tony: (*A little impatiently*) Oh go on.

Anne: (*Looking over her left shoulder, checking the cues on the board*) Why do you keep ...(*Ros is writing rapidly on the board, trying to elaborate on the minimalistic cues originally written up by Angie, but her body is obscuring the text*)...

Ros: Oh sorry (*Neatly stepping to one side to reveal the board writing and points to the very words she has just written*)

Anne: You're making me feel bad. *(Ros smiles to confirm she got it right)*

Tony: Oh, but you'll really enjoy it.

Anne: No...*(glancing over, but without reading from the board)*...Why do you keep asking?

Angie: *(Loudly and enthusiastically)*...Well done *(The whole class clap loudly, as does Del who is smiling generously. Ros is still writing industriously on the board yet more detailed guidance, but stops briefly to acknowledge the girl's effort with a clap)*...Well done. That's a really good effort. Do you want to pick a girl to go? Another one?

Anne: *(Already out of her seat and returning quickly to her starting place, she pauses before saying)*...Janet *(Someone else also says Janet)*

Janet: Ahh. *(Sighs in a loud tone of resignation as if asking 'Do I have to?')* She stands up, pulls down her white polo shirt and walks unhesitatingly towards the empty chair beside Del. Janet is the strong girl who, at the beginning of the class, shoved with one arm, three tables. She adjusts the hair from across her face and, smiling comfortably, folds her arms with her left hand falling in a relaxed shape across her right forearm. She swings her right 'downstage' leg over her left as if she were turning in towards Del)

Angie: *(Bending down towards Janet)* So if you get stuck it's all up on the board. Say three 'Nos' . Say how it makes you feel and then ask, 'Why do you keep doing it?'...OK? *(Janet looks at the board and smiles confidently. She has large, brown eyes, her face is open and interactive)*

Tony (Del): Hey, my mum's gone out for a bit. D'you want to go upstairs?

Anne (Janet): *(Shaking her head gently, smiling and speaking softly)*...No.

Tony: Go on.

Anne: No *(Higher pitched, more assured)*

Tony: It will be really good fun.

Anne: *(Looking him in the eyes, smiling, raising her eyebrows and in a higher, more emphatic tone)* No.

Tony: You'll really enjoy it.

Anne: *(Rolling her eyes to the ceiling and re-adjusting her whole body into a more 'planted' position and speaking with real conviction)* You're making me feel really awkward.

Tony: Oh go on.

Anne: *(Speaking right to him as if really wanting an answer ...The distinct tone of a Nokia mobile phone penetrates the atmosphere)* No...Why do you keep asking me?

Angie: Yaeey! *(Leading the clapping as everyone immediately joins in – this was the most accomplished and word perfect performance so far – without recourse to looking at the board, Janet's performance had surpassed that presented by the peer-educators)*...Despite the mobile phone you did really well there! Do you want to turn it off?

Female learner: Yeah.

Angie: Yeah

Following Janet's performance, one more girl and four more boys come to the front to demonstrate their mastery of the 'Reverse' technique. Ros applies the pressure on the boys. Ever since Janet's highly capable performance, the new resistors themselves prove to be much more adept, presenting the most complex of the methods either without looking at the board at all or with just the slightest of glances. The sense that the resistors need encouragement and bit of coercion from their classmates to come to the front builds up. This is quite without malice, rather it seems that it is how the rest of the class choose to involve themselves and appropriate their agency when it is not their turn to come to the front and take centre stage. The class know exactly who has already gone to the front and who is yet to go. Names get chanted, there is some gentle pushing and prising of the new 'resistors' out of their chairs. Accordingly, there is always a reciprocal display of reluctance, shyness and uncertainty on the part of the resistors, even when they proceed to demonstrate that they are quite capable. In response to the class's increasingly boisterous contribution, Angie, in particular, takes on a more maternalistic presence, comfortably improvising phrases designed to appeal to their sense of fair play and asking everyone to show due respect by being quiet and listening. Not that this was actually necessary, since the class were invariably transfixed by their classmates' performances. Rather, it seemed to come out of Angie wanting to have a sense of control in the proceedings which she judged required a degree of formality. Nevertheless, the class becomes increasingly vocal and this builds up as the peers refer to their scripts and start to prepare themselves for the last of the 'Three Rs'.

Del: Are we moving on?

Ros: Yeah. We need to save some for...

Angie: There's another...um... another thing

Ros: There's another thing to come yet, though, so...Right. (*Reading from her script now*) ...If you reverse the pressure and turn it back, the other person will usually be forced to stop and think. They will understand that their pressure is not having the desired effect. (*Emphasises this word 'effect' with an upward, slightly irritated inflection, lowers her script and stares hard in the direction of the noisiest part of the class*) ...Ok?...(*scanning rapidly through her script*)...Now I've lost my words. (*Same inflection and accompanying expression and gesture as with previous sentence*) ... (*Continues to try to find her place in the script*) ... on you and they will often give up.

Sam: However, sometimes some people are so concerned about getting their own way that they completely ignore what the other person is saying.

Angie: Ok, finally, we're onto the third of the three Rs. So far, we've had Resist, Reverse and the last method is... (*She points out in rhythm the instructions for the first two Rs on the board, then rolls the blackboard upwards to create more space and while she is talking writes 'Remove' on the board*) ...Remove.

Sam: This means all you have to do is refuse to talk about it and remove yourself from the situation. That means just get up and walk away.

Del: (*Angie continues to write the Remove instructions on the board*) This does not...not mean that this is the end of the relationship. It just means that you are not going to stick around and be pressured.

Ros: So, you could say something like, 'I don't want to talk about it anymore'.

Sam: If the person keeps going on about it, just get up and walk away and say, 'I'm going to call you tomorrow'. Or...

Del: *(Speaking over Sam)* ...Or, 'I'm going to make a cuppa tea, when I get back, we're going to change the subject.

Angie: So, we're going to do the same again with Tony and Anne and they're going to use the three Rs. They're going to Resist... *(It looks like the recording stopped for a few seconds here, but Angie was pointing out the instructions on the board and verbally reminding them of the assertiveness techniques of the three Rs.)*

Angie (mum): The boy's useless, see you guys later... Bye.

Ros: Bye.

With Ros to Del's left, they take up their positions in the empty chairs at the front of the class. Del applies the, now overly familiar, pressure lines and Ros adds the third of the refusal techniques to the previous two in rather perfunctory manner. This gives the impression that Del's continued pressure is something of an irritant and that this procedure should be readily mastered, and control regained by simply walking away. After a couple of girls are quite assertively brought to the front, the action is picked up as a particularly shy girl is encouraged to come to the front of the class. She is very thin, with straight, black hair that is parted in the middle and hangs flat against her head. Angie is squatting low beside the girl with her right hand holding the back of her chair, suggesting she is making a particular effort to be supportive towards her. She talks to the girl in warm, confidential tones.

Angie (SM): Just say 'No' three time, he'll keep asking. Just say 'No' three times. And say how it's making you feel... you're making me feel bad...you're making me feel uncomfortable... ask him why... 'Why do you keep asking for this, don't you understand? That sort of thing. And then just walk away. Just...'I'm gonna make tea or something.'

Ros: It's all on the board. It's all on the board.

Angie: It's all up there if you want it. So you'll be fine. You Ok?

Female learner: Yup.

Angie(SM): *(Whispering)* Yup...*(Announcing)* Bye guys, see you later. *(Walking out of the scene)*

Tony(Del): So...my mum's gone out, d'you want to go upstairs for a bit?

Anne: No.

Tony: Oh go on.

Anne: No

Tony: Oh go on, you'll really enjoy it.

Anne: No

Tony: I really think it's important to take our relationship further.

Anne: You're making me feel uncomfortable.

Tony: I'm sorry...but...I really think you'll enjoy it.

Anne: Why do you keep asking?

Tony: But I just think you'll really enjoy it.

Anne: I'll call you later. *(Gets up smartly and walks away with her head and eyes turned towards the floor.)*

The remainder of the untested learners come to the front of the class, and although they do not all successfully perform the 'Reverse' part of the three Rs, without fail they get out of the chair and walk away – successfully achieving the 'Remove' part of the three Rs.. The year nine girl who was second to come to the front to perform the Resist method who had initially been so nervous, volunteered and flawlessly demonstrated all three of the assertiveness techniques.

The action is picked up as the peers set about testing the learners' capacity to come up with responses to a wide variety of pressure lines. This is practice in invoking refutational arguments.

Ros: During this session we've used a number of lines that people use to try and get others to do things they want them to do. So, the next thing we're going to do is to see if any of you can come up with replies to a few more lines. *(A girl, Gerri, puts her hand in the air – this is the very first girl who came to the front)* Yeah?

Gerri: If you loved me, you'd wait until I'm ready.

Ros: Exactly.

Del: That's nice. Anyone else?

Angie: *(Seeing another girl who has put up her hand)* Yeah?

Learner (F): I was going to say, 'If you loved me you wouldn't ask.'

Angie: Well done. So, OK ..umm..*(seems to be paraphrasing)* What if, 'If that's the way you feel, then I'm going to ..not.. stop seeing you... and that's the way it's going to be.'? *(Nobody answers)*

Del: *(Talking quickly over nervous laughter)* Ok, then... suppose I said, 'If you won't have sex with me, then I don't want to

see you anymore.' What would you say? (*Class does not respond for six seconds*) ...Any ideas?

Learner (F): I'm better off without you.

Ros: (*Upbeat, encouraging*) Yeah

Del: Yeah.

Angie: Ok (*As if making a suggestion*) ...Choose the word 'respect' – 'If you respected me you'd waited .. wait even'.

Ros: You could say, 'If that's the way you feel, then I'm going to miss seeing you but that's the way it has to be, so...

Learner: That's what I said just now... (*Ros laughs – conceding the point*)

Ros: Sorry about that.

Ros: What if I said, 'I know you want to do it, but you're just afraid of what people will say'... what will you say to that?

Angie: (*In a higher-pitched, coaxing tone of voice, almost maternalistic in quality*)...Any ideas? You guys over here? Got any ideas for that one?

Learner(F): You obviously don't know me very well.

Angie: Yeah, that's a really good one.

Del: What about, 'If I wanted to, we wouldn't be arguing about it'. Yeah? Just explain how you're feeling.

Angie: Ok, what if I said, 'It's just part of growing up'? (*Class is silent for three seconds ... very softly*) what would you say to that one? You guys, got any ideas?

At this point on the tape there is a good view of how they are seated – it is not anywhere near a regular circle of chairs. Some seem to be clustered in twos and threes in small corners created by the irregular positioning of the large tables. In some areas the seats are arranged in a more regular curve. The students look quite tired and slouch in their chairs and lean their elbows on the

benches. They are listening, but boys never seem to be replying and there is a general sense of apprehension and caution before replies are ventured. The previously buoyant atmosphere has changed into one of introspection and thoughtfulness with the peers being much more coaxing and gentler in their style of questioning and eliciting answers.

Del: *(After another three seconds pause)* Well, is it part of growing up?

Learner (F): *(Apprehensively)* Yeah.

Learner (F): *(Agreeing with the previous contribution)* Uh hum.

Del: *(Very softly)* No?

Learner (F): Yeah but some people...they don't fancy anyone . so, they don't want to grow up. *(A few laugh uncertainly)*

Angie: It doesn't make you grown-up if you have sex, it doesn't make you not grown-up if you've not had sex. Yeah?

Del: What if I were to say, 'You're not a real man or woman unless you have sex?' *(Three seconds pause)* ...What would you say?

Angie: *(Looking directly at a small cluster of girls – in a whispering tone)* Any ideas?

Ros: *(Rupturing the reflective silence and speaking much more boldly)* You could say something like, 'You know, having sex doesn't prove you're more of a man, or more of a woman. What do you think?'

Angie: Any other ideas? What about if someone said, 'C'mon, have a drink, that will get you in the mood'. What do you reckon you could say to that one? *(Five second pause ... Gerri and her friend, Charmian, appear to be sharing an idea or*

conferring) ...are you whispering...someone's got some...ideas...Yeah?

Learner (M): Yeah *(Sitting next to Gerri and Charmian forming a slightly more mature group, leaning forward keenly, and putting his hand in the air.)*

Angie: Yeah?

Learner(M) *(His voice is much deeper than the rest of the boys – smiles laughingly)* Alcohol doesn't make you any prettier. *(General and quite prolonged laughter lasting five seconds, particularly among the girls – someone claps)*

Angie: Well done. *(The boy turns towards Gerri and friend – all three are smiling together and laughing. It seems like not everyone heard his saying it and the phrase is repeated by Angie and at least one of the other learners in the class)* ...Are there any others? *(in a high voice again)*...How about you guys...are there any others? *(Five or six seconds of silence. Body language is quite protective here, faces are covered with hands, legs are crossed, and arms crossed. Some learners are biting their fingernails, while others have their arms locked forward with hands clenched together.)*

Ros: How about if they said, 'I have to have it ... what could you say to that? *(Three seconds of murmured responses – possibly including 'I've got to fancy you first' - which are too quiet for the peers to pick up, but a small enclave of learners are laughing amongst themselves.)*

Angie: What's that? Uuhh..let's try another one. Um..'If you don't someone else will'.

Leaner (M): Good luck to that person then.

Angie: Well done. That's really good.

Del: How about, 'A lot of your friends are doing it, why not you?' (*Three or four seconds pause*) ...What would you say back?

Learner (F): Because I want to stay individual.

Del and Ros: Yeah!

Angie: That's really good, well done.

Sam: What about. 'What my friends decide to do is their business?'

Angie: I make my own decisions. How about you guys over there. (*A group of about six boys are hunched over, slumped, arms crossed biting fingernails, smiling slyly at each other, showing a general reluctance to respond.*)

Del: You could just turn round and say, 'Well actually, a lot of my friends aren't doing it.'

There follows a long pause and as the camera pans around, it is clear that most of the class, even those who had formerly been eager contributors, have closed-off, appear tired and evidently do not want to talk any more. Del, reads the last few lines from the manual, telling them how well they have worked and explaining that he hopes it will help them to handle some of the pressures teenagers experience to become sexually involved before they are ready. Ros reads a quick recap of the techniques they've learned and reminds them of their right to say 'No'. On behalf of the peers, Ros thanks the class warmly for listening and working with them, smiles and says, 'See you next time.' Her tone is bright and upbeat, and the whole class claps spontaneously and generously. The learners re-arrange the classroom furniture, respectfully returning it to the more customary configuration; this is prompted by unscripted requests from the peer-educators, with the finishing touches more formally directed by their science teacher. Satisfied that the learners are standing calmly and quietly at

their tables, the teacher dismisses them, one table at time, in a silent and orderly fashion. Having once passed through the door and into the corridor, the learners can be heard to be talking quietly amongst themselves.

Appendix 5 Two Brent Schools – A pause Peers Only

Excerpts, analysis and discussion based on A pause Peers Only (unpublished)

In the academic years 2008 – 2009 the Brent Council in NW London funded a small pilot of the A pause Peers without the adult-led components in two of their schools. Albeit this was a small sample (362 pre-intervention respondents, 192 post-intervention respondents) and a simple pre and post-intervention self-report questionnaire, nevertheless, statistically significant gains were made in all those important variables which, according to our programme theory of change, would be predicted as being antecedent to behaviour change. The findings presented below comprised the commissioned, unpublished report I wrote for Brent Council in 2009. (Evans and James, 2011)

In trying to get nearer to something of the affective states of the participants, this questionnaire style of generating data is not a sensitive method. Notwithstanding that limitation, the data suggested that in the school in which there was a strong normative belief that most teenagers were sexually active by sixteen, the programme had a significant impact in reducing that erroneous belief.

School A already achieved a relatively high correct score prior to the intervention (39.9%) this remained unchanged, but School B moved from 16.4% to 24.1% which does represent a significant positive shift. So, it might be concluded that where there is high prevalence of the normative belief 'Most teenagers have had sex by the age of 16', the peer education has significant impact on correcting this unhelpful and inaccurate belief.

A large minority of respondents from both schools, again, reported experiencing some embarrassment (44.1% in each case) but only 13.8% reported it was *too*

embarrassing. Despite the experience of embarrassment, high levels of participation in group discussions were reported (85%), while 60% took part in role plays. It might be observed that the role play participation was quite low, but this could easily have been due to the low number of post questionnaires returned by School A. School B returned a much higher number of questionnaires (see Table 1 below). Having personally trained the peers in both schools, however, it was clear to me that they represented quite different demographics, with School A having a higher proportion of students from Asian and Muslim backgrounds compared with School B which appeared to have a more even mix of ethnic groups with more students of white British, African and Caribbean heritage represented. My experience of the two schools was that peers from School A showed much more conservative values towards teenage sex and sex before or outside marriage and were more reserved about rehearsing the role-plays. To some extent, the conservative values of School A are reflected in the data and may go some way towards explaining the relatively low uptake (49.3%) of opportunities to participate in role-plays.

Table 1 Process Monitoring

Process monitoring: I took part in the roleplays.

			School		Total
			A	B	
I took part in the roleplays.	Disagree	Count	34	37	71
		% within School	50.7%	33.6%	40.1%
	Agree	Count	33	73	106
		% within School	49.3%	66.4%	59.9%
Total		Count	67	110	177
		% within School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

We wanted to know how well the peers worked as a team, in the hope of getting some insight as to the classroom management . (See Table 2) Despite School

B peers achieving higher levels of participation, their year nine students did not rate the teamwork of their peer-educators as highly as their School A counterparts.

Table 2 Process Monitoring

Process monitoring: The peers did NOT work well as a team.

			School		Total
			A	B	
The peers did NOT work well as a team.	Disagree	Count	51	68	119
		% within School	85.0%	73.9%	78.3%
	Agree	Count	9	24	33
		% within School	15.0%	26.1%	21.7%
Total		Count	60	92	152
		% within School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Perhaps, this suggests that the classes were a bit more unruly or possibly less formal in School B which is arguably born out by how the learners rated the peers' adherence to the ground rules. (Table 3)

Table 3 Process Monitoring

Process monitoring: The peers often broke the ground rules.

			School		Total
			A	B	
The peers often broke the ground rules.	Disagree	Count	39	64	103
		% within School	69.6%	62.1%	64.8%
	Agree	Count	17	39	56
		% within School	30.4%	37.9%	35.2%
Total		Count	56	103	159
		% within School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Despite the learners' misgivings about the peers' adherence to the ground rules, the learners themselves in School B appear to rate themselves better at sticking to the ground rules than their School A counterparts.(Table 4) Again, this might be due to the School A students being accustomed to receiving a broadly more formal and authoritarian style of teaching. This could lead to them judging their own behaviour in these unusually participatory and highly interactive sessions as being somewhat unruly.

Table 4 Process Monitoring

Process monitoring: The class were pretty good at keeping to the ground rules.

			School		Total
			A	B	
The class were pretty good at keeping to the ground rules.	Disagree	Count	34	39	73
		% within School	59.6%	36.1%	44.2%
	Agree	Count	23	69	92
		% within School	40.4%	63.9%	55.8%
Total		Count	57	108	165
		% within School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Despite the inevitable inconsistency of the A pause peer facilitators across the classrooms of the two schools, it seems that their efforts were almost universally appreciated. Over 90% agreed that the programme was useful to people of their age and over 70% agreed with the statement 'All sex education should be like this'.

These findings, whilst on one level are indicative of the potential effectiveness of the A pause Peers as a stand alone intervention, they also offer tantalizingly incomplete evidence suggestive of the performative and playful nature of the classroom experience. One of the ground rules is 'No personal comments' and

the ostensibly fictional, representative and simulative nature of much of the learning contrives to protect the individual learner from feeling too personally exposed or making a personal disclosure. Paradoxically, however, it can be seen from the transcripts, that consistent with Apause Peers, all three of the Apause interventions suggest a sense of presenting and indeed exploring and exposing facets or versions of self - processes that arguably are intrinsic to play and personal transformation (Henricks, 2014). No matter what the source and nature of the data, the reports consistently highlight the personally challenging and potentially embarrassing or awkward nature of the experience, giving rise to apparently incommensurable accounts of the performed events as being both embarrassing and rewarding. The peers clearly do have lapses in classroom control and lose their discipline with regard to teamwork and maintaining the ground rules but, arguably, with highly interactive material so dependent on unpredictable learners' responses and the potential for regulative conventions to quickly unravel, they are playing an unusually high risk game for unusually high stakes. Counterintuitively perhaps, encompassed within this liminal space, charged and destabilised by participant agency, important identificatory processes are being initiated, unhelpful norms are interrogated and more conservative, culturally sanctioned, norms become enacted.

Appendix 6 Synopsis of the complete Get-WISE Programme

By the 2005-2006 academic year the 'Get-WISE' programme had been formulated as a set of four Scripted Performance Workshops. See below a synopsis of the programme as it appears in SRE Project website.

Get-WISE is founded on the idea that healthy sexual relationships are best modelled, understood and managed as a series of successful negotiations:

Session 1 *"Starting a Relationship" - Preparing for first moves and uncertain outcomes*

Session 2 *"Taking things a bit Further" - Negotiations for stopping points and sexual pleasure*

Session 3 *"Safer Sex and Practise Situations" - 'No condom, No Sex' - stay safe and stay together*

Session 4 *"Accessing health services" - Get the best out of adults - counselling, contraception, STIs*

Appendix 7 Get-WISE Transcript 1 Laboratory Phase

Get-WISE Laboratory Phase 1: Irma and Mitch Explore Will and Counter-will

On 21st September 1997 a group of sixth form peer-educators meet in a multi-purpose lecture and study room in the Department of Child Health. It is very similar in appearance, size and furniture to a classroom. It had been agreed that the purpose of the session would be to explore Boal's notions of 'will', 'counter-will' and 'dominant will' (Boal, 1992, pp. 51-59) Having, during previous sessions, explored improvisations in which male characters expressed the dominant will of being only interested in girls for sex, and being prepared to end the relationship if their sexual desires were not consummated, the peers found such scenes very difficult to improvise and largely implausible. We, therefore, decided to look at a relationship in which a couple feel a strong bond for each other, but nevertheless the male character appears to be pushing for full sex despite his partner's protestations that she was not yet ready for that degree of intimacy. Irma and Mitch used improvisation to explore, and possibly challenge, the notion that the predominant thing Mitch is interested in is having sexual intercourse. The biggest challenge being to establish if Mitch's dominant will really is to pressure to have sex, even if it does mean risking a break-up of their relationship, or whether his counter-will of wanting to keep the

relationship going actually becomes manifest as the dominant will. In setting the scene, I attempted to create fragments of a case history and be explicit with the actors by saying what forms of physical intimacy they have already done. It is clear from the video I find this extremely difficult, embarrassing even, moving uncomfortably between euphemism and slang word for genitalia and admitting that I find it hard to use such language with the peer-educators. My words as the facilitator are attributed to the character 'Dave'. The actors are Mitch and Irma, while Lorna operates the camera.

Get-WISE Transcript 21 September 1997

(Mitch and Irma are on chairs turned slightly in towards each other and approximately 50 cm apart. Irma sits, apparently comfortably, cross-legged, with her hands folded together over her feet and her head tilted down and away from Mitch. Mitch sits half-way back in his chair, with his back very straight and both hands grabbing the front edge of the chair. The scene begins with his head tipped back a long way, as if stretching and arching his spine before composing himself for the ordeal.)

Mitch: Are we starting again?

Lorna: Are you still too close to her?

Mitch: I thought if we were going from half way through then... *(Irma, in a flamboyant, almost balletic pastiche of romantic love, flings both her arms around Mitch's neck)*

Lorna: Oh dear

(They break off the cuddle and pull away from each other and giggle self-consciously)

Mitch: Are we going from half-way through or are we starting again?

Dave: I think the trouble with being close.... I'll tell for why I have this problem... *(Mitch sits up straight, moves his chair about half a meter further away from Irma and smiles and laughs quietly, as if indulging Dave in his explanation, and Irma sits up straight herself, looks at Mitch and smiles and giggles softly)*...People read visual or physical signals much more strongly than language. And I think that they will be more interested in how near you are getting to her without touching her than in the actual verbal negotiation, you see what I mean?

Irma: It's a lot easier though *(Irma is smiling broadly, Mitch sits up even straighter and, to demonstrate her point, Irma reaches over coquettishly and strokes Mitch on the knee)*. It's easier though...

Dave: I'll give you a very crude demonstration. This is how it works *(Moving over to where Mitch is sitting but addressing Irma as if he were in the role of Mitch)*

Dave: *(Fully assuming the role of Mitch, the pressurer, very slowly moving towards Irma talking in gently warm and empathetic tones)* Look I realise we're not going to have sex tonight, but it would be nice to spend the evening, wouldn't it, together *(moving in closer to Irma standing over her with his arms out in a supplicating gesture)* I mean, really, we can stop wherever you like *(Lorna and Irma squeal in horror, Irma covers her ears, bows her head and closes her eyes, Mitch laughs)* Honestly, I mean it, you can stop wherever you like, I haven't got... check...see if I've got condoms *(gesturing and*

turning round to indicate his rear pockets. More squeals of horror while Irma curls over in a ball on the chair. All the time the spatial and gestural signals of intent from Dave are so powerful that the words mean nothing, indeed they add to the physical menace.)

Irma: Clearly.

Lorna: She actually got freaked out then.

Dave: I'm sorry about that. It was very crude... I just wanted to show you...It was a demonstration.

Irma: *(Holding her hands high and fluttering them around her ears as to cool them off or shut out sounds) ... It's a lot...a lot easier.*

Dave: So keep it distant.

Mitch: Right.

Dave: So they're not muddling the message between the physical language and the verbal language...it's verbal language we're working on. *(Irma appears agitated, she is still sitting cross-legged on her chair and drumming her feet, as if drumming the message into herself, then she puts her right elbow on her knee and rests her chin in her hand and looks hard at Mitch)*

Mitch: But you were . . . you were getting...you were getting closer.

Dave: I know that's what I'm saying. You were getting physically closer as the improvisation developed.

Irma: Yes.

Dave: And that's what I think intrigued...

Irma: *(Pointing to Dave while addressing Mitch)*
That's what he was saying. "You don't have to do anything...it's OK" ...But he was, like, getting closer.

Dave: It was undermining the verbal.

Mitch: OK, right.

Dave: You see. So, we have to be very careful what language we're operating here. Because if you start getting closer and closer and closer, they think you're going to do it anyway.

Lorna: Mitch's having a nervous breakdown.

Dave: Is that a tough one, Mitch?

Mitch: No...no... it's Ok.

Dave: I think you might put even the whole room distance apart.

Irma: No.

Dave: That would be interesting.

(Irma leans in towards Mitch and offers him her righthand which Mitch holds in two hands for a second before they let go and the scene 'proper' seems to slip into action)

Mitch: So...what about it then?

Irma: No...You know you're abusing this...we've been over it so many times it's getting boring. I will not have sex with you. Not now, Ok? Believe me, when I'm ready, I will let you know.

Mitch: What about when I'm ready?

Irma: It sounds like you've been ready most of your life.

Mitch: Well, you know that's not true because we've been going out for ages.

Irma: What about taking me into consideration?

Mitch: I thought by now you might actually trust me.

Irma: I do...I do trust you. I just um...I'm not ready to have sex with you.

Mitch: So tell me, what...what are you ready to do?

Irma: You know...it's a big question...OK...OK, OK, I'll tell you what, we do a deal. You quit nagging me about sex...Ok...for, ooh, at least a couple of months and I will be more willing to ...do...more other stuff.

Mitch: Look, this is making me feel guilty now.

Irma: Why? Christ I'm giving here? Ok? I... I'm giving to you. This relationship...I care about it. I care about you. I want you to be happy...so we can do everything...everything, anything you want, Ok. I feel comfortable with you. I do love you. Anything you want. But I'm not going to have sex with you. That's...that's the way it is.

Mitch: But, look, look, look what happens in the heat of the moment, is that not more important?

Irma: No. No.

Mitch: But what about if you don't want to stop?

Irma: I won't.

Mitch: Ok (*standing up and moving to slightly behind and to the right of Irma and holding his chin*) So, if I agree to that, then maybe...you know...in the future...at one time.

Irma: Don't push it.

Mitch: You might want to have sex with me?

Irma: Well yes, of course, but one time in the future, but I'm not going to limit myself to when *that* is going to happen.

Dave: We'll stop there. Don't stop the tape. Brilliant acting. Plausible...I found it plausible...the only part of the recipe which was missing...I think everything was there.... was that we didn't quite challenge him ...on whether, actually, was sex the only thing he wanted?

Irma: Yeah...Sorry.

Dave: That's not your problem...it's not necessarily your problem within the improvisation, it could be Mitch. Because maybe Mitch didn't give a strong enough signal that he would have accepted that. You see what I mean? [To Mitch] You could have said well, "Everything?...You touch me ...and... I touch you... and all that?" So you...say that..."Yeah. Ok...that sounds fun". So you're prepared to make it sound like a very positive outcome.

Mitch: Yeah.

Lorna: Yeah. That would be better.

Dave: And also possibly [to Mitch] “Yeah, it’s not just sex... but I do love you” ...[to Irma]... “Look if that’s all you’re going to do all the time for me, then I just assume you don’t want me for anything apart from sex. Surely there’s more to our relationship apart from just you trying to get sexual intercourse.” Does that make sense, Irma?

Irma: Yeah, it does.

Dave: If you could build that in, now this may be a model of negotiation *(some nonsense as Mitch and Irma seem distracted by a notebook)* I’m pushing you on this. I want to build up a case history. The case history is that you’ve touched her...below the belt before...

Irma: *(Laughing and gasping as if shocked)* Christ.

Dave: Ok there, Irma?

Irma: Ooh bad knee *(Out of shot, it seems Irma has managed to jam one of her crossed legs into an uncomfortable position and it has locked there)*

Dave: Sorry about that.

Irma: Sorry...excuse me.

Dave: But I think she should say something of this nature. “Look, I know you’ve touched me, I know you’ve done, you’ve tried it before... touched me...put your hands in my knickers and so on, but I really think you should do it properly, so I really enjoy it.”

Irma: Mmm...

Dave: “And I tell you what, I’ll do the same for you, so you really enjoy it.” ...Does that make sense?

Irma: Yep.

Lorna: Yep.

Dave: Instead of just a quick grope after a disco or something. It’s near the knuckle...but d’you think you can handle that?

Irma: Yep.

Mitch: Wooah. *(Dave laughs loudly)*

Dave: Poor old Jake always misses out on these bits *(The three young people laugh gently. Dave giggles in a falsetto voice. Irma and Mitch do a kind of squirming, wriggling dance, folding their legs across their laps, stretching them out and Mitch pulls his left leg across his chest. They laugh at their nervous antics.)*

Lorna: Limber up....Ok.

Mitch: *(After a very long pause.)* So..... you don't want to have sex then?

Irma: *(Rolling her eyes to the ceiling in exasperation)*
Nooo!... You know that. I don't give 'No' away without asking, but...I'm sick to fucking death of you nagging me...so...let's do a deal, Ok?

Mitch: Well...shi... you're making me sound like ...

Irma: No, no *(raising her right index finger)* sshh.

Mitch: *(Sighs deeply)*

Irma: Let's do a deal. You know I don't want to have sex with you, Ok? I know you do. I love you. I feel comfortable with you. I want to keep the relationship going. Ok? So...we haven't done... much... other stuff. You know... a quick grab and a quick squeeze...you know. You're the big sex expert here, you should know. It could be fun...you know?

Mitch: So you're saying it wasn't fun before?

Irma: Yeah, well, it was, but you know, we can just... explore...more...

Mitch: Ok...

Irma: ...thoroughly.

Mitch: Yeah. Well what, what sort of things do you suggest?

Irma: Well...you know...you scratch my back, I scratch yours *(breathy, nervous or possibly suggestive laugh)*

Mitch: But not just your back.

Irma: Well, no, not just my back.

Mitch: So, what are you trying to say?

Irma: Pretty much everywhere else.

Mitch: *(Long pause)* So, I get to touch you?

Irma: Yes.

Mitch: And you get to touch me?

Irma: Yes. And we get to have fun. I'll do that for you because I care about you and I care about this relationship.

Mitch: *(Very long pause)* You're not just saying that?

Irma: No. I'm not just saying it.

Mitch: So you definitely want to?

Irma: Yes, I just don't want...I just don't want to sleep with you yet, Ok? But I don't see what's wrong with...other...forms of...pleasure.

Dave: *[To Irma]* Challenge him with," Surely you want me for things other than sexual intercourse."

Irma: Does that sound good to you?... Because I'm giving a hell of a lot here, Ok?

Mitch: I know that, I know, I know.

Irma: I'm giving something away and if you're not up for it then...things are going around in my head... like why are you here?

Mitch: Of course not, I'm here because I care about you.

Irma: Not just... because... you want to shag me?

Mitch: No! If that were...if I just wanted to shag you then I wouldn't be here listening to you now would I?

Irma: Mmmm... *(picking up her cup of coffee)* so, do you think this sounds like a good enough plan? Good enough for you to stop fucking nagging me?

Mitch: Well, I didn't realise I was nagging you?

Dave: Alright, we'll stop there. From my point of view, I found that fascinating to look at and very plausible and very human.

Lorna: Yeah.

Dave: A very interesting model for young people to look at.

Mitch: I'm a bastard, aren't I? Nagging away!

Lorna: "Fucking" nagging.

Dave: I do admire your work folks, that was tremendous.

Appendix 8 Get-WISE Transcript 2 Classroom Phase

Over the next two weeks the same group of peers construct a workshop and a set of guidance notes to restore their laboratory phase processes in a classroom setting which takes place in a city high school.

Get-WISE Transcript – Classroom Phase, 7 October 1997

Lorna, now in the role of Boal's Joker, introduces another couple (Mitch and Irma) who are having the same sort of problems. They are seated in much the same way as when they were rehearsing.

ML = Male learner, **FL** = Female learner

Mitch: Well you know, I've finally got round to buying those condoms. I thought maybe, you know, tonight...we could have sex.

Irma: You thought wrong.

Mitch: Oh

Irma: C'mon, we talked about this.

Mitch: Yeah but...

Irma: You'd wait for me to...till I'm ready to have sex.

Mitch: Yeah but you know I care for you...

Irma: And I really, really care for you Mitch, but I'm just not ready...

Lorna: Ok...Stop, fine...So...What happens now? They've both said what they want, but they disagree with each other, what can they do now?

Chas: Nothing. Take your time. (*One or two learners laugh*)

ML1: Take your time.

Lorna: Take your time? What would that do?

Chas: Go and ask for your money back for the condoms.

(Most of the class laugh loudly)

Lorna: He can't stop wanting to have sex with Irma, and Irma still doesn't want to have sex with Mitch, so...

Irma: I do really want to keep the relationship going...

Lorna: Can the relationship carry on?

Mitch: Is there any middle ground?

Lorna: Yeah, Chas, what do you think?

Mitch: Not just Chas, anyone.

ML1: He could have a teddy bear *(laughter – maybe this refers back to Lorna saying she did not want to 'sleep' with Matt)* she could have a teddy bear until...

FL1: Can he wait for a while until she's ready?

(A lot of learners call out at the same time making it undecipherable, none of the peers is able to pick out and respond to any of the remarks)

Lorna: What is there else?... Hang on...*(laughter)*

Irma: Is there anything else they could do, in a relationship with each other that could keep the relationship going.

Mitch: Is there any other options?

Lorna: That isn't sex?

FL2: Foreplay.

Lorna: Foreplay...yeah. Excellent.

Lorna: Yeah...We're going to try with Irma and Mitch talking about what else they can do. They're negotiating. Ready? Listen.

(the class sh sh each other)

Mitch: So...you don't want to have sex then?

Irma: Well no...not yet.

Mitch: Well...I'm fine...

Irma: I really love you and I enjoy you company and there's loads of other stuff we can do.

Mitch: Yeah, yeah? What other stuff?

Irma: Oooh...Y'know...there's like romantic stuff...like get out the massage oil...I give you a massage and you give me a massage...bath together...I mean I could give you a really good hand job. I mean you'd....

Lorna: Ok. Stop ...*(Up to 6 of the class laugh, possibly at the rather censorious and strident nature of the interruption)* ...Listen... *(Lorna carries on projecting her voice loudly over the class who are talking excitedly amongst themselves)*. Look, Irma agreed to give Mitch a hand job *(the class is agitated and a few laugh nervously)* ...What could Mitch do for Irma to return the favour?

(The class is very noisy now, many are talking amongst themselves and very few phrases are clearly distinguishable from the background chatter. As the camera sweeps around 90 degrees, one boy sits with his chair reversed, his left arm across the back, his chin buried in it with his right hand clasping the side of the chair, a majority of the learners are covering their mouths. Another boy is chewing the knuckles of his left thumb, holding it in his mouth with his right hand, his bullet-headed neighbour rolls his eyes to the heavens and crosses them while opening his mouth, jutting his jaw forward while pulling his upper lip over his teeth in a pastiche of boss-eyed incomprehension.)

FL3: What's a hand job?

(A lot of nervous chatter which is not managed or focused by the peers, no one seems ready to offer any suggestions to the whole class, but they are talking intensely among themselves – someone [a male learner] calls out)

ML2: Stroke her vagina.
(Most of the class laugh)

ML3: Squeeze her tits

Lorna: Sorry?

(Jake, very slowly walks across and gently takes a piece of paper out of Chas's hands, examines it and without speaking appears to be asking for an explanation)

Chas: *(Laughing cheekily without any contrition)* Only because he said she's in the right position. *(Laughs again)*

(Mitch and Irma are still on their chairs at the front, while Matt is engaged in discussion with a small group. Everyone seems to be fully involved in chatting amongst themselves, but the general clamour makes it impossible to eavesdrop on what is being said. In one sense there is a quality of anonymity and privacy in their chatter)

Lorna: Listen *(Strident)*...Can you all get into groups again and think about... *(Looking in Chas's direction where Jake is still squatting)* ... Chas's having a giggling attack... what's going on? Think about what else they could do...what other words are there...for what Mitch could do...pleasure for girls, right? *(The class very quickly turn in their chairs or move them as they form into groups and start to talk. All five of the peers are now interacting with small groups, again the general clamour makes their conversations effectively private but, it is possible to see that peers and learners are smiling and laughing. Peers are asking questions and the learners are responding and there are frequent nods of assent. Jake is fully absorbed with Chas and his entourage.)*

Lorna: Ok...shh...shh...Could you first tell us what you came up with?

The class are very noisy and excited

Chas: *(Singing it out enthusiastically)* Yeah, we will...

Jake & Lorna: Go on then.

ML2: Go on, Chas.

Chas: *(Beating out the rhythm of his emphases with his pen)* These are all for women, she could still do without having sex.

ML3: *(Thrusting out his arm to halt Chas)* It's what a bloke's got to do for a woman.

Chas: Yeah, what he can do for a woman.

Lorna: She doesn't have to do it.

Chas: Things she's not having sex but she's still having fun...A cucumber...Natural yoghurt and barbeque sauce.

Irma: What?

Mitch & Irma: Together?

(Whole class seems to call out and chat about this proposition for five seconds and a girl tries to say something which Irma attempts to pick-up)

FL1: That's what you said.

Lorna: Yeah?

FL2: She could toss him off.

Irma & Mitch: Yeah

Lorna: That's brilliant.

(More noisy class reaction)

FL3: Or you could touch yourself.

Mitch: What's the point in that? *(Class laughs)*

Chas: She could play with her cliddy.

ML4: Buy a vibrator.

Mitch: Buy a vibrator.

Lorna: Brilliant.

(Whole class are very noisy again and this carries on for around ten seconds)

Lorna: Listen...sh...Ok stop...Now we're going to see if we can run through the whole scene with the beginning, the middle and the end. With all your suggestions...alright? Ready?

(Class are saying "ssh" excitedly to each other. There is an intense sense of anticipation)

Lorna: Ready...Go.

Mitch: Right...So, I've bought those condoms, so I thought maybe... you know... tonight ...possibly we could have sex.

Irma: *(Shaking her head and smiling despairingly)*
Mmmm...Oh Mitch we've spoken about this. You know I'm not ready to have sex.

Mitch: But I really care about you and I thought now...maybe...?

Irma: Mitch, I really, really care about you. You know I don't want to put you off. I want to keep the relationship going. I'm just not ready to have sex. I mean there's loads of stuff we could do...

Mitch: Yeah?... Yeah what could we do?

Irma: Like you, you know...massage...and you know...I could toss you off...and you could...

Mitch: And I could do the same for you.

Irma: Yeah, you could do the same for me...except gentler this time.

Mitch: What?

Irma: *(More emphatically)* Gentler.

Mitch: Well, what was wrong last time?

Irma: You were a bit...rough...heavy handed.

Mitch: What? I'm sorry but I mean, maybe if you'd actually give me some instructions, a bit of direction...

Lorna: { Ok

Mitch: { Maybe I might have more of a chance...

Lorna: { Ok, stop...

Chas: *(Slightly hurt tone, possibly accusatory)* What happened to the cucumber?

ML2: Yeah?

(Whole class laugh loudly)

Lorna: It's still in the fridge.

ML3: Say "cucumber" quickly.

Lorna: *(Upbeat and loudly)* Cucumber!

Chas: Yay!!

(Class laugh and clap)

Lorna: So, in that scene, do you think Mitch and Irma were saying exactly what they wanted?

ML4: Yeah *(Other learners join in and agree)* ...

Lorna: And do you think that Mitch did actually, really want to just have sex with Irma? *(pause)* or

Mitch: Did I want to keep the relationship going?

ML5: You wanted to keep it going.

Chas: What's this got to do about sex?

Mitch: It doesn't have to be.

Irma: Sex is about the situation.

Lorna: *(Pointing to the word RESPECT in large letters on the white board)* ...Respect in here is about not slagging other people off.

Irma: And you listening when other people are talking.

Lorna: *(cutting in over Irma)* Listening when other people are talking and that's very important in a sexual relationship.

Jake: Respect could be...

(Class chatter loudly amongst themselves)

Lorna: *(cutting in over Jake and the class)* So we're agreed then that Mitch just wanted to keep the relationship going...He wasn't really that bothered about just having sex with her...He just wanted to progress the relationship, yeah?

Mitch: Is that what we all think, yeah? (*Class nod and make sounds indicating they are in agreement*) ...Right.

Appendix 9 Get-WISE Transcript 3 Classroom Phase

Get-WISE - Classroom Phase Transcript, 21 October 1997

(Mitch is leaning forward with both his elbow on his knees and turning slightly towards Irma but looking at the floor. Irma is seated to Mitch's left with her right leg crossing her left, her hips and lower torso are twisted away from Mitch, her right elbow is resting on her right thigh with her arm in her lap, and her left arm is straight and hangs loosely across her legs in front of her right arm. Her head and upper torso are turned in towards Mitch as she looks at him.)

Mitch: Um...Yeah, there's nothing on...

(Straightening up, facing her and opening up his body using a gesture with his right arm. With both arms now opening up, his hands make a soft, relaxed movement making the signs of a gentle suggestion) So, I thought, maybe tonight we could go upstairs, and you know, do stuff and then *(softly)* maybe have sex.

Irma: There's a really good Film on Four *(opens up her body, pointing with her right hand, as if to the TV)* actually to be fair I wanted to...

Mitch: Oh c'mon, c'mon, c'mon stop mucking around...

Irma: *(Turns away, raises the back of her left hand to her forehead in a gesture of despair then, as before, closes down her body with arms and legs crossed)* Mitch, how many times? *(Louder with right arm movements beating out the*

rhythm) How many times have we talked about this? (*Both arms marking her speech pattern*) I love you to bits but I'm just not going to sleep with you...

Mitch: But I thought...maybe now...you know... (*opens up with his left arm towards her*) we've been going out so long...I thought (*softly*) you, you, you'd want to prove it to me.

Irma: Well, you know I do. I don't feel ready but (*She looks at him and plays with her fingers and looks at the open palms of her hands*)... c'mon there's loads of other stuff we could do (*she looks at him, smiles and tips her head to one side coyly*) you know, I scratch your back and you scratch mine, (*smiles and uses her left hand to stroke the back of her head coquettishly*) Sort of...you know... messing around together.

Mitch: Well what else, (*lightly enquiring tone*) ...what other stuff do you mean?

Irma: Well...you know (*wriggling her spine from the neck downwards and rocking her pelvis from side to side slightly suggestively*) ...touching... we can both find out what we both enjoy.

Jake: Stop there. ...What do you think Irma meant by "Finding out what we both enjoy"? (*Pointing at a boy who has his hand up*) Yep? (*Meanwhile, Lorna has moved across the enclosed space and sits in a chair near to Chas*)

ML1: Giving a blowjob. (*A few of the class giggle very quietly*)

Jake: We did something like this last week.

Lorna: Remember what we said at the end? I know some of you weren't here but what do we mean by finding... (*Lorna is sitting in the circle with the learners and talking in conversational tones*)

Jake: ...finding out what they both enjoy?

Lorna: What does that mean?

ML2: (*Quietly suggesting*) Having a good time?

Jake & Lorna: (*Encouragingly*) Yeah

Irma: You could be a bit more graphic, couldn't you?

Chas: Oh yeah (*Just remembering and pointing to Mitch*) last week he was a bit rough or something.

Irma: Yeah, yeah.

Jake: Someone was a bit rough, I remember it now.

Irma: We're rewinding a bit, Ok?

Lorna: How could they find out what they both enjoy?

ML3: Take their time.

Mitch: Spend more time together, yeah.

Irma: You're all being very shy and coy.

Jake: Very shy.

Lorna: Come on.

Irma: We're going to whip out a number of revolting pictures if you don't tell us what we mean by find out what they both enjoy.

Chas: Get 'em out, get 'em out. *(Using both arms in a large beckoning gesture as if to say 'bring it on')*

Jake: You don't want to see these pictures, believe me, you don't want to see them.

Irma: No, they're pretty scary. *(A lot of giggling and excited chatter)* One suggestion before you get to see the graphic pictures.

Lorna: Yeah, one suggestion

Jake: What does it mean?

Irma: One suggesting what "find out what we both enjoy means." What could they do?

Chas: *(This bursts out of his mouth like uttering an expletive)* Toss each other off!!

: Thank you.

Lorna: *(Throwing both her legs in the air and clapping)*
Yeah!! What's the technical term?

Chas: *(Punching the air with his right arm and shouting heroically)* Masturbation!!!

Lorna: Yeah!!! *(The class join in with laughter and a sense of relief that they've arrived at this point in the discourse. Lorna points to Jake and jabs the air in a*

theatrically authoritarian gesture like a referee adjudicating a wrestling bout)... HAND OUT THOSE PICTURES!!!

(At this point there is a lot of noisy banter and triumphalist air pumping gestures from Irma and particularly Jake who enjoys distributing, like contraband, some anatomically detailed diagrams of male and female genitalia. These are labelled in some detail but from a biological perspective, at this stage of programme development they lacked the kinds of information that an under-informed couple might find useful when trying to give each other sexual pleasure. This was to be communicated by the peer-educators who had been trained with basic biological information about how the genitalia change as a result of sexual arousal. They had been prepared with short phrases to explain which areas are most and least sensitive to touch - the clitoris being more sensitive than the vagina, the glans being more sensitive than the shaft of the penis. The intention being that the biological information imparted will lead the male students to conclude that using cucumbers is not likely to be the best way of giving enjoyment. The class work in groups of about four to six, huddling intensely over the diagrams while the peers move from group to group contributing to the discussion. It is impossible to hear what is being said, but it is highly interactive. Using the camera, I move in closer to Chas's group and he holds his hand up to shield the lens and said, "Na, you can't see that...Out of the way please." He first clutches the diagrams to his chest and then waves them teasingly in front of the lens, so they are too fast and too close to focus on. All the peers are engaged; there are

smiles and laughter. After approximately four minutes of group work, the class is getting noisier and individuals appear less absorbed in reading and writing on the diagrams and some seem confident enough to be ready to talk with the rest of the class)

Mitch: We're going to give you a pretty free hand on this, but the main criteria is that it has got to be something that both people enjoy, so before you shout out...

Irma: *(In a pained, long-suffering tone) ...Cucumbers, pencils, things like...*

Lorna: *(Pointing and walking over to the group of boys [stage right] she had just been working with) We've already talked about this...*

ML6: *(Laughing) Yeah. (Matt moves to the group, one of whom [ML6] shows him the diagram and points out something, Matt slaps the diagram playfully and walks away laughing quietly)*

ML7: What is it?

ML6: Clitoris *(General sounds of agreement and approval from Lorna, Matt and the male learners)*

Irma: Ok, Ok, one from each group please. *(Jake points to another group of boys [stage left] at the opposite side of the room from Lorna's group)*

ML8: Chipmunk.

Jake: Chipmunk

Irma: *(In playfully exasperated tones, steps towards the boy with both her arms open, with elbows straight, hands down, leaning forward on her left foot) What is that?*

ML8: *(Louder) Chipmunk.*

Jake: Chipmunk? Explain it.

Irma: Explain it. Tell it. *(They do not explain it – although it seems plausible that it is slang for oral sex)*

Jake: Share it with us.

Irma: While you're thinking about that, there's one over here *(Pointing inclusively to Lorna's group, then strides enthusiastically over to them and leans right in towards them. There is a lot of laughter.)*

ML7: Massage

Lorna: Massage, yeah *(writes it up on the flipchart. They say something indecipherable from the tape, but sounds like "tickle" and "cliddy" which elicits laughter)*

Irma: Yeah? *(Pointing to another boy who has had his hand in the air)*

ML9: Foreplay.

Irma: Foreplay.

Lorna: *(Writes it on flipchart) What does foreplay entail?*

Jake: Be explicit.

Lorna: Explicit. *(The class does not give any explanation. There is some restless chatter. It is possible that many do not share the same understanding of the word 'explicit' as the peers or have any understanding of the word at all.)*

ML10: *(shouting out)* Anal sex.

ML8: Rubbing an erection.

Irma: Rub...what...yeah?

ML8: ...An erection.

Irma: *(As if coaxing ML8 to speak louder)* ...rub...rub did you say...rubbing? Yeah *(Pointing to Lorna indicating she should write it on the board)*

ML11: Wanking.

Irma: Yeah.

ML12: Experimenting.

Lorna: *(Tones of approval)* Oh, wow!!

ML13: Blowjob.

Irma: Yeah *(Each suggestion gets written on the board)*

FL3: Bondage.

Irma: Bondage.

Jake: Wow!

Lorna: Bondage.

Irma: Anything else? *(Moving in closely to Chas's group)*

Chas: Shall I read them all out? *(Pointing out the last items by waving a pencil)* Mars Bar parties, Snickers and Turkish Delight. *(Up to half of the class laugh briefly)*

Irma: Mars Bar parties. Oooh!

Lorna: *(Loudly concluding the list)* That's fine!! All that. *(Sweeping her hand down the extensive list she has compiled on the flipchart)*

Jake: Thanks, you've made me feel physically ill!

Irma: Now quickly...we want you... to try... and come up...into this scene Ok? *(Mitch is seated with his legs apart, elbows on his knees, leaning forward with his face in his hands. The position of his hands moves from covering and rubbing his eyes for a few seconds, to holding his chin for a few more seconds then apparently supporting the weight of his head by holding the front of his neck.)*

Lorna: You don't have to say all the stuff on this list *(Indicating the list on the flipchart)*

Irma: You don't have to say anything...Ok...We just want you to negotiate your way out of having sex... *(Indicating to Mitch who is sitting in the chair at the front with his face buried in his hands)*

Jake: With Mitch!! *(Like a comedic punch line)*

Irma: With Mitch!!

(The whole class reacts noisily with groans of disbelief and laughter)

Chas: I ain't going up.

Irma: Ok? Any girls, any boys? *(Irma's arms are held wide open in a supplicating gesture, she smiles widely and appealingly)*

Chas: *(Right hand held high in the air, wagging his index finger) ...I'll go up.*

ML10: *(The same boy who shouted out "Anal sex", shouts) Gid on, Chas!! (whistles and clapping come from around the class)*

Mitch: *(Gets out of his seat and moves towards Chas, they exchange some inaudible remarks) ...It's boring isn't it? (Chas gets out of his seat and just before moving towards the two chairs in the centre, he bends down so the boy sitting to his right [probably Tom] can whisper in his ear. Irma is now seated in Mitch's chair.)*

ML10: Go on Chas, say it! *(Louder, longer whistle and cheering)*

(Chas sits, and with both hands smoothens his trousers down his legs before covering his face with his hands while still bending at the waist)

ML10: Chas keep your legs closed, it's cold in here.

Irma: *(Sits to Chas's right with her left leg crossed over her right and left elbow on her left thigh and her right elbow on her left knee creating a shape in which her lower body is twisted and closed off to Chas with her head and upper body facing him)*...Ok...um...We've got on... you know quite well, there's nothing on telly, I was wondering if you would like to... you know...it was about time...you know we go and...we had sex?

Chas: *(His elbows are on his knees and hands are clasped in a fist shape in front of his face which is turned slightly towards her. He answers in a quiet, straightforward tone)* ...No.

Irma: Well, c'mon why not?

ML10: *(Calls out)* You would. *(Chas turns threateningly towards the interruption)*

(The class "sshh sshh" the interruption and someone – possibly Jake- calls out assertively "Shut up")

Irma: Well, we've been together for ages *(almost inaudibly)* there's no one about...we could go upstairs.... *(maybe hinting at what Chas might say)* "There's loads of other stuff we can do" *(Irma has taken her arms away from her lap and opened her body up much more and is smiling in a friendly way. Chas appears to struggle for words and Lorna comes to support him by crouching down between them)*

Lorna: Remember what we said?

Chas: Oh yeah.... *(rubbing the palms of his hands into his eye sockets. He speaks softly)* ...Right...Yeah, but I don't want to have sex...we can do other things...

Irma: *(A pause, then in a gently interested, coaxing tone)* ...Yeah?

Chas: Do you want to put your hand on my cock and get a Mars bar? *(Irma smiles and opens up her arms at the same time the whole class bursts into laughter and the peers join in)*

Irma: *(Wagging her left finger in front of him, laughing)* I may well be up for that!! *(Puts her left hand on his back as if to usher him back to his chair and then waves him in that direction with her right arm)* Right, that's fine. *(Chas gets up smiling and starts to move towards his chair)*

Jake: Chas, choose someone else... *(To build suspense, Chas windmills both his arms around and pans his body, rotating it around 180 degrees. No one can guess who he's going to choose. Then he uses a strong, pointing gesture, leaning in towards the person he's chosen. This is a freeze frame of the referee, almost identical to the one used by Lorna when she announced triumphantly "HAND OUT THOSE PICTURES !!)*

Chas: TOM!!

(The whole class cheer and clap their approval and Irma, smiling appealingly, beckons Tom to the chair. Pressure is mounting on Tom but there is no sign of him moving yet. Shouts of encouragement build up and before we find out if

Tom will succumb and make the journey towards the empty chair, the tension is ruptured, the performance is interrupted by the bell signalling the end of the lesson. There is a sense of release with more cheering - especially from Tom. The video ends with the class noisily gathering up their belongings and heading for the door.)

Appendix 10 Get-WISE Transcript 4 Classroom Phase, Floor Puppets

Floor Puppets 4 July 2001

JASON = Male Peer 1, **GEORGE** = Male Peer 2, **SHARON** = Female Peer 1, **FL1** = Female Learner 1, **ML1** = Male Learner1

(The class has arranged their chairs in a circle and the teacher is seated discreetly behind his desk. He never interrupts the proceedings. Two stiff, semi-translucent rolls of plastic 2m long and 65 cm wide are rolled side-by-side into the space. On each is a silhouette outline of a body, one female, one male, similar to the icons on the doors of public toilets, except the female has a mature, curvy body with a short dress and the male is imposingly large and angular.)

JASON: These are our little models. This is Barbie and this is Ken.

GEORGE: *(Slaps down on the male silhouette's hands a pair of rectangular blocks of foam (15 cm x 10 cm). These have the outline of hands drawn on them in blue marker pen. He does the same with hands drawn in red for the female, Barbie. A rectangular piece of foam (10 cm x 4 cm) on which is drawn a simple, red pair of lips is positioned on Barbie's face and an equivalent pair in blue given to Ken.)*

JASON: Don't walk over Barbie, George.

GEORGE: Lips and hands, that's all we need. Here we go, babe.

JASON: Yep?

FL1: Nope! She's not going to walk. *(class giggle)*
They're not going anywhere.

(Class giggle more loudly)

JASON: They're going to find out what each other's going to enjoy, make it up, basically. They've not really been in this sort of situation before. So, there needs to be some sort of a negotiation. The idea is that they don't have to have a verbal negotiation. So hopefully we are going to try and show you. We've got a little bit of a sort of situation and what we want you to do is show us how to act it out with these models *(He squats at the head of Barbie, his hands clasped together, like a workman about to clean a drain)*

GEORGE: You're all going to have to do this yourselves later on, so...

JASON: Pay attention.

GEORGE: Yeah.

JASON: Ok. So, to start with, they kiss. So how do we want to show that? *(No immediate response)*

Any ideas how we want to show kissing? *(Giggling and muttering but unintelligible comments)*

FL1: Smack their lips all together.

JASON: *(Kneels down, snatches the pink pair of lips from off the female face and plants them roughly down on the blue lips of the male face)...Like that? (The pink lips accidentally tumble off the blue lips)...Is that right?*

FL1: Nooo,..put them in the middle.

(JASON Picks up both mouths and brusquely plants them down equidistant between the heads of the two silhouettes and

leans back squatting on his haunches. In front of his knees, on the floor is an A4 sheet of notes he is following)

(The class make sounds which suggest they're not convinced)

GEORGE: C'mon, use a bit of imagination.

JASON: Ok?

FL3: Yeah...yeah. Super extending lips.

JASON: He decides he wants to touch her above the waist.

FL3: He should put his hand above.

ML1: On her tits.

JASON: *(Picks up the right blue hand with his own right hand while supporting his weight with his left and, reaching forward, he plants the blue hand roughly on the right breast of the female silhouette)*

JASON: Pretty good.

(The class laugh and referring to his posture on all fours, someone calls out)

FL3: Try doggy, mate.

JASON: She decides she wants to touch him on his back.

FL1: Try under the sheet.

JASON: *(Roughly picks up the left hand from the female silhouette, accidentally rucks up the translucent sheet and pokes the hand underneath the fold where it is now barely visible. Then he rapidly pulls it out from underneath and slaps the hand down hard on the front of the male abdominal area.)*

JASON: I'll put it on the top, you know it's on the back.

GEORGE: You know what we mean. Don't worry about it. She's touching him round the ass.

JASON: ... this is the way it will...He touches her thigh, she touches his waist.

FL1: Well, go on then.

JASON: Yep...*(reaching forward again with his weight on his own left hand, he picks up the blue right hand and slaps it down roughly, high up on the right thigh of the female silhouette.)*

FL4: What's he doing there?

FL1: Leave one hand where you put it and use the other hand sort of...

FL3: Yeah

(The group of five girls in shot all have their legs crossed, have their arms across their bodies and three of them have the hands in front of their mouths, but continue to remain engaged and attentive)

FL1: Do you stick just to her thigh?

GEORGE: You don't have to but you can do...if you want

FL4: You could.

GEORGE: You could... it's up to you.

FL1: No...not really...

(JASON moves the second of the female hands so it is touching the lower abdomen of the male, just above the crotch area)

JASON: Now, I want you to tell me what is happening or what has happened. *(He reaches again with his right hand and sweeping the blue hand in an arching anti-clockwise movement from the female thigh, he plants it firmly on the female genital area and taps it for emphasis before rocking back on his haunches.)*

FL1: Ah Ah...that's the place, isn't it?

FL3: He's gone below her clothes.

JASON: Yeah? So where is he touching?

FL1 *(Slowly with deliberate over-articulation)* On her...*(pause)*...mini!

(The whole class laugh loudly and chatter excitedly for about ten seconds)

GEORGE: Any other words?

FL2: On her knickers.

ML1: Nah... You can see it's not on her knickers.

FL5: Maybe she's taken her knickers off.

GEORGE: Is there any other names for her mini?

FL3: Would he be poking her?

(General calling out and laughter)

FL6: Her verginah.

(The whole class make a collective gasping sound) Ahh

GEORGE: Not like that...any other names?

FL5: Uh?

GEORGE: You don't have to worry about swearing... any other names?

FL3: Is he giving her a poke?

(The whole class make a second collective gasping sound) Ahh

GEORGE: That's alright, you don't have to be embarrassed about it.

JASON: Why...does he want to touch her there?

FL1: Because... *(Giggling and whispering amongst themselves)*.

JASON: Any reason at all?

FL1: He wants to see her reaction.

JASON: Sure.

GEORGE: Ok. Any other reason why he might want to touch her there?

JASON: Ok Will he enjoy touching her there?

FL1: Yeah

ML2: Probably

JASON: Will she enjoy it?

FL1: Yeah

FL3: Yeah

FL2: I dunno... I'm not that lady.

JASON: Why might she not enjoy it?

FL6: Might not be comfortable about it.

FL5: *(Loudly)* She might be offended.

JASON: Ok. Yeah...She might not be comfortable about it, might be offended by it.

(Turning towards a male learner) Ok, so what boys would want to touch a woman down there?

FL4: *(In a mock tone of bored indifference)* Dunno.
(Several of her friends laugh)

JASON: *(Turning round to talk to ML1 over his shoulder, the learner is swinging on his chair balancing with his arms on the table, he is looking at the puppet action and smiling)* What ten year old boy would want to touch a woman down there?

ML1: *(Still swinging)* I dunno, I'm not a ten year old boy so I can't answer that.

JASON: It seems that most... adult people, or grown up people would want to go down there...

FL1: I dunno, would you?

ML1: What?

FL1: Do you?

JASON: *(Opens his arms in a non-committal gesture)*

ML1: *(Led on by FL1's provocative question, several of the girls laugh, out of the ensuing chatter ML1 speaks out)* Might not if he's gay... could be gay. What about gay people?
(More laughter)

FL3: *(Pointing down towards the puppets)* He wouldn't fancy her.

JASON: It's all a matter of personal choice.

FL2: *(Talking to her neighbour, they are both pointing at the puppets)* Yeah but, it's the same thing.

GEORGE: *(Swinging on his chair with his right foot up, and left arm crossed over his body grasping the side of the chair – he is holding his notes in his right hand and swinging them)* Right... so er...you see how they ...er...we did it without talking then. Like moved it like, and that... well, could they have ...do you reckon they could talk about it...do you reckon they could talk about going below the waist and stuff?

FL2: *(Nods in agreement)*

SHARON: They could?

FL2: Yeah.

SHARON: You see, there's a difference between could and should. Do you think they could actually sit down and just say, "Right, I'm going to touch you here, if you touch me there, right?" Do you think they're going to be able to do that?

FL1: *(Playing with an earring in her right ear, speaking quietly)* 'Course they won't.

FL2: No.

SHARON: But do you think they should be able to?

FL1: *(still adjusting her earring and feigning a casual indifference)* What?...Talk about it?

SHARON: Talk about it.

JASON: Talk about it.

FL1: *(Others also nodding in agreement)* Yeah

SHARON: Do you think these things should be talked about only in private between the two concerned or...

FL3: *(Bending over to adjust her socks)* Yeah

SHARON: I mean is there a difference between when girls get together and talk about it and boys?

FL3: *(Still adjusting her socks)* Yeah, but they always do that anyway, don't they?

GEORGE: What?...Who always does? Girls or boys?

FL3: *(Talking quietly addressing both the peers and seeking approval from her neighbour. She has her hands clasped together, bending the fingers backwards with the whole length of her arms coiled around each other)* Girl and boys, They're like, 'Is he this, is he that?' *(A group of girls and GEORGE chuckle knowingly)* then they're like 'Is she this, is she that?'

SHARON: Yeah.

GEORGE: So, it should be talked about in private then?

FL1: It's between them.

GEORGE: But do they talk about it in private?

FL2: I dunno, it depends what the relationship is like.

JASON: *(Brightly with a sense of purpose)* Quite right. We're going to move things on then a bit. Let's see what her reaction is to this.

JASON: *(Lifts the pink hand of Barbie away from the abdominal area of Ken and slaps it down emphatically on Ken's hand which is on her genital area. Then he lifts both hands up to indicate Barbie is moving Ken's hand and with two more slapping sounds first places Ken's hand on Barbie's waist before returning Barbie's hand to Ken's waist. These three moves give off light, percussive slapping sounds)*

FL1: She don't want it.

FL2: Right... She...she... moved his hand...

FL1: She removed his hand from there.

FL2: *(Impatiently)* Ok... Next step....next step!

JASON: *(Picks up Ken's hand and slaps it back down on Barbie's genital area)*

FL2: Hmm.

FL1: He's carrying on... 'seeing'...her

GEORGE: No worries

FL1: He wants it up there, but she doesn't like it.

JASON: *(Picks up Barbie's hand, puts it lightly on Ken's hand and moves his hand two centimetres upwards in the direction of her pubic bone)*

FL2: AAhh

GEORGE: What's happened there?

FL1: She lets him...*(three of them smile and giggle nervously as they struggle to find a vocabulary)*

FL1: I dunno.

GEORGE: She lets him what?

ML3: Did she just let him go down there?

JASON: Let's run it again *(he re-arranges the hands to the point where Ken has put his hand on Barbie's genital area for the second time)* So, that's the previous one, we're starting again.

GEORGE: She's already moved his hand away.

JASON: *(Again presents the move again whereby Barbie moves Ken's hand slightly higher)*

FL3: *(Stammering)* Duh...duh...duh?

FL2: Does she let him?

FL3: Yes.

FL1: She moved it up.

SHARON: Not necessarily 'up' maybe to a different place.

GEORGE: Why might she have done that?

FL1: She might not have felt comfortable with it where it was.

GEORGE: Why...might...have been uncomfortable?

FL4: Might have hurt, first time.

GEORGE: What?

FL4: Might have hurt.

GEORGE: *(Overlapping with FL4)* Might have hurt, Yeah. What...might have been too hard or something?

FL2: He might have shoved too many fingers up.

(Five or more of the girls laugh loudly FL1 and FL2 covering their faces with their hands)

Appendix 11 RAP Scene Setting, SEND School

RAP - Descriptor, Special Educational Needs School 3rd visit.

11th November 2015

The sky was a battleship grey the morning we drew up outside the grounds of the school. The topography of the school in relation to the bay meant as we approached the large, heavily barred and electronically locked gate we could look down over the city and take-in the Hoe, the mile-long Breakwater that stretched across the Sound and the naval dockyards. We pressed the buzzer and the receptionist, Ashleigh, answered in a friendly voice and the gate was released with a loud 'click'. As we picked our way down the steep path towards the reception, two boys aged around twelve seemed to be roaming around the grounds clambering over walls and poking around the shrubberies and flower beds. We pressed the buzzer outside the reception and one of the boys burst through the opening door and scuttled through the foyer into the office and administration area, he was quickly followed by a burly male Teaching Assistant (TA) and the boy came bundling back out into the small foyer. The TA explained he could not come into this part of the school. "Fuck off. What are you going to do about it?" The TA said calmly, "Just come out with me and I'll take you back to class." "Piss off. You can't touch me. No one's allowed to touch me." "I'm not touching you, I'm asking you come with me." "You can't force me." "I'm asking you. Come with me...Please." "I'm not coming. I'm staying here." "Ashleigh, could you call Derek. Ok, just sit there until Derek arrives and then we'll go back to class

together.” Ashleigh then asked us to sign in and gave us a lanyard each with a pass card on it, Elsie got the one with a bar code on it which would allow us through the electronic doors to the classroom where we would be working. Ashleigh said, “You’ll have to wait here a bit longer until things calm down, if you go out through the door the other boy will try to get in.” Then Derek arrived, smiling. “Ok Darren, time to get back to your class now.” “I’m not moving.” “We’ll phone home and see if someone’s there to pick you up at lunchtime. But you can’t stay here.” “You won’t have to talk with Miss B. You can work on the computer. By yourself. All right?” First TA says, “Shall we go then, Darren? Can you unlock the door, please, Ashleigh? Thank you.” “Ok, but just don’t touch me.” The two male TAs left with Darren without appearing to use any physical force and the boy outside had disappeared. Elsie and Grace, the two peer-educators, and I went back out through the front door and walked around the side of the building before going through an electronically controlled door, along a corridor and arriving outside the classroom where we waited a few seconds until we were spotted by the teacher who came to the door and used the pass card on her lanyard let us in.

This was not the conventional rectangular shaped classroom. On entering you walked down a space of about three meters width which had worktops permanently attached to the walls with computers and monitors on them. On one side of the room these were divided by melamine panels into booths large enough for two people to work side-by-side viewing the monitor. It then opened into a much larger, brighter area

which had moveable tables and chairs. As you followed the room round to the right it widened further into a pleasantly carpeted area with bean bags and soft furniture; there was a sink with taps and recently washed art equipment. A fish tank with a variety of tropical fish gave a feel of a pleasant front room in someone's home and on another worktop there was a hamster cage which gave every appearance of being inhabited. The teacher explained this was an area where the children came to chill out when they couldn't cope. A locked, glass panelled door opened out into an enclosed concreted yard.

Appendix 12 RAP Transcription

On entering the room, we greeted the four learners whose names we'd learned from the previous sessions. Kevin (Male Learner 3) did not move from his seat on the edge of the chill-out area, but the others – Del (Male Learner 1), Liz (Female Learner 2) and Paul (Male Learner 2) helped to clear the tables to the side of the chill-out area and then took up seated positions in the circle of chairs. They formed half a circle while the three visitors formed the other half. Liz sat on a stool which made her higher than everyone else. I asked if anyone wanted to blow up a balloon. Liz volunteered and I offered her a choice from a variety of balloons. Liz does not automatically cooperate, but on this occasion, she willingly took up the challenge, picked a pink one and started to blow into it. After a couple of puffs, she asked if it was big enough and Del said it could go bigger. She was keen to get it right and after one more puff asked us all again and we agreed that it was perfect, so she carefully tied the knot and gave it back to me. I thanked her and without saying anything, I tapped it into the centre of the chairs and called the name of Grace who immediately patted it up into the air and called "Elsie". Elsie repeated the action calling "Paul" who calmly got out of his chair, gently tapped it up and called "Del". Immediately Del jumped out of his chair and nudged it with his elbow calling "Paul". Paul had to respond by moving very fast and reaching for the balloon before it hit the floor. He succeeded and scooped it up calling "Del" again who, this time, used his

knee to keep it up and called "Liz". She could not move off her stool as quickly as Paul had done and had to pick the balloon up off the floor and restart. She hit it hard so that it rocketed to the low ceiling and bounced down again and called "Del" too late who volleyed it with his right foot across space calling "Dave". I dropped it and started again calling "Elsie".

The game was played in good spirits with laughter, plenty of mistakes, no one trying to impose or clarify the rules, and everyone involved. On every possible occasion Del attempted to hit the balloon with a part of his body other than a hand which often resulted in bringing it to a standstill and necessitated a restart. I had agreed with the peer facilitators beforehand that we would try to avoid explaining the rules of the game before it started, rather our aim was to enhance their sense of ownership of the game and agency within the playing of it. If they wanted to bring in a rule it was up to them to negotiate it. If the balloon escaped the circle into Kevin's vicinity he couldn't resist hitting it back, almost as if it were a reflex, but he never called a name. Paul hit it towards him several times to include him, Kevin would hit it back but never brought his chair into the circle. The presence of the balloon lifted the atmosphere. It felt like a little party we had created for ourselves and its delicate, floating and benign quality seemed to be the catalyst to a playful and cooperative atmosphere.

I asked if we should try Del's rule of never using our hands. This resulted in energetic movement, laughter and cheering as

individuals contributed to the spectacle as they struggled and contorted themselves to use their heads, elbows, knees and feet. At other times, Del and Paul just repeatedly hit it between themselves, excluding others until they messed up. Sometimes someone would call out a suggestion to make it more inclusive or fun, for example not hitting it so hard that it would bounce back down off the ceiling, or avoid calling someone's name too late, or hitting it out of the circle. On checking the time, this activity had lasted fifteen minutes before it seemed to run its course and we moved on to exploring trust using balancing exercises.

The peer-educators came from the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth and had no opportunity to practice together beforehand, so I carefully set up what drama practitioners would recognise as a trust exercise. I deliberately used very simple language as Grace and Elsie followed my instructions.

David So, now Grace and Elsie are going to try something they've never done together before. Just come to the middle and face each other so your toes are touching. Now shuffle back a couple centimetres. Perfect. Now, just reach forward and hold hands... both hands... perfect. Can you see that their elbows are bent? So now, without moving your feet, very slowly lean back, feeling each other's weight until your elbows are straight. *(to the learners)* What would happen to Grace if Elsie let go?

Dan: Fall on her ass.

(Laughter around the group but mostly the learners)

David: Exactly. So, neither of them is going to let go. Now, both of you.... gradually bend your knees and slowly find out how near to the ground you can go.

(Leaning even further back, they slowly lower themselves and get stuck with their knees at 90 degrees)

Liz: I'm not bloody doing that.

Dan: Do it with me.

Liz: No way.

(Grace starts to laugh nervously. Elsie is a competitive tri-athlete and has great strength and confidence in her physicality. She grips Grace's wrists even more firmly while holding strong eye contact and then initiates the next move by bending her knees further. The whole group are rapt by the spectacle. Grace puts her trust in Elsie and leans back even further and starts to bend her knees beyond the sticking point, now Grace is surprised by how easy it is and descends smoothly into a position where they are both sitting on their heels. Their wrists are interlocked and elbows still straight as they rise holding steady eye contact. I initiate a group clap. I then move it on to the 'seesaw' exercise which starts in exactly the same way, with them leaning back taking each other's weight but this time only one goes down and on their way up the other goes down so they pass at a point where both have knees at 90 degrees)

David: Brilliant. So, who reckons they can do it with Elsie?

(Smirks and glances of complicity are exchanged between Paul and Dan.)

Paul: I can. *(Stands up)*

(More smirking between Dan and Liz.)

David: Thanks, Grace, that was great. *(Grace returns to her seat)*

(Elsie stands with her feet firmly planted and reaches forward towards Paul who takes her hands and carefully places his toes opposite hers. Paul is short for his age, but his legs seem strong and support him well. He has a calm aura about him with a dependable centre of gravity around his hips and I quickly sense he will manage this with assurance. After leaning back and smiling, they slowly lower each other to the squatting position with no hitches or sticking points. They both look comfortable with the experience and, smiling, they rise to a standing position smoothly and easily. They do it two more times before Elsie suggests trying the seesaw. Again, they succeed with a sense of ease.)

David: Perfect. What do you think, Dan, do you fancy giving it a go?

Dan: Nah, it's all right.

Paul: She won't let go. It's fun.

Dan: If she lets go, it's your fault.

Elsie: You might let go of me.

Dan: *(Getting up)* I won't.

Dan is almost the polar opposite to Paul. He is much taller, his movements are a series of contortions and lurches, and he rarely feels securely in balance. His eyes are constantly darting around. Elsie is a truly beautiful young woman with thick, long, blond hair. Her complexion is very fair with rosy coloured cheeks and blue eyes. She smiles widely at the fourteen-year-old boy and reaches out to him with both hands. He is hesitant at first and jerkily raises his hands towards hers. They interlock wrists and he nearly achieves a state of

stillness before Elsie initiates the movement by leaning back. I suspect Elsie made this decision because she knew that Dan was highly unlikely to achieve this stillness. He can now feel her weight and slowly, in a series of asymmetrical convulsions, he straightens his elbows and takes her weight and begins to lean back himself. He never quite straightens his right elbow, but he leans far enough back for us all to see he is putting his trust in Elsie. When they are nearly still, Elsie starts to bend her knees and Dan follows. Now his whole trunk seems to be twisting but he continues to consent to lowering himself. As he gets nearer to the ground his elbows bend more, which is a sure indication that he is taking his weight for himself and Elsie is less able to lean back. In a sudden movement he sits on his heels and almost immediately catapults himself back upright again. We all clap. He tries the seesaw but takes almost all his own weight using bent elbows to pull himself back up.

Elsie: Well done. You did it.

Grace: Liz. Do want to try it with me?

Liz: No.

Grace: You could just try leaning back.

Liz: No thanks.

David: Ok, so now we're going to try something else. Grace is going to blindfold Elsie. *(I hand them one of the selection of scarves and Grace gently blindfolds Elsie)* Now, without using words, just gently touching, they are going to find a way of walking Elsie around the space.

(Through a series of gentle touches – e.g. index finger between shoulder blades means ‘go forward’, index finger on left shoulder means ‘turn left’, no touching means ‘stop’ etc - Grace very sensitively moves Elsie around the enclosed space. Again, the group observe in silence.)

David: Who thinks they could do that?

Liz: I’ll do it with Dan. He’s the one who’s blind.

David: You Ok with that, Dan?

Dan: As long as I can blindfold Liz.

Liz: Alright.

(Liz quite gently blindfolds Dan who squirms and wriggles and touches the scarf and then they proceed to move around with Liz calling out instructions as well as poking and patting him. Dan gets confused and Liz shouts a bit louder and Paul laughs.)

David: Liz, do you want a bit of time to explain to Dan what your signals are?

Liz: Yes.

David: You ok, Dan?

Dan: Scared.

(Liz carefully explains what her signals mean while Paul opens up the space to the length of the narrow part of the classroom. We have a couple of test runs of ‘turn left’, ‘turn right’, ‘stop’, ‘go’ and then we all go quiet while Liz steers him all around the room. The tension is palpable as we wonder if she is going to drive him into some chairs or into the lap of one of the peer-educators. Dan never stops squirming,

it is viscerally uncomfortable to watch him, but he never takes the blindfold off.)

Dan: Can I stop now?

David: Yes, that was fantastic. Well done both of you. *(Everyone claps them spontaneously.)*

We continue to explore various permutations of blindfold walking, including two or three pairs at a time. The noise level increases as does the laughter and occasionally Dan allows someone to crash into a chair, but it seems that it is accidental rather than premeditated and so no one complains. At one time two people are guided so that they stand almost nose-to-nose while the group chuckles. At another time, Grace is steered right up to the fish tank and she is shocked when they take off the scarf and she is peering at the guppies. Overall, this activity is done within reasonable margins of safety and there is a pleasant atmosphere - a mixture of risk taking and goodwill. After fifteen to twenty minutes it seemed a good place to move on to the next activity.

David: Excellent. You did that really well. Was it fun?

Liz: It was a laugh.

David: So, Liz, you've done some work with masks before, but Dan and Paul I think this is new for you.

Paul: Yeah.

David: Well, in life people often say they need a mask to get through a difficult situation, like putting on a brave face or showing some feelings but hiding others. Does that make sense?

Dan: Yeah. People act hard. But it's just a mask.

Liz: I try to act nice.

David: It's the same when we make theatre. A mask can be a character and the mask makes that character do things. Things that the actor, as a person in real life, might never do. We're going to play something called 'One track mind.'

Liz: Oh, I remember this.

David: *(Pulling out a plain, white, 3D neutral mask and holding it by its edges with both hands, tipping the face towards the group so they can see it clearly)* So, this mask is called 'I want that.' That's the only thing this mask can do - as soon as an actor starts to wear this mask they can't help asking other people for their stuff – mostly clothes.

Liz: My sister's like that.

David: So's my daughter. She nicks her mum's clothes. So, Elsie, you go first. Put on the mask and we'll see what happens.

(I still hold the mask by its edges in both hands and pass it to Elsie with a slow, ceremonial gesture. Elsie puts it on with slow and deliberate movements. She turns towards Grace.)

Elsie: Oooh, Grace. I really love your sweatshirt.

Grace: Thanks.

Elsie: Great colour.

Grace: I always choose this colour.

Elsie: Could I borrow it?

Grace: Well ...I need it.

Elsie: I'll give it back, I promise. Please.

Grace: How long do you want it for?

Elsie: I'll bring it round after school.

Grace: Promise?

Elsie: Yeah...I'm your friend. You can trust me.

Grace: Ok (*Taking it off*) but bring it back after school, right?

Elsie: Sure. (*Taking it from Grace*) Aw, cheers Grace.

(*Turning to Kevin who hasn't participated since the balloon game*)

Elsie: Hi Kevin (*She moves towards him and eyes him up and down. The other learners smile at each other.*) Cool trainers.

Kevin: No. (*The three learners laugh under their breath*)

Elsie: I was just...wondering...maybe I could borrow them?

Kevin: No.

Elsie: Maybe just try them on.

Liz: They stink.

Kevin: I don't want to... No.

Elsie: (*Turns to Liz*) Your fleece.

Liz: No... I'm not taking this off for anyone.

Elsie: But I'm cold.

Liz: Tough.

David: Well done, Elsie. So, you get the idea? Anyone else want to try the mask?

Dan: I will.

Elsie: (*Handing him the mask*) I hope you do better than me.

Dan: (*Puts on the mask and turns to Liz and stands awkwardly in front of her, his arms twitch and then he is quite still for three seconds. He speaks in a gentle voice*) Liz ...can I borrow your fleece...please?

Liz: Well...

Dan: I'm cold.

Liz: *(Starts taking off her fleece)* Ok...There you are.

Dan: Aw thanks, Liz *(He squeezes into her fleece then is still again)* ...So ...I really like that wristband. It's cool.

Liz: Do you want it?

Dan: Yeah... I love it.

Liz: *(Takes it off and gives it to him)* There.

Dan: Ah...Cheers mate. That's so cool. *(He puts on the wristband and is still again, just calmly looking at her)* Your watch....Could I borrow it...just for the afternoon?

Liz: Give it back after school?

Dan: When I see you after school, I'll give it back, I promise. *(Liz takes off her watch and gives it to him. The group make sounds of surprise and disbelief).* Your badge?

Liz: No.

Dan: Please.

Liz: My prefect badge!

Dan: Just for a bit.

Liz: No...I can't...No.

Dan: Thanks anyway. *(Walks away back to his seat)*

David: We'll stop there. That's great you two.

We take it in turns to take the mask and play 'One track mind' exploring the different needs the mask might have. I try it and start asking for money.

David: Dan, I'm really skint and I've got to catch the bus home.

Dan: Walk then.

David: I promised I'd get home early. I need some money.

Dan: Tough.

David: C'mon, I thought we were mates.

Dan: You were given money, but you just spent it.

David: I leant it to Liz, so she could buy some lunch.

Liz: Don't bring me into it.

Dan: You always want money. You should learn to look after it. It's your own fault.

David: This is the last time.

Dan: It's your own fault. Piss off.

David: *(Taking off the mask with both hands)* Wow, you were tough on me. Well done. Liz do you want to have a go? Let's say your mask only wants the one thing – a friend. *(Passing her the mask)*

Liz *(takes off her glasses, puts on the mask and then repositions her glasses on the outside. The effect is powerfully disconcerting. Whereas with the previous masks the effect was to allow the spectator to project qualities onto the mask and see expressions, emotions even, these glasses gave the mask a singular purpose and focus. Liz seemed to grow in stature and the mask developed an aura. It seemed to have an almost statuesque density and filled the space).*

Liz: *(Approaches Kevin, stands still in front of him)* Be my friend.

Kevin: No.

Liz: Kevin, be my friend.

Kevin: No.

Liz: I'm a good friend. Be my friend.

Kevin: What do you want to do?

Liz: Just hang out.

Kevin: No.

Liz: Hang out after school. Just be friends. Listen to music. Round my place.

Kevin: Maybe. Anything else?

Liz: Watch a DVD. Play video games.

Kevin: Yeah, alright.

Liz: Thanks. *(turns to Dan)* Do you want to be my friend?

Dan: Why?

Liz: I'm fun. We could do art and stuff.

Dan: Where?

Liz: Round my place.

Liz: I could look out for you round school.

Dan: Yeah.

(Liz takes off her mask and her cheeks are flushed. It is hot behind the mask. She looks around blinking, unable to focus. She puts on her glasses and seems a bit bewildered as she makes her way back to her stool. This is the only interaction she's had with Kevin and the only thing he's said throughout the session to anyone, apart from "No.")

David: Shall we leave it there and do something else?

Liz: Yeah

Paul: Yes. Can we go mad.

David: What do you mean?

Paul: Get mad with each other.

David: What, do you mean like really angry?

Paul: Shout maybe.

David: I've got a script here where someone gets quite angry. Do you want to hear Elsie and Grace read it?

Paul: No. I can read it. With Liz. Alright Liz?

Liz: I'll read it.

(I hand out the scripts, one each.)

Liz: I'll be A.

(Paul moves his chair to sit opposite Liz with their knees around fifty centimetres apart. They are both hunched over their scripts and read with a controlled intensity. There is little in the way of vocal variety. Liz is more fluent and by anticipating the sense of some of the lines, catches some of the mendacity of A. Paul's deliberate reading of B is imbued with his characteristic calm, but he can sense where the scene is going, and he releases the last line with surprising force.)

Bossy boots

A: You can't go out like that.

B: Yes I can. It's cool.

A: You look terrible.

B: What do you mean?

A: Your hair looks crap.

B: I think it's Ok. I just checked it out.

A: Your jeans are all scruffy looking and that sweatshirt is really not cool at all.

B: Why should I listen to you? My friends think I look Ok.

A: They just wouldn't tell you.

B: Yes they would. You're always trying to make me feel crap about myself.

A: I was being helpful.

B: No you weren't. You just act like you're better than me and keep bossing me around.

A: Well, I wouldn't go out looking like that.

B: Well, you're not me. My friends are not your friends. So just BUTT OUT!!

Liz (*looks up from her script through the thick lens of her glasses and smiles sadly.*)

Elsie: That was really good, you two.

Grace: Yeah, well done.

Paul: Do you want to try Dan. With Liz?

Dan: I'll read with you. You do Liz's part.

(Dan takes a script and tries to work out which letter corresponds to each character.)

Paul: I'm A this time, you're B.

Dan: I'm not very good at reading.

David: That doesn't matter. You know what happens. Start reading and see how it goes. Change the lines or make them up.

Paul: You can't go out like that.

Dan: Yes I can. It's cool.

Paul: You look terrible.

Dan: What do you mean?

Paul: Your hair looks crap.

(Dan squirms and looks up at Paul, then looks back down at his script)

Dan: Well, your jeans are all scruffy and that sweatshirt is crap.

Paul: Why should I listen to you? My friends think I look Ok.

Dan: They just wouldn't tell you.

Paul: I was being helpful.

Dan: You just keep acting like you're better than me.

Paul: Well, I wouldn't go out looking like that.

Dan: Well, you're not me. So just BUTT OUT!!

Tracking their reading on our own scripts we became increasingly bewildered. Somehow, midway, they had managed to reverse the line allocations, so they were saying each other's lines. Dan had taken on a more confrontational role, Paul stood his ground but Dan had the last word which he read loudly and triumphantly. The scene had a dangerous, unpredictable energy. Dan read the scene again with Liz, this time expanding it with more lines of his own. Then he suggests they try a scene of their own.

Dan: We're at a therapist right. Me and Liz are living together. Liz's the one who's always trying to control everything.

Liz: I can do that.

Paul: I'm the therapist.

Dan: So Liz is bossing me around. No...that's not right.

Liz: Why not?

Dan: The bloke's got to be the boss.

Paul: A woman could be the boss who's in control.

Dan: Not a woman. It's always the man.

Liz: I'll be a man then.

Dan: Ok. So you're always trying to control my life.

Liz: Yes.

Dan: Right. So Paul, you're the therapist and you're sitting here and then we come in.

Knock, knock.

Paul: Come in. *(They enter from the far end of the classroom into the circle of chairs, no attempt to mime a door.)* Take a seat. *(They take two chairs and position them close together, but some distance from Paul)* So, how's it been since last week? Are things any better?

Liz: No.

Dan: Maybe.

Paul: *(To Liz)* You don't seem very happy. Nothing's changed?

Liz: She's always got an excuse not to be in the house. Always on the phone...to her mother...her sister....all her bloody bingo friends.

Dan: Bingo friends?

Liz: Yes, those slags you play Bingo with. Then you come back drunk and stinking of fags.

Dan: Bingo? I'm not playing bloody Bingo. Blokes don't play Bingo.

Liz: You're not a bloke...you knob head...I'm the bloke...you're my missus. Unless you want to be gay.

Dan: I'm not gay.

Liz: It was your idea to make me a bloke.

Dan: *(Pause)* Alright, I'll be your missus. We'll start again. You be more angry this time. Paul, you're still the therapist, alright?

Paul: Yep.

Dan: Right, we'll go out and start again. *(They go out)* Knock, knock.

Paul: Come in. How are you? Take a seat. So...how's it been?

Liz: Crap. She's completely selfish. Always out playing bloody Bingo. On the phone all the bloody time.

Dan: *(In a high pitched voice)* You're the one who gets drunk. You come home and shout and push me about.

Paul: Does he hit you?

Liz: Hardly.

Dan: Shuddup. He's asking me not you.

Paul: Ok. Try to calm down both of you.

Liz: She knows what time I get home from work. She's not there. Out with her friends. Spending our money.

Dan: *(in his more normal register)* Spending my money. I work as well. It's my life, I can do what I want. Then I get back ... that's when it kicks off.

Liz: What do you expect? You come back drunk. *(Pause)* I never hit you anyway.

Dan: You keep saying you will.

Liz: I'd never hit you, darling.

Paul: So you'd never hit her, but you do threaten her?

Liz: She just makes me so mad. She's not like a proper missus. Never does anything for me.

Dan: Wait a minute. Am I your missus? I forgot. Right let's start again. You're the therapist, Paul. Liz, you be my missus.

Liz: Am I still controlling you?

Dan: Yes. You're the bully. And you start off really angry.

Grace: The scene doesn't have to start off angry. It could build up slowly. So we see how you make each other angry.

Dan: Yeah. That's right. You don't have to be so angry, Ok. Liz? Right, so let's start again. I'm the therapist this time. Liz, you're the bossy one, right, and Paul you're the bloke.

Paul: Knock, knock.

Dan: Come in. Take a seat.

Liz: Sit there, Paul. No need to be on the other side of the room.

Dan: You can sit where you are comfortable.

Paul: I'll sit over here then.

Dan: How's it been this week? Have you been a bit more chilled with each other?

Liz: I have, but he seems just as snappy?

Paul: I'm not the snappy one!

Dan: Wait. Hang on. Liz you're the bossy one aren't you?

Liz: Yes.

Dan: So why is Paul being the angry one?

Liz: Because you told me not get angry straight off.

Dan: That's right. Paul, you don't be so angry straight off as well. Ok, start again.

Liz: Knock, knock.

Dan: Come in you two. Nice to see you. Take a seat.

Liz: Sit here Paul.

Dan: So, how's it been since last week? Did you try spending a bit more time apart?

Paul: I did, but she kept on texting me.

Liz: Because you were always late or never where you said you were going to be.

Paul: Once, that happened.

Liz: At least three times.

Paul: I'm a driver. That's what it's like. So, she's always having a go. And when I get home, she's even worse.

Liz: What do you expect? I try to cook you some tea, ready for 6.30 and an hour later you're still not home.

Paul: I tried to call you.

Dan: I can see you're both getting angry with each other now, just try to calm down and listen.

Liz: I am listening.

Paul: We're both listening.

Dan: Good. Let's start again, then. Without getting so angry. Paul, don't get stressed straight off. Act like you're the calm one.

Paul: I am being calm.

Dan: Good. Have you tried just giving each other a bit more space? Spending time without each other and with your own friends?

Liz: What's the point in that?

Paul: I don't want to spend time with my friends.

Liz: It's up to us. We've got to work it out.

Paul: When I get home, I'm tired. I don't want to go out. I like being with Liz.

Liz: That's right.

Paul: Except it's always a stress.

Liz: If I knew what time you were getting home, I wouldn't always be stressing and worrying.

Dan: Paul, have you tried phoning a bit more often or earlier?

Liz: What's the matter with you, you're supposed to be the therapist?

Dan: I am.

Liz: So why are you treating us like kids? All I've got to do is ask him and he'll phone me more.

Dan: I'm only suggesting...

Liz: Well don't! ... right...just shuttup.

Paul: I could phone you more...I just forget.

Liz: I know.

Dan: You seem to talking a bit....

Paul: Shuttup.

Liz: We don't need you.

Paul: No

Liz: Get out.

Paul: Or I'll push you out.

Dan: Alright. I'm going... *(He stands up and walks out of the performance space to the chill-out zone)*

The whole room erupts with laughter. The three actors, Kevin, the visitors and Rachael, the teacher are laughing.

David: That was fantastic.

Elsie: Excellent acting.

Grace: Brilliant. A great scene.

David: Have you done enough acting for today?

They agree and we all start putting the room back into its normal configuration. The learners are still talking excitedly and Dan says, "We could show our play around school." Liz agrees. Paul adds, "We could set up that music group and put something on."

Appendix 13 RAP Evaluation – Progress Report

RAP Evaluation – Case Study: Progress Report developed with Jezz
September/October 2014

It is important to remember that the RAP team know very little about the home lives or circumstances of the clients. So what is written here is based entirely on our experiences of our relationship with Jezz over the 15 plus sessions.

Jezz did not join the group until around the third session. At the time he could often be seen carrying a can of energy drink containing caffeine. He tended to spend a lot of time smoking and outside the building away from the group, but perhaps with someone else – sometimes one or two of the girls.

Once, in his second session, he got very agitated about something and threw his can of drink hard against the outside wall. In the earlier sessions Jezz often seemed agitated and was unpredictable, sometimes his behaviour was a challenge to the peers who interpreted it as aggressive.

From the very first session Jezz always observed the workshop action closely but didn't always want to participate, but he soon started to help make teas and coffee for the participants and was keen to join in the games of football. He was, at first, slow to offer his opinion in discussions and reluctant to read. However, given the opportunity, gradually it became clear that Jezz was good at improvisations and was confident and expressive in his movement work.

By following the lead of the peer-educators Jezz soon started to volunteer to read the short scripts, which he did with increasing confidence and clarity, often bringing intelligence and expression to the roles.

As the sessions moved onto dealing more directly with intimate relationships, Jezz took part in discussions, shared his opinions and continued to willingly participate in reading the scenes. He showed he had a good understanding of what it meant to

negotiate and demonstrated that he could direct the action of the actors and very successfully take part in improvisations.

Since he started, Jezz has never missed a session and over the last half dozen sessions he has become an important leading member of the group, often being relied upon to volunteer to start off by reading a scene or doing an improvisation or sharing movement work. He is very friendly with the visiting RAP team and tells us he is much happier at school. Recently, when asked about the value of RAP in his behaviour and relationships outside the RAP sessions, he said that at school he'd been angry with someone, but was able to go outside, have a cigarette and go back into the class calm.

The main aim of the RAP Project is to give people a stronger sense of their own self-efficacy – particularly when it comes to managing relationships by reaching solutions through negotiation. Our observations and interactions with Jezz suggest that he has made great progress in developing his self-efficacy and confidence in managing relationships. He is openly friendly and affectionate with the members of the group and the RAP team. He is happy to share information about his progress and hopes and he asks questions about the RAP team. Certainly, within the particular situation of working in the project he has shown all the self-efficacy competencies we had mapped out in the observation scale and he has discussed all of the steps with us and agrees that he has achieved all of them.

Appendix 14 RAP Evaluation - Follow-up Interview

RAP Evaluation - Case Study: Follow-up Interview with Jezz

3rd September, 2015 - Excerpt from a follow-up with Jezz and Bob, his carer, one year after completing a RAP cycle. D=David, J = Jezz, B = Bob

D: I'd... tell me, Jezz, how does a person build up self-esteem, or self-worth, how does it work? Can you give me an idea on that?

J: You've just got to believe in yourself, haven't you?

D: And how does that belief build up?

J: Speak to someone and then sort of get their advice and then you can sort of work on their advice and start building your self-esteem up.

D: So, you build up your self-esteem through the interactions with other people?

J: Yeah with other people.

D: Yeah and what happens if an interaction goes badly, how does that effect your self-esteem?

J: You've got to start working on it again. You've got to learn to deal with that emotion and then get rid of that emotion and start building your self-esteem back up.

D: So, controlling your emotion is an important part of it?

J: Very important part of it.

D: That's interesting to hear. And did you feel on an emotional basis the work that you did ... what sort of emotions did you feel about RAP?

J: Positive.

D: Positive?

J: Yeah

D:....Were you actually happy during your time?

J: Yeah, it was fun, it was a good laugh. So worth it, like. Worth the hour of my life that I can give you, you know what I mean *(laugh)* it is though, you know what I mean?

B: That's what I say to you Jezz, if you don't do things like have a conversation with someone you can't get something out of it.

J: I was getting my childhood back a bit, I never really had one, so...

D: Get your childhood back. Yeah that's interesting. Which part of it made you feel you were getting your childhood back?

J: Just interacting with other people again.

D: Interacting? Yeah

J: With other people.

D: What about the games and stuff like that?

J: They was good, they were. They was funny.

D: You liked the games?

J: Yeah.

D: Did that feel like getting your childhood back?

J: Yeah, because you're sort of playing again, ain't ya?

D: Is playing important then?

J: Of course it is.

D: Yeah.

J: I mean, you've always got to have a bit of fun in your life no matter what age you are. Unless you're like Bob - ancient.

D: And what about rules, were you aware of us having a lot of rules?

J: Yeah. You have rules but every game's got a rule in it, hasn't it? Everything's got a rule in it. Every club. Everything.

B: It's a life lesson isn't it.

J: Yeah

D: Yeah. And were you happy with the rules that were there?

J: Fine, yeah. Nothing too harsh was it.

D: No. If there was a rule which you didn't like... how did it... what... what did you do about it?

J: Speak to the main man - which was you.

D: So, you were happy to talk about a rule and change it?

J: (Agrees) Mmm.

D: That happened, didn't it? You did sometimes talk about the rules of a game that we were playing, or somebody's behaviour in fact.

J: Yeah.

D: And we sorted it out. So that was very interesting. Did you feel you had a right to change the rules, if you thought you could make a better rule?

J: Yeah. If everyone agreed with the idea, then yeah. You can't just sort of come in to someone else's club and start changing things around. It's not your place to do it. As long as everyone agrees and they're happy to do it, then I don't see why not.

D: So, you could make rules of your own so long as you took people with you.

J: Yeah as long as the people in the group were happy to do it. I don't see why not.

D: That's very good. And do you think creating rules and working with rules is good for your self-esteem? How does that affect self-esteem, do you think?

J: It makes you much more confident, doesn't it? More confident to do more things in life. To express what you want to say.

D: Yeah.

J: If you can't express what you want to say, you're not going to get very far in life are ya?

D: No. Well that's interesting, you've really hit the nail on the head actually. Just one more thing that I wanted to talk about. How important was it to work with the other young people, the peer-educators?

J: The others?

D: Yeah, the others. Say it had just been me turning up by myself, how good would that have been compared with to working with the peer-educators? What did they bring to it?

J: They just brought... I don't know... they just made it more fun, didn't it? So other people were joining in. So, it was not just one person doing it with you and that's nice. Then everyone else wants to join in. They done a good job. They done a fantastic job.

D: And did you feel...um...you were confident to make a relationship with them?

J: Yeah, Yeah definitely.

D: That's good, that's very interesting.

J: No, they were really nice people. All of them.