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Performing Futures: Toward a 'Future Theatre'

By:

Dana Koellner
140108152

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Abstract

The contribution of this thesis lies in the exploration, combination and creation of new methods of imagining positive futures through performance. It initiates a field of study within contemporary performance practice that builds upon the work of other artists and contributes developmental insights and new methods into imagining futures within performance contexts.

The research is conducted through multi-modal methods. It begins with an autoethnographic study of Live-Action-Role-Play (LARP) examining how ‘other worlds’ are created in real time. This is followed by a survey of prominent artist practitioners whose work can be considered performances of or about the future, which then informs a series of eight Practice-As-Research (PAR) based case studies. The case studies combine and test various approaches to imagining the future, which are inspired by LARP and the artist practitioners. The thesis concludes with a proposal for a range of practices and suggested solutions to some of the issues that arose while imagining the future within the workshops and performances of the case studies. The issues concerned predispositions toward dystopias, perceptions of human greed that discouraged imagining future possibilities, representations of the performer as a political agent and challenging contemporary theatre perceptions. Solutions came in the form of open and invitational language, disclaimers for role playing, discursive open scenarios where the dialogue (and performance) was guided by and co-created by the participants, and the facilitator’s ability to provide counterarguments to dystopian inclinations.

The main advantage of the approaches, methods and suggested solutions resulting from the study is the beginning of a flexible form of ‘Future Theatre’ practice that can be applied within different situations and contexts as needed and appropriate to different perspective positions. This flexible approach encourages finding agreement amongst individuals and potentially disparate groups by examining their ideas and desires about the future.

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Section One
An Introduction to the Future:
Context, Aims, Methodology and Limitations

This new generation of scholars will be committed not just to describing the world, but to changing it. Their texts will be performance based. They will be committed to creating civic transformations and to using minimalist social theory. They will inscribe and perform utopian dreams, dreams shaped by critical race theory, dreams of a world where all are free to be who they choose to be, free of gender, class, race, religious, and ethnic prejudice and discrimination. The next moment in qualitative inquiry will be one in which the practices of performance ethnography finally move, without hesitation or encumbrance, from the personal to the political.¹ – Norman K. Denzin⁶

My interest in the future began during a Masters course at the University of Sheffield where I delivered a presentation entitled “Fragment of the Future: A Possible New Form for Positive Political Theatre.” The paper was in response to what I perceived as a continual representation of dispiriting political narratives within theatre. My research briefly examined the concept of ‘invitation’ to evoke imagining through a future-tense of positive/open-ended word fragments. These initial thoughts were derived from an analysis of two contemporary performance pieces, Chris Burden’s *Send Me Your Money* and A. Smith’s *All that is Solid Melts into Air*.² Within the paper, I drew upon Burden’s use of repetition. I did not focus on his repetition of phrases, but on the way his requests to imagine repeated and progressed. Within his work, Burden creates a series of requests to his audience, moving from the more general ‘imagine’

¹ Norman K. Denzin, *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003), p. 129.

² Chris Burden, ‘Send Me Your Money’, <<http://www.artandwork.us/2009/11/send-me-your-money/>> [accessed 06 July 2015] and A. Smith, ‘All that is Solid Melts into Air’, <<http://asmithontheinternet.com>> [accessed 7 June 2015].

to a more specific directive which states ‘consider the possibility,’ and then finally to ‘can you conceive of the idea’. The phrasing moves from broad and general instruction to a progressively more personal invitation through the use of the pronoun ‘you’ and by asking the audience to engage with his (this) work directly through imagining. He asks the audience not only to ‘imagine’ or ‘consider’; he requests further action, to consider the future ramifications of the idea he is proposing. He uses specific phrasing to request the active mental engagement of the audience, and to ruminate on the potentialities of a hypothetical scenario.

Smith uses a similar tactic of request and directive in his performance of *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, addressing his concerns about society and capitalism that detriment or benefit everyone. Smith’s approach utilises an open invitation for the audience to imagine on a grand scale. He asks the audience to imagine how they might ‘change the world’ by soliciting feelings of similarity between himself and the audience on specific issues, thereby stimulating the audience to think in a relationship together. He facilitates room for thought through long pauses within his speech. Smith fosters associations between his concepts and the audience’s own memory or experiences through these pauses within his storytelling and by inviting the audience to think about specific points or problems. Both Burden’s and Smith’s performances inspired an openness through invitation. These acts of invitation and solicitations of audience mental engagement within hypothetical scenarios would become essential ingredients in my practice of creating a ‘Future Theatre.’ The works of both artists inspired in me a feeling of the unknown concerning imagining futures. Consequently, I wanted to understand different forms of imagining the future within performance and begin to investigate the parameters of considering futures with live audiences. Thus, the feeling of the unknown, inspired by Burden and Smith, led me to begin researching performance strategies which might facilitate imagining the future within live performance.

In the present, this research, though about the future, seeks to offer an experience that involves and evolves imagining of what *could be*, in an effort to inform the present by experiencing the future *now*. The practice intends to explore, combine and create different forms of performance that experiment with the complicated desires of the future — a theatre that may be used to transform our thoughts, actions and selves. The goal of realising a type of theatre that affects political and social transformation is not unique but the approach and the methods uncovered within this thesis are distinctive. The quest necessitated a reach beyond that which we already know, have heard and experienced, into uncharted territory. Largely, this thesis seeks to avoid what has been covered in previous theatre forms.³ Though current theatre methods can be educative, experiential, informative, entertaining, enlightening and, in some cases, life-altering, this is a search for a new methodology and new combinations of practice which explore the future within contemporary performance. It should be noted that the ‘future’ in this context means the political, sociological and economic possibilities of space and time beyond the immediate present. Within the work, the future is exhibited and experienced within live performances and workshops through at least one of the following: physically immersive environments, representations of artefacts or concepts ‘from’ a future time, or the process of participatory imagining. Often, there is a combination of all three elements within the experiments as delineated within the Case Studies.

³ I acknowledge that the end results of the study may be broadly placed within the processes of participatory and/or socially engaged theatre and their definitions. However, identifying or aligning this work with any particular genre was not my intention from the start. This approach allowed room for new discoveries, insights and possibilities in experimenting with methodology and encouraged freedom within the practice to develop, based on the action-based process rather than the application of other established methods. However, there may be some similarities between the work of other artists discussed within Chapter Three and other theatrical forms, particularly concerning ethical matters similar to those within Boal’s Forum Theatre and Invisible Theatre (discussed at length within Chapter Three).

An Argument for a Positive Stance

Certain ideas concerning the future already occupy the stage in the form of literature adaptations and new works of science fiction. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of dystopian productions which may reflect ongoing or growing anxieties of the present.⁴ These types of science-fiction theatre narratives are usually set in a futuristic world and feature a technologically driven cataclysmic event while examining some aspect of human relations from the after-effects of a techno-apocalypse. Here, let me consider for a moment the use of theatre that represents a cataclysmic view, one that explores the concept of a terrible dystopian future to come.

Dystopian narratives serve several purposes. They may solicit and examine feelings of fear, both as an expression of tensions or anxieties. These narratives also function as a type of fictional warning mechanism. Dystopian themes explore the ramifications of decisions that lead to a doomed future, becoming, in some form, a type of risk assessment based on fear.⁵ Such themes are evident in recent theatre and television revivals of *Fahrenheit 451*, *1984* and *The Handmaid's Tale*.⁶ The popularity of these revivals evidences a preoccupation and focus on fear, rather than the solutions that overcome such fears. In an effort to concentrate on

⁴ Several dystopian theatre productions within the last three years include Edward Einhorn's adaptation of *The Iron Heel* in New York City; Sinclair Lewis's play, *It Can't Happen Here*, a staged reading by Peccadillo Theater Company at the National Arts Club in New York; *ow*, a production of *A Clockwork Orange*, adapted from Anthony Burgess's script by British director Alexandra Spencer-Jones found in Jonathan Mandell, 'Dramatizing Dystopia', <<http://howlround.com/dramatizing-dystopia>> [accessed on 26 February 2018] and in Alexis Solokidec, '10 More Plays Where the Future Forecast Is Grim', <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/20/theater/dystopia-plays-zoe-kazan-caryl-churchill-lucy-kirkwood.html>> [accessed 26 February 2018]. Dystopian themes have developed in form and content, particularly since the mid-1990s from British and Irish playwrights and addressing pressing concerns over cloning, nuclear disasters, patriotic fear and paranoia; see Caryl Churchill's work, including *A Number* (2002), *Love and Information* (2012), *Ding Dong the Wicked* (2013) and Lucy Kirkwood's *Chimerica* (2013) and *The Children* (2016).

⁵ Emma Cocker discusses this preventative type of imagining as risk management in her analysis of Michel Foucault's examination of *praemeditatio malorum* found within Emma Cocker, 'What now, what next – *kairotic* imagination and the unfolding future seized', unpublished paper presented at *In Imagination: The Future Reflected in Art and Argument*, University of Sheffield October 4, 2013, p. 6.

⁶ Dan Stahl, '5 Dystopian Novels Adapted for the Stage', <http://www.theatermania.com/broadway/news/5-dystopian-novels-adapted-for-the-stage_81518.html> [accessed on 3 February 2018].

solutions rather than fear-based concepts, some entertainment forms are examining themes which utilise dystopian visions as controlling mechanisms in order to find ways to counter such narratives. At a recent conference in Norway, the Live-Action-Role-Playing game designer, Eirik Fatland, discusses the mechanism of fear and how fear is utilised to destroy and control individuals within narratives, moving them away from creative problem solving.⁷

Now let me first tell you something that is not challenging, and it is to direct humans towards a shared purpose. Not their creativity, just their bodies and the essential facilities of their ability to control them. We know very well how to do this. If we need to direct people towards a shared purpose, we hurt and threaten them until they lose their rough edges and do what we tell them to do. Sometimes we medicate them, as well, or tell grand lies for them to believe in. And we have become very sophisticated with the hurting and threatening so it barely looks like hurting and threatening, and it barely sounds like trying to assert control but instead uses the language of “protection” or “safety” or “necessity” or “for your own good.” And it becomes internalized, rationalized. No longer the teacher or sergeant or boss threatening you – but you yourself, the voice in your head. But directing human creativity is much harder. Creativity describes our ability to generate and execute ideas. Creativity is complex problem-solving. And: Creativity Does Not Thrive On Fear. All authorities on creativity agree on this: that it requires fearlessness, [and] thrives on playfulness.⁸

In exploring solutions to problems, it is the positive creative act, the new effort of creativity, that moves action forward and inspires individuals to change, ultimately. It would be counterproductive, as Fatland argues, to move toward a state of fear as a problem-solving mechanism. This is not to say that dystopian themes do not inspire change. Fear induced by

⁷ Live-Action-Role-Play, otherwise known as LARP, is further defined below and is a significant element of the practice examined in Chapter Three.

⁸ Eirik Fatland, ‘Does LARP Design Matter?’, <<http://larpwright.efatland.com/?p=532>> [accessed 27 September 2015].

dystopian cataclysmic visions may act as a catalyst toward the consideration and prevention of negative outcomes. However, these devices can also further ideologies of paranoia, which history and the present have shown in so many cases. As a result of recent terrorism, several nations have coerced rationalizations of fear to violate privacy, condone civil atrocities and break human rights laws, in justification of a fearful future. Unfortunately, post-truth demagoguery has played on individual fears, polluting both policies and politicians alike toward paranoid power struggles. Fear has been used to drive individuals and groups apart, rather than finding mutual agreement and creating solidarity. The exponential growth of technology year after year, the rise of collaborative production, an ever-increasing population growth, the continual depletion of natural resources, global warming and changes in information technology are all stimulating destabilization, and fear is often the weapon used to keep creative and productive solutions at bay.⁹ An example of this type of transformation resulting from political and economic imbalance is detailed in Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine*, in which she rightly suggests a link between capitalism, Iraq, and destabilization based on the capitalist consumption of oil within the region.¹⁰ Many leading economists and cultural theorists have long projected that that resource consumption rates and imbalances between rich and poor induced by capitalism are not ultimately sustainable and that global economies driven by unrestrained capitalism will be disrupted.¹¹ This shift in destabilization has occurred more rapidly in the last three years than predicted and several countries, such as Greece, Syria and Spain, have suffered devastating economic spirals. In earlier research on post-capitalism, I discussed the lack of viable alternatives and institutional structures for a

⁹ Peter F. Drucker, *Post Capitalist Society* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Paul Mason, 'The End of Capitalism has Begun', <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/17/postcapitalism-end-of-capitalism-begun>> [accessed 20 July 2015]; Harry Shutt, *Beyond the Profits System: Possibilities for a Post-Capitalist Era* (London: Zed Books, 2010); Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014).

¹⁰ Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine* (London: Penguin, 2007).

¹¹ Drucker, *Post Capitalist Society*; Mason, 'The End of Capitalism'; Shutt, *Beyond the Profits System*; Klein, *This Changes Everything*.

techno-based society free of capitalism.¹² Calls for finding new alternatives for living in a post-capitalist world seem to be the subject of more and more published material from 2016 forward.¹³ Suggested solutions often centre around the influence of education and community-based management of resources as we move further toward a post-capitalism or post-scarcity economy. Post-scarcity theory posits that the continual advancement of technology will create *some* solutions to our current problems, but *not all*, and it is unclear, as of yet, how a post-industrial society will function in a post-capitalist world. Paul Mason, Naomi Klein, Jeremy Rifkin and Christopher Dew are among the current prominent writers and scholars exploring the impact of a post-scarcity world. The transition they discuss speaks not only of the technological impact of a new world economy, but also of social impact, politics and care for the environment.

The expectation of financial reward loses relevance when prosumers begin to produce their own products for use and exchange, and marginal costs approach zero. In the Commons, the expectation of financial reward is quickly being replaced by the desire to advance the social well-being of humanity. In other words, 'economic welfare is measured less by the accumulation of market capital and more by the aggregation of social capital.'¹⁴

Social capital is broadly defined as 'features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit'.¹⁵ In terms of

¹² Dana Koellner, 'Justice, Leadership, Equality and the Search for a New Structure: Post Capitalist Lessons from Fanshen, Changing the Relationship Between Leaders and the Led' (unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Sheffield, 2012).

¹³ See the following: Mason, 'The End of Capitalism'; Nafeez Ahmed, 'Beyond Extinction: Transition to Post-Capitalism is Inevitable', <<https://medium.com/insurge-intelligence/beyond-extinction-12daed1bc851#.meiizo5z0>> [accessed 06 July 2015]; Christopher J. Dew, 'Post-Capitalism: Rise of the Collaborative Commons, The Revolution will not be Centralized', <<https://medium.com/basic-income/post-capitalism-rise-of-the-collaborative-commons-62b0160a7048#.981654mph>> [accessed 15 November 2015].

¹⁴ Christopher Dew quoting Jeremy Rifkin in *The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, The Collaborative Commons, And The Eclipse of Capitalism* (New York: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 18–19.

¹⁵ Robert D. Putnam, 'Bowling alone: America's declining social capital,' *Journal of Democracy* 6 (1995), p. 67.

social capital aggregation, Facebook was one of the first global companies to embrace the principles from the above quotation, giving rise to something capitalists did not understand at first: social capital, rather than financial capital, could become a tool for activism. The social network of Facebook provided the first world-wide platform that institutionalised social capital, which gave rise to influence over marketplace economics. It allowed consumers to band together to boycott or promote products and companies, thereby facilitating alignment and organisation with others of similar beliefs. Now, however, Facebook has unfortunately opted for a more capitalist approach by using its members' data for financial gain. The results have been far more damaging and influential than anticipated (e.g. the recent US election and the Brexit data harvesting scandal from Cambridge Analytics).¹⁶ Several aligned groups that have connected through internet platforms have made some progress on behalf of social capital endeavours or social activism with large corporations, but these struggles are often paralysed within a type of feedback loop of language and motivators. On the 23rd of April 2015, I attended the 'Energy 2050' conference at the University of Sheffield which discussed the world's first power station with carbon capture and storage (CCS). The event was hosted by Sask Energy, a Canadian corporation that was attempting to change Canada's energy system to a more carbon neutral source. What quickly became evident from the presenter's point of view were the intricacies of capitalism's influence on the project and how the new alternative energy companies were trying to solve energy issues based on the old methods of financial market exchange theories. Social pressure from local groups forced both the government and Sask Energy to find solutions to financial-based problems. Although the project is now underway, its financial viability remains in question.

¹⁶ Patrick Greenfield, 'The Cambridge Analytica files: the story so far', <<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/mar/26/the-cambridge-analytica-files-the-story-so-far>> [accessed 16 July 2018].

One of the most difficult aspects of such a revolution — a revolution away from the aggregation of capital — will be the occupation of one's self instead of money making in a post-scarcity/post-capitalist future. What does one do when one no longer has to work to make a living, finance a place to live, or pay for energy or put food on the table? Perhaps instead of questions about what *to do*, the first question is actually 'What do I truly want?'. This is where I believe this study to be useful because one of its purposes is to create a dialogue concerning what one person or community wants their world to resemble, and how they might identify the changes necessary in order for their desired world to be achieved. Imagining futures collectively opens a community oriented dialogue which moves from 'what I want' to 'what we want'. Identifying such wants promotes a more collective consideration, with the goal of avoiding more fascistic impositions. At present, the voices of the many are far too controlled by the powerful few and when envisioning futures collectively, there is more opportunity for marginalised voices to be heard. There will always be a risk that not every viewpoint and voice is accounted for in such discussions; however, the aim of collective futures is more inclusive than exclusive as it addresses the wants of all the participants based on their needs, tensions, proclivities, anxieties and concerns at the time and in the moment. A 'Future Theatre' can help to create a positive dialogue about what we — individually and collectively — want and help to resolve the question 'What do I/we become?'. It is true that there is potential for individual confrontation in the work; however, the approach offers the necessary space for different viewpoints and the methods ultimately work toward finding forms of agreement through the individual desires expressed. Therefore, the research necessitates the avoidance of dystopian approaches, as future imagining and creative problem-solving must result from expressions of what we *do* want rather than what we *do not* want.

Given this, I will not be using dystopian science-fiction content that intentionally utilises or elicits fear(s) as an inspiration for imagining futures for my methods. However, I

will examine other practitioners' methods that may invoke dystopian visions within their content for the purpose of understanding and reviewing their methods which directly imagine futures. However, as stated, my own methods will focus instead on ways in which theatre can create conceptualised future spaces that reflect more positive-oriented desired futures. A 'future world' or 'future space' in this context can mean a physical representation of the future, the conceptualisation of an imagined future scenario from the present, or a feeling of a future time being transposed within the present as a part of a performance experience. Through these imaginings, we might think of ways to reverse engineer decision-making processes on how to obtain those futures, or, at the very least, begin a dialogue about what we want the future to resemble, rather than spending more energy on how to avoid it. As source material through some of the workshops, from time to time I will draw on visions from science-fiction literature, such as *Star Trek*, but only as a tool for imagining through a shared lexicon — not to adapt or recreate utopianism on stage. Where relevant, I will also utilise some selected literature that discusses the future as inspiration within the practice, such as the works of historian Yuval Noah Harari, who wrote *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*, as well as Naomi Klein, whose works include *The Shock Doctrine* and *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*.¹⁷ One of the aims of this work is to create future experiences through live performance with minimal resources. Therefore, virtual reality systems and games such as *Second Life* will not be explored within the realm of this thesis.¹⁸ Virtual worlds require significant amounts of time and often vast amounts of resources to create from the initial concept, as well as lengthy times of engagement for performers and participants. The ethos of this practice stems from creating a method (or methods) that requires minimal time and expense, and which is thereby useful to anyone and which avoids such restraints. It is crucial,

¹⁷ Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (London: Harvill Secker, 2015); Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (London: Harvill Secker, 2011); Klein, *This Changes Everything*.

¹⁸ See *Second Life*, virtual online world created by Philip Rosedale in 1999. For additional information on Second Life see Second Life, 'Second Life', < <https://secondlife.com> > [last accessed 23 January 2018].

more than ever, that we endeavour to imagine new positive future scenarios which are accessible to all. These narratives will help us to think in new or different ways that combine both technological advancement and modern social awareness in order to explore and experiment with the future. This must begin by considering what we desire individually and collectively. Therefore, the methodology of this research must always endeavour toward a positive approach for an optimistic theatre and be both practical and accessible for all who wish to partake. This thesis aims to uncover possible new approaches by exploring some of the techniques used by other artists in imagining the future, as well as those individuals creating entirely fictionalized worlds. Most crucially, as a form of theatre practice, the research asks how performance can contribute to experiences of conceptualised future spaces and imagining future worlds.

Though aware of the significance, definitions and lineage of delineating the terms ‘theatre’ and ‘performance’ within the field of theatre and performance studies, within my own practice and this thesis I do not differentiate the two terms in a practical way. For myself, as a practitioner, delineating the two terms does not promote the conceptualization and creation of pieces of work directly and the work does not inherently necessitate labels toward inception. At the start of each piece, I don’t think ‘I’m going to create a theatre piece, not performance’ (or vice versa). Instead, I research elements of practice that might inform and distinguish different methods of achieving a witnessed event. For example, I may consider how immersive environments can work toward the subject matter; what the sensorial aspects are that lend the event toward conscious and subconscious embodiment; how I can play with and construct possibilities for identity investigation and raise questions of power structures within the topic, and so on. This is not to dismiss other arguments and definitions which are undoubtedly necessary in academic debate or useful to others. However, it is important to clarify my use of these terms within this work, as it steps away from the

conventional duality of either/or titles associated with these words, defining the work from the outset or in retrospect. *Theatre* and *Performance* are thus interchangeable within this work and describe the demarcation of an event rather than lines of distinction between the two terms.

For the definition of theatre/performance within this text, I have drawn from Erving Goffman, Richard Schechner, Marvin Carlson, Tim Etchells and Margaret Wilkerson.¹⁹ Foremost, the terms herein indicate the opportunity for individuals and communities to come together to hold a dialogue – a conversation that tells a story or reflects a subject of interest or concern, in and of that moment, in and of that moment, be it from a text or devised entirely through improvisation.²⁰ In this sense, theatre/performance only requires a dialogue (visually, spoken, or through movement) and a witness participant. A conversation might therefore also be a performance, not just from the roles we might play, but through the sharing of thoughts and mutual creation of experiences. From this, new stories are thereby created and told, which are specific to time, place and the witness participant. Tim Etchells speaks of the importance of a witness in *Certain Fragments*: witnessing an event ‘leaves us, above all, unable to stop thinking, talking and reporting what we’ve seen.’²¹ It is both the participation of witnessing an event and the imprint of the experience that draws me to the term ‘witness’ as the second critical element in defining theatre/performance as I apply it, not in terms of an either/or, but the desire for both participation and imprinted experience. Thirdly, it is also necessary that a space is designated as ‘other’ in some way (i.e. verbally or atmospherically by, for example,

¹⁹ See Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Double Day 1959), Richard Schechner, *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 36-38, Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 4, Tim Etchells, *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 18 and Margaret Wilkerson, ‘Demographics and the Academy’, in *The Performance of Power: Theatrical Discourse and Politics*, eds. Sue- Ellen Case and Janelle G. Reinelt (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1991), p. 239.

²⁰ See Margaret Wilkerson, ‘Demographics and the Academy’, p. 239.

²¹ Etchells, *Certain Fragments*, p. 18.

lighting or sound), marking the space as different for a particular purpose and time.²² This formally indicates, either implicitly or explicitly, that all involved will be conscious of participating in an event which is marked as intentionally separate from other everyday experiences. The fourth component is drawn from Goffman, Schechner and Carlson, and concerns the roles individuals may perform within public interactions. Goffman, Schechner and Carlson point out that people are consciously aware of the different roles they may play in public situations (e.g. facilitator, spectator, peacemaker, consumer). An awareness of roles being played also creates an awareness of the actions taking place within a public space.²³ This means that, in an event or scenario marked as separate from everyday occurrences, there is an awareness of the potential roles being played within the given scenario and of the actions experienced (verbal or physical) as being potentially ‘different’ than those of the norm; we are consciously calling attention to this difference. Therefore, calling something a performance or a piece of theatre draws attention to both the event and the potential for roles to be played within the setting. In summary, theatre/performance is an opportunity for people to come together and witness a dialogue in a demarcated space and time, with all participants being consciously aware that role play and actions may be assumed within the apportioned space/time, designating the event as theatre/performance.

²² I realise that designated performance space may appear as a difficult definition for such experiences as Invisible Theatre forms. However, I would argue that while the participants are not aware at the time that the event is a performance, the actors/players/organisers *are* and are designating the spaces as such. However, for my purposes, the assurance that participants are aware and the space has been designated as one of performance is used specifically to encourage transparency and as a tool for creating democratically designed events. I will discuss this further in both the LARP section to follow and within the practice.

²³ In terms of role play, Schechner defines “restored behaviour” as ‘symbolic and reflexive [...] the self can act in/as another; the social or transindividual self is a role or set of roles,’ *Between Theatre and Anthropology*, p. 37. Carlson interprets this as the conscious ability of individuals to roleplay, and leading to a conscious awareness of the specific action taking place (Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 4-5).

Methodology

This research involves a ‘multi-modal inquiry which draws upon a range of methods’, as is often a necessity within Practice As Research (PAR).²⁴ The range of methods within this study were derived from social anthropology in the form of an autoethnographic study and an action-research based process for the practical experiments, both discussed further below. These methods were consistently tied to the literature and the theoretical underpinnings of other artists in pursuit of the aims of the research. My approach provided a type of spontaneous problem-solving through a series of experiments within eight individual case studies. The practice was dictated by my own interpretations. Other routes might have been taken and should be taken in further studies embodying the spirit of future imagining. The process was therefore both subjective and critical, using an academic framework of investigation alongside intuitive methods and responses. Robin Nelson discusses the validity of this approach to PAR in chapters three and five of his seminal work *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. For Nelson, PAR consists of identifying and integrating the various methods of obtaining knowledge from performance practice through academic rigour, which clarifies and outlines how performance research contributes to new knowledge or substantial insights within the field.²⁵ The aim of this research is to uncover new territories and new combinations of practices that open a field of performance which can help to imagine the future. In order to examine and create new potential methods of performance that reflect future imagining, the research required a PAR approach. It was essential to formulate and test methods through practice, as there are no direct forms reflecting this type of query within academic theatre research at present.

²⁴ Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (London: Palgrave, 2013), p. 99.

²⁵ Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts*, pp. 24–47.

In preparation for the practical portion of the research, I began by studying principles of PAR as delineated by Nelson to construct my practice plans.²⁶ My approach was to work through the experiments in consideration of the prominent artists' practices within the field and in a 'doing-thinking' action-research based structure.²⁷ This method allowed me to respond to the practice in a formulated process, step by step, but also permitted an organic reflexive response to each experiment within a detailed cohesive structure. This structure took the form within each case study of a practice plan and rationale, followed by the significant details of each experiment, then reflection and analysis, and finally the revised goals, the context and the aims of the experiment to follow.

For the framework of the methods, I also considered the 'Intentional Action Model' as prescribed by Anna Pakes.²⁸ John Freeman perhaps best summarises Pakes' model and its alternative in *Blood, Sweat and Theory: Research through Practice in Performance*. Freeman describes Pakes' approach in the following way: 'post-practice reflection needs usually to be harnessed to pre-practice questions [...] where value stems from the researching practitioner's intentions and creative processes rather than residing in the produced event as the embodiment of knowledge.'²⁹ The alternative, Freeman argues, is one in which the produced artistic work 'illustrates the practice rather than vice versa.'³⁰ Though there were several performance pieces throughout the practice, the intentions, methodological process, discoveries and results of the study are the focus, rather than producing a single artistic product based on the culmination of the research. I endeavoured to harness the study under the academic rigour of structured reflection, confined by aims set out at the start of each

²⁶ See Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts*; John Freeman, *Blood, Sweat and Theory: Research through Practice in Performance* (Farrington: Libri, 2010).

²⁷ Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts*, p. 61.

²⁸ Anna Pakes, 'Art as action or art as object? The embodiment of knowledge in practice as research', *Working Papers in Art and Design* 3 (2004), pp. 1–11.

²⁹ Freeman, *Blood, Sweat and Theory*, pp. 4–5.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 5.

experiment within a practice plan and rationale. In addition, I also endeavoured to balance the practice at times with a type of intuitive ‘conscious disorder’ in response to themes and questions that emerged within the process and that I felt might best solve the questions and explore various techniques in imagining future scenarios.³¹ I did not set out with a preconceived notion of methods; instead, I intended each case study to build upon the last. The subsequent rationale and method was based on the successes and failures of each experiment and was congruent with the questions that arose from the work as an action-research based process. Pakes suggests that the use of predetermined methodologies

begins to look as though the artist deliberated ‘in her head’ about the best course of action, and then methodically carried out steps already identified as leading to the desired outcome. We then lose the advantage of conceiving of reasoning as embedded in the activity itself, because it appears as a process that happened before and then imposed its structure on the practice.³²

As the aim of the research was to uncover new territories and new combinations of practices, such predetermined methods would have been prohibitive, restrictive and precluded new possibilities. The rationale of the methods used within, and the justification in relation to the aims, literature and reasoning behind the methods was intended as a critical examination of the practice.

In preparation for the autoethnographic research, I studied the methodologies outlined by Norman K. Denzin, Tim Ingold, Robert Burgess, Heewon Chang, Hal Foster, Barbara Kawulich and Ben Walmsley, among others.³³ Autoethnography can be described as

³¹ Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts*, p. 99.

³² Pakes, ‘Art as action or art as object?’, p. 3.

³³ See the following: Denzin, *Performance Ethnography*; Tim Ingold, ‘That’s enough about Ethnography!’, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4.1 (2014), pp. 383–95 [accessed 2 September 2014]; Robert G. Burgess, *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research* (London: Routledge, 1991); Jan Blommaert, *Ethnographic*

an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience. This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially-just and socially-conscious act. A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product.³⁴

In this way, the autoethnographic approach yielded not only my observations of a particular experience but also concrete first-hand documentation comprised of thick description that is viewed through the lens of the experience of the observer participant. This form describes the physical action, as well as the context of the subject as related to the aims of the research.³⁵

The autoethnographic perspective was based on an ‘active observer participant’ position. This method is a type of approach used by social anthropologists in the study of groups and cultures, and there are various levels of engagement within the form. The active observer participant approach specifies that the researcher becomes a member of the group by acquiring the knowledge and skills through participation in the activities of the group.³⁶ As an active participant, I played the games in each undertaking, made first-hand observation and recorded my own self-reflective process in note form, then immediately wrote a report of my experience after each event.³⁷

Fieldwork: A Beginner's Guide (London: Institute of Education at University of London, 2006); Hal Foster, ‘The Artists As Ethnographer?’, in *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996), pp. 302–8; Barbara B. Kawulich, ‘Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method’, *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6.2 (2005) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-6.2.466>> [accessed 26 April 2018]; Ben Walmsley, ‘Deep hanging out in the arts: an anthropological approach to capturing cultural value’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 24.2 (2018), 272–291 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2016.1153081>>.

³⁴ Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams and Arthur P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 36.4 (138) (2011), 273–290 (p. 273) <www.jstor.org/stable/23032294> [accessed 26 April 2018].

³⁵ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 7–30.

³⁶ Kawulich, ‘Participant Observation’.

³⁷ Susan C. Weller, *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*, 2nd ed, eds. H. Russell Bernard and Clarence C. Gravlee (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

In documenting the experiments within the case studies, I used a combination of approaches in both written and recorded form. The recorded forms consisted of photographs, drawings, audio recordings, transcriptions, video recordings, flyers, presentations slides, reports, questionnaires, release forms and notes where permissible and appropriate. Every effort was made to document the process in forms that were deemed appropriate to participation and concept in each case study. Some of the case studies produced more documentation than others by necessity. For example, The Free Shop performance (discussed in Case Study Four) was open to the public, and any type of recording or post-show questionnaires would have been prohibitive to the concept and the desired effect of the immersive future experience. In this case, documenting the participant responses would eject the participant out of the scenario and invalidate the premise of the performance (discussed further in Case Studies Three and Four). All documentation for the case studies is located in Appendices 1–8.

The methodology determined the structure of the thesis, particularly in the practice sections of the case studies. I began the thesis by researching certain methods by which individuals inhabit or seek to inhabit a purely fictional world, either physically or conceptually. I studied several prominent practitioners (The Yes Men, Stuart Candy, Forced Entertainment and Live-Action-Role-Players) who create fictional worlds or futures both physically and conceptually. I did so in order to determine how these practitioners transformed and inhabited those spaces within performance scenarios. I initiated the study by first examining two types of participants that both work toward creating future experiences or alternative worlds: Live-Action-Role Players and artist/academic practitioners working in

what can broadly be described as performance work which creates experiences of future spaces.

Live-Action-Role-Play, known as LARP and sometimes LRP, consists of a group of people who wish to create and experience fantasy worlds in the present. LARP players come together on a field or in a building usually over a weekend to play a game. They dress as characters they have created from a particular fictional theme and play a role playing game immersed in a fictional environment. Section Two of this thesis contains a detailed explanation and analysis of LARP from my autoethnographic perspective and a review of LARP literature to uncover how these individuals create imagined worlds in the present. There, I discuss LARP in relation to creating fictional worlds, the properties within LARP that contribute to making individual fictions ‘real’, and other factors which lend to imagining futures. I investigated the methods used within LARP to extrapolate practices that work toward the conceptualisation of fictional worlds, particularly those that aid in the exploration of alternate future scenarios constructed by participants.

Section Three of this thesis examines several prominent artists working in futures and the field of what is sometimes confusingly called *Futurism* or *future studies*. In this context, Futurism does not refer to the Italian art movement of the early 1900s. Here, it is a term used to discuss a type of exploration which attempts to imagine, create and test futuristic ideas. Its advocates are sometimes called ‘Futurists’ or ‘Futurysts’. The terms refer to a small but growing group of academics, sociologists, scientists, writers, artists, facilitators, consultants and philosophers, who contemplate different scenarios of the future in order to inform actions and decision-making processes. Futurists are also often confused with those working in the field of Strategic Foresight. Strategic Foresight practitioners are usually social scientists or consultants who seek to analyse business trends to predict future products or system

improvements for companies and organizations. Strategic Foresight practitioners often utilise hypothetical future scenarios as a method to predict business trends. Their efforts are usually pre-dispositioned toward financial markets or industry evaluations.³⁸ The popularity and number of practicing Futurists has grown steadily since the 1960s. Most recently, several universities and educational institutions have advocated the study of Strategic Foresight and Futurism as essential resources toward new socio-political and policy solutions for the modern age.³⁹ Alvin Toffler, who wrote *Future Shock*, might be considered one of the early writers working in the area of future studies. Futurists sometimes work in future studies as well as consult for companies seeking Strategic Foresight planning. Stuart Candy, an academic and educator, is one such example, working in both Futurism and Strategic Foresight. He defines the objectives of the field of Strategic Foresight as being about ‘rigorously diversifying and deepening the sort of view of the landscape ahead in order to inform action now. [...] to lead to different places.’⁴⁰ Though the end purpose or goal of practice (financial gain versus knowledge) may be different, both Futurists and Strategic Foresight practitioners deal with hypothetical futures in some form, hence the confusion between the two. The type of research contained herein is more in line with Futurism and the term promoted by Candy as ‘experiential futures’.⁴¹ Experiential futures practice is concerned with providing a space that not only discusses future issues but which can encapsulate an immersive environment or utilise futuristic artefacts to experience or provoke imagining of alternate realities.⁴² These efforts are made ultimately to inform the present. The focus of

³⁸ Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970).

³⁹ See the following: School of International Futures, ‘School of International Futures SOIF’, <<http://www.soif.org.uk>> [accessed 28 October 2016]; College of Social Sciences University of Hawaii, ‘Department of Political Science Future Studies’, <<http://www.futures.hawaii.edu>> [accessed 28 October 2016].

⁴⁰ Stuart Candy, *Playing the Future*, online video recording, YouTube, 11 June 2016, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PitXsvDdWK8>> [accessed 15 October 2016].

⁴¹ Stuart Candy, ‘Experiential Futures: Show and Tell’, <<http://futuryst.blogspot.co.uk>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

⁴² The definition of ‘immersive’ throughout the thesis is derived from the work of Josephine Machon in *Immersive Theatres* (New York: Palgrave, 2013). The term will therefore reference a performance/workshop which encompasses one or more of the following: 1) an element of participation in which the audience are ‘integral and necessarily affect the outcome of the work’ (Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 72);

experiential futures is on the contemplation of different realities — on considering those alternate realities and different possibilities — more than it is on prediction. Thus, while this research may also be related to the field of Futurism, it is intended to locate itself within performance studies. This work focuses on contemporary performance of futures, an area of practice which is less delineated than other fields of academic performance inquiry, as it is emerging at present.

Other artists working in this area are Forced Entertainment and the political subversionists known as The Yes Men. The performance work of Forced Entertainment in *Tomorrow's Parties* takes another form of practicing futures through the language of disruption, whereas The Yes Men, comprised of Jacques Servin and Igor Vamos (whose aliases are Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno respectively), explore a different type of future practice, utilising a term called 'ethical spectacle'. An ethical spectacle 'offers a way of thinking about the tactical and strategic use of signs, symbols, myths, and fantasies to advance progressive, democratic goals.'⁴³ By creating these 'ethical spectacles' and utilising multi-media marketing, The Yes Men present an altered reality as if the altered reality has already occurred. Although Forced Entertainment and The Yes Men do not posit their work under the term *Futurism*, I shall discuss their work in Section Three and explain why I believe they are creating future spaces.

In Section Four, I examine the development, alterations and revisions in practice through eight case studies. Within each case study and its corresponding documentation in the appendices, I outline and analyse the workshops, performances and experimentation process

2) some involvement of one or more of the senses (p. 80); and 3) a location that indicates or physically encapsulates a particular idea, concept, feeling or meaning which differentiates and marks the environment as a separate space for performance (pp. 85-88).

⁴³ The Yes Men, 'The Yes Men and The Yes Lab', (2015) <<http://beautifultrouble.org/practitioner/yes-men/>> [accessed 5 July 2015].

in the form of illustrative case studies through the action-based practice, working toward answering the research query through the research plans and revisions.

Finally, Section Five brings together the results of the methods, process and discoveries of the practice. Additional challenges and suggestions for further areas of inquiry are also addressed.

Limitations

The inquiry was based on the literature, experiences and participants available at the time of undertaking this research and necessarily encompasses a specific set of results based on these circumstances and the methods chosen. There may be, and should be, other approaches equally as valuable and unique in the future. I am by no means proposing that the methods used herein are universalist prescriptive methods, nor do I posit this work as a form of expected universalist agreement. I am aware of the limitations of the study in terms of locale and participation via a democratic western capitalistic position. Though resources and imagining will be and should be different in other contexts, perhaps some of the revelations here may be utilised by others and applied to future imagining as needed, as this work comes from a particular position relevant to time, place, methods and participants.

Within the autoethnographic study, I became an active participant observer. Therefore, there are necessarily biases both in my interpretation and understandings of the proceedings. My attempts to record the facts of the events and of my experiences throughout the study serve as a sample reflection, indicative of perhaps some experiences but not all, and are specific to the parameters of location, participants and events. I selected this method for the autoethnographic experience as it permitted the most integration through knowledge and skill

acquisition. The active position required me to immerse myself within the games and to observe the practice of LARP as a new player. I used notes, field reports and ‘deep hanging out’ as methods during the inquiry.⁴⁴ I selected these approaches as they encouraged an informal two-way process between the participants and myself. There are limitations to all techniques of study, but I selected approaches that would generate the most potential for equal liberal exchange, thereby attempting to limit, to the best of my ability, my own power and control as a researcher over others throughout the process. Social anthropologist Ben Walmsley advocates this research approach in the following way:

The overriding consideration is perhaps to what extent deep hanging out constitutes a genuinely bi-directional process. This in turn raises questions of power and control between academic researchers and so-called co-researchers. My personal reflection on this is that deep hanging out generated the most equal power dynamic of any research process I have ever taken part in, as it genuinely realised Ingold’s call for anthropologists to ‘immerse’ themselves with participants ‘in an environment of joint activity’ [...] following a process perhaps akin to what Ledwith (2007) has labelled ‘emancipatory action research’ and ‘critical praxis’.⁴⁵

I made myself known as a researcher to all participants in all conversations about LARP. The main focus of my LARP activity was my own reflective experience in engaging with the game system to learn and observe the creative process of imagining other worlds.

Autoethnographic work, as social scientist Heewon Chang describes, is a ‘highly personal process, because the personal experiences of the researchers themselves are the foundation of

⁴⁴ The term ‘deep hanging out’ stems from approaches with anthropology in the study of cultures. Walmsley states that the term ‘was coined (albeit disparagingly) by James Clifford in 1997 and rehabilitated by Geertz (1998) in the title of a book review he authored for The New York Review of Books to describe the fieldwork method of immersing oneself in a cultural, group or social experience on an informal level’, see Walmsley, ‘Deep hanging out in the arts’, p. 277.

⁴⁵ Walmsley, ‘Deep hanging out in the arts’, p. 283.

the autoethnography. [...] Therefore, in a public light, autoethnographies reveal their author's personal, professional, relational, and socio-cultural identities.'⁴⁶ Indeed, these personal limitations are revealed in my autoethnographic study of LARP found in Section Two, especially in relation to duration and improvisation.

Within the practice, and detailed in the case studies, my position changed to a facilitator-performer-observer role. I instigated, devised, participated, analysed and reflected upon the process and responses within each case study. The limitations of this type of position are in their subjectivity of interpretation within responses and processes. Attempts were consistently made to compare conclusions across the case studies based on the participant experiences of the workshops and performances in order to balance such limitations. Perhaps the most difficult aspect in maintaining a facilitator-performer-observer role concerned documentation. At times, I would find myself in the middle of a performance or a particularly dynamic conversation and the recording device would have stopped or failed and I would not have been aware or been able to stop and adjust. Where this occurred, it is noted in the Appendix as *partial transcript. Video and audio recordings were made where appropriate to the context of each case study. The addition of a third-party recordist was not conducive to the experiments (due to participatory requirements and considerations of atmosphere and anonymity). Given this, I was obliged to operate video and audio recording devices on my own. I maintained a varied approach to documentation in order to compensate for technological problems; I would take notes and photographs, where appropriate, and wrote reports for each case study. Therefore, even if certain elements of the documentation failed, I was able to capture the material with diverse and reliable methods to make the experience of documenting as full as possible. The nature of the study was not conducive at all times to

⁴⁶ Heewon Chang, 'Individual and Collaborative Autoethnography as Method: A Social Scientist's Perspective' in *Handbook of Autoethnography*, eds. Stacy Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, Carolyn Ellis (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 107.

recording, nor the addition of a third-party recordist as the personal positions discussed within the workshops and performance should be afforded an atmosphere of anonymity to foster the freedom of expression and role playing. Prior to every case study (with the exception of the one public performance), the parameters of the research and convention of confidentiality, anonymity and consent were discussed at length and release forms were signed by participants.

In terms of participant limitations, an influencing factor of the practice concerning the type of attendees as academics, students, practitioners and non-specialist participants that attended the workshops and performances is particularly important. Participation was open to everyone and people were invited to the workshops via solicitations through departmental emails, flyers, posters, announcements on the PAR group *Terra Incognita* website, Facebook and word of mouth beyond my university. *Terra Incognita* is comprised mainly of theatre academics but also of other individuals who have an interest in performance, research and fine art. Additionally, there were other participants throughout the study who were interested in the subject matter, but who were not theatre practitioners or academics. I did not turn down any participants. To do so would limit the possibilities for participants and varied voices in each session. Throughout the workshops and performances, it was difficult to obtain larger groups of participants and the support of *Terra Incognita* was invaluable in two ways. First, their participants were, in general, guaranteed, and second, they were also invaluable as critical partners when discussing method and form of practice. As *Terra Incognita* participants were mainly academics and practitioners or individuals with an interest in performance, commentary was enthusiastic and contained personal and critical discussion of theory and structure. The academic analysis influenced the type of conversation within these feedback sessions and referenced some material that a non-specialised audience might not be aware of. The conversation sometimes reflected references to practitioners, discussions on

form and contained academic inclined debates, such as questions of hierarchy and power structure, participatory ethics, endowing character or role playing and immersive structures. This did not occur during the performances/workshops, but predominately in feedback sessions or in response to my specific inquires. Within the sessions, the academics' participation and responses were based on their individual personal proclivities, desires and imaginings, the same as the non-academic or non-specialist participants.

When practicing 'Future Theatre', both the content and results of the experiments were limited to the views and positions of all the participants. Consequently, the results of the study are based on these particular participants, my professional relationship to them (including non-academic participants, whose multiple participation built a rapport), and the number of participants. Even though I was professionally familiar with some individuals, they are, nevertheless, individuals with their own desires and anxieties. Though I felt that the conversation was more specific in critiquing the method with performance academics in feedback sessions, their responses to the experience of the material and their contribution of imagining within the performances/workshops were no more academically or critically inclined than any of the non-academic or unfamiliar participants who also attended. As stated, not all participants were theatre practitioners, and the content of the discussions framed more personal concerns and proclivities throughout, which will always be the case for any participants in a 'Future Theatre.' The conclusions for this study are therefore specific to the positions of all the participants, as well as being potentially universal in their similarity to any other participants with similar concerns. Thus, although the results of the study are specific to these participants, they also encompass wider results, where future experimentation utilising these methods may result in the same conclusions – or similar conclusions, given the nature of addressing concerns of the present. Therefore, the content generated from the work may or may not be different with other participants; however, the methods outlined in this study

benefited from the rigorous critique in form from some of the participants of *Terra Incognita* in particular. I do not feel that this limited the study to a significant degree; in fact, on the contrary, it enhanced the study by making it more rigorous as I was able to act on the critiques and implement changes in the following sessions, which made for an improved piece of research.

Case Study One, the *Star Trek* discussion group, was not hosted by *Terra Incognita*, and was comprised mainly of academics who responded via announcements and flyers. Case Study Four, The Free Shop performance, had minimal feedback due to the nature of the performance set-up and the low numbers of participants due to adverse weather. Case Study Five consisted of undergraduate theatre students and a theatre lecturer from another higher education institution. Throughout the process, I debated the potential limitations and advantages of an academic audience versus a general non-specialist audience. Potentially, a general audience might have some specialist knowledge as well, but the conversation would more than likely have been less specific concerning the topics of form and methodology than in the group comprising mainly of theatre academics. Ultimately, I felt that the academic participation supported the methodology process in a more precise and theoretical way for the purposes of this research, lending to extensive examination and specific testing during the process of this thesis.

Limitations on participant size of the workshops was also considered. In larger workshops, a sizable group might prohibit detailed discussion, requiring too much time for dialogue exchange and perhaps restricting the volunteering of personal experiences or expression of insights, particularly those of a more personal nature. The experiments contained herein could be utilised with as few as two participants or even on a one-to-one level. However, this may provide a level of intensity not conducive to the nature of topics that

arise. Too small a group may feel overwhelming to participants. I would suggest that a maximum of eight participants would be the ideal target if recreating these workshops or performances, with a minimum of four participants. This number would provide enough voices for participation, enough space for in-depth dialogue and enough comfort for those who may feel more reserved in small groups.

Participant age did not seem to be an influencing factor of significance within the sessions, as responses from older participants were quite similar to those of younger participants across all of the workshops. The main difference between the two age groups (estimated between 20–40 and 40–75) emphasized some concerns about the functionality of future technology and the loss of previous forms of lifestyle, such as green spaces and recreational enjoyment due to preoccupations with technology, particularly amongst younger generations heavily influenced by social media and Artificial Intelligence technology. However, these concerns were also echoed by some of the younger participants as well.

As stated, this research is limited to the exploration, examination and creation of different approaches of practice to imagining futures within theatre, and does not address the result or long-term impact of said practice. I can only suggest ways in which I think this research may aid certain efforts toward imagining futures and some possibilities for its use, though I cannot outline criteria for its value. For example, I do believe that this research may be used to add to the power of global social pressure through its identification of shared future desires. Both the experience of imagining new futures and the sharing of collective desires may also serve to stimulate political awareness. Social imagining can be an important way of manifesting both identification of wants and desires, as well as being a forum for debate and finding solidarity in agreement, as the results of the research will show. However, the first step in attempting to create performances which stimulate this future imagining is by

investigating methods of constructing collective, co-created, alternative worlds. Before beginning my own experiments, I found it prudent to investigate the processes of other groups and individuals in order to understand their methods and how these might be tested and/or applied to my own research endeavours. LARPer were the first group I identified. Gaining an understanding of how they imagined and created fictional worlds within LARP was a large undertaking requiring much time, engagement and reflective learning before I was capable of applying what was learned through LARP in my practice. Studying LARP required immersion in its complex physical practice and a review of the existing literature to comprehend the practice form thoroughly. This process is discussed in the following section detailing my autoethnographic account of LARP and the significant elements within LARP which contributed to the concept and practice of imagining futures.

Section Two

How LARP Creates Fictional Worlds: Autoethnographic Study and Findings



Figure 1: *Empire* LARP Game Photo

(Photo Credit & Copyright Oliver Facey)

This section focuses on my autoethnographic two-year study of Live-Action-Role-Play (LARP). The importance of LARP as an impetus for this study resides in understanding creative ways in which other worlds can be imagined and can engage participants. Crucially, I wanted to know what LARP methods might be utilised through imagining to create and inhabit these fictional spaces. My aim was to uncover some of the methods and approaches which might be modified for use within the practice. This necessitated the study of LARP from an autoethnographic perspective, where I became both LARP participant and theorist in order to understand and explore certain aspects of the methods directly. The experience was unique to my own participation and understanding, dictated by the context, interaction,

locations, resources, circumstances, systems and individuals encountered. The elements described represent my first-hand encounters and cannot be all-encompassing of all experiences of LARP. However, my participation was informed by an extensive survey of the existing literature published on LARP at the time of the study. This research by no means encompasses the entirety of LARP; however, it does relay the experience of LARP as a new participant and examines LARP's approaches toward creating fictionalized worlds. To contextualise this approach, I provide a brief history and a description of LARP and relay my experience of learning how to play. I then discuss the creative approaches to imagining which I uncovered, as well as elements of LARP that relate directly to the aims and which were utilised within the case studies of practice in Section Five.

The origins of LARP are often connected to a long history of general role playing activities, such as children's games, miniature war-gaming, storytelling, theatrical improvisation and battle re-enactment at festivals.⁴⁷ Most sources attribute the formulation of LARP to the table-top role playing game 'Dungeons and Dragons' created in 1974 by Americans Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.⁴⁸ The popularity of 'Dungeons and Dragons' inspired players to physically (re)create fantasy worlds represented in the table games. Medieval enthusiast groups such as the Society of Creative Anachronism⁴⁹ began to form. Such groups produced medieval festivals and jousting tournaments as live-action events. I remember the proliferation of these live-action events developing through the 1980s, as I also played 'Dungeons and Dragons' and began to look for ways to inhabit these fantasy worlds we created, beyond the table top. Perhaps unsatisfied with their spectator positions or desiring more of an immersive experience, individual groups then began designing more participant-based games to inhabit these fantasy scenarios. The proliferation of these game events

⁴⁷ Sarah Lynne Bowman, *The Functions of Role-Playing Games: How Participants Create Community, Solve Problems and Explore Identity* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2010), p. 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ Society for Creative Anachronism, 'SCA', <<http://www.sca.org>> [accessed 22 November 2015].

remains relatively outside of the more familiar gaming genres. Unless one searched specifically for fantasy role playing games, LARP remains relatively obscure. I discovered LARP for the first time while searching literature for new creative experiences that imagined other worlds.

The literature concerning LARP is not vast. I began by reading both the formal and informal published materials on the topic. As the phenomenon is relatively new, the written material surrounding LARP is growing year by year, in both private informal works and through formal publication. The main body of academic research is currently tied to a LARP publication entitled *International Journal of Role-Playing*.⁵⁰ The most prolific writers within the field are Markus Montola, Jaakko Stenros, Sarah Bowman and Annika Waern, who predominately focus on ludificology, online gaming and LARP as game design scholars and players.⁵¹ There appears to be a cross-over between Massively Multi-Player Online Gaming (MMPORGs) and LARP within LARP literature, more than likely due to the financial funding of research for online gaming, as opposed to funding for studies directly related to LARP.⁵²

Within the literature, arguments are often made regarding LARP as a form of theatre. It can be argued, certainly, that LARP contains, in its various forms, the core elements of theatre, such as a gathering space, costumes, make-up, performers, lighting, props, written and/or non-written texts, and forms of improvisation. Most recently, more performance-based forms of LARP have emerged as game designers continue to experiment with the form.

⁵⁰ International Journal of Role Playing, 'International Journal of Role Playing', <<http://ijrp.subcultures.nl>> [accessed 22 November 2017].

⁵¹ See websites: Markus Montola, 'Montola Homepage', <<http://www.markusmontola.fi>> [accessed 12 March 2014]; Jaako Stenros, 'Jaakko Stenros-researcher, player, writer', <<https://jaakkostenros.wordpress.com>> [accessed 24 November 2015]; Annika Waern, 'Persona: The academic homestead of Annika Waern blog', <<https://annikawaern.wordpress.com>> [accessed 7 August 2015]; Sarah Lynn Bowman, 'SarahlynnbowmanPhD', <<http://www.sarahlynnbowman.com/about/>> [accessed 17 March 2018].

⁵² MMPORGs is an acronym for Massive Multi-Player Online Role-Playing Games.

Traditional LARPs do not permit non-participants, viewers or an audience. Even if on the rare occasion a ‘play’ is performed within a LARP, all viewers of the play are expected to be participants in character, reacting to the play according to their character within the game world scenario. The same applies to those watching a battle or competition held within a designated playing area, such as a fighting arena. Developments of LARP have culminated in different styles of LARP that include more participating audiences such as ‘Theatre LARP’ and ‘Black Box LARP’. Theatre LARP does not involve physical ‘fighting,’ but instead relies on political drama and intrigue. Theatre LARP has all the other elements of traditional LARP, with costumes, location, props, time and financial investment on the part of the players. However, issues are usually resolved through some type of verbal mediation, such as a trial, rather than combat. Other than combat resolution, traditional LARP and Theatre LARP games are very much the same in terms of self-driven activity or agenda-setting and character improvisation. Black Box LARPs contain performance elements and are sometimes staged for a public audience, typically in a black box or traditional theatre space, though inclusion of public audiences appears very rarely within accounts of Black Box LARPs. The Nordic LRP website states:

There is no clear border between black box LARPs and other chamber LARPs and/or freeform scenarios. However [...] [a recent black box] festival has asked designers t[o] use the black box in accordance with at least two of the following criteria: use of lights, use of sound, use of props, use of audience. Generally black box chamber LARPS played at festivals such as Prolog, Grenselandet and Black box CPH lasts 2-6 hours including [a] workshop, accommodates 4-30 players and requires no preparations except those made during the pre-larp workshop on site.⁵³

⁵³ Nordic Larp Wiki, ‘Black_Box_Larp’, <http://nordiclarp.org/wiki/Black_Box_Larp> [accessed 27 November 2015].

Black Box LARPs began as spaces for players to retreat to during a game and work on specific plots in character.⁵⁴ Later, experimental Black Box LARPs, such as those of *Blackbox CPH*, were seemingly designed to explore game designer's artistic visions and participation with less preparation.⁵⁵ Here, the participants follow rules, plots, roles and instructions set by the designer.⁵⁶ As a player, 'all you have to do is be ready to follow instructions and give it your all when the spotlight hits you,'⁵⁷ presumably meaning that the player performs limited improvisation within the specifications provided by the designers. The evolution within LARP from combat-based role playing to a more performance-based activity is perhaps a natural development from traditional LARP role playing, as some designers seemingly desire more control in the form of 'directing' and even perhaps controlling the narrative more than possible on the playing field.

Most recently, traditional LARP has expanded into more Invisible Theatre and real-world immersive scenario forms,⁵⁸ called Pervasive LARPs, reaching out into the public sphere and expanding the fictionalized world beyond a protected 'In Character' (IC) area. Pervasive LARP events have been described as being 'staged in the real world and where both the people and the objects of the real world have a direct role in the game. This is a relatively novel variant of Larping, which poses higher demands on technology support than traditional

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Blackbox CPH, 'Black Box Larp: A Festival for Experimental Larp', (2018) <http://blackbox-cph.dk/?page_id=10&lang=en> [accessed 27 March 2018].

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Invisible Theatre is a type of performance that occurs outside of traditional venues to an unsuspecting audience. Its primary intention is to provide conflicting scenarios in a public environment which solicit debates on a particular issue through involvement of an unsuspecting audience in an effort to effect change. Invisible Theatre was created by Augusto Boal in the 1960s, see Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed* (London: Pluto Press, 2000). In terms of immersive scenario forms for Pervasive LARPs, such forms are similar to the work of Punchdrunk, a prominent immersive theatre company, whose work focuses on audience choice and game playing. Punchdrunk applies 'the word *immersive* to its work in order to distinguish it from the familiar conventions of site specific and traditional promenade theatre. The physical freedom to explore the sensory and imaginative world of a Punchdrunk show without compulsion or explicit direction sets it apart from the standard practice of viewing theatre in unconventional locations. Although our work is necessarily structured from a practical and safety perspective, the non-linear narrative content coupled to the high degree of viewer freedom of choice make it a singularly intense and personal experience.' Punchdrunk, 'FAQ Punchdrunk International', <<http://punchdrunk.com/faq>> [accessed 8 February 2016].

Larps.’⁵⁹ Pervasive LARPs must include additional game signals or signs to facilitate the game in a real-world scenario. These are usually pre-established code words or gestures that signify to other players that one is part of the game. These games usually rely on phones or taped messages to provide direction to game players over a much broader physical area than the traditional LARP’s designated playing-field, such as a nightclub or a city. Pervasive LARPs are developing most rapidly in the Nordic LARP scene. The Nordic LARP community is continually re-developing LARP and is known for combining artistic and theoretical approaches to LARP, and for re-defining LARP gaming techniques.⁶⁰ The reason(s) for the surge in Nordic LARP development is unclear, whether that be a cultural proclivity or a general acceptance in communities as a legitimate entertainment form. In fact, Nordic LARPs define their game styles as more artistic than ‘normal’ or ‘traditional’ style LARPs. Three significant descriptors of Nordic LARP are:

[1] Immersion. Nordic larpers want to feel like they are ‘really there’. This includes creating a truly convincing illusion of physically being in a medieval village/on a space ship/WWII bunker, playing a character that is very close to your own physical appearance, as well as focusing on getting under the character’s skin to ‘feel their feelings’. Dreaming in character at night is seen by some Nordic larpers as a sign of an appropriate level of immersion. [2] Collaboration. Nordic-style larp is about creating an exciting and emotionally affecting story together, not measuring your strength. There is no winning, and many players intentionally let their characters fail in their objectives to create more interesting stories. [3] Artistic vision. Many Nordic games are intended as more than entertainment – they make artistic or even political

⁵⁹ Staffan Jonsson, Markus Montola, Annika Waern, and Martin Ericsson, ‘Prosopopeia: Experiences from a Pervasive Larp’, in *ACM SIGCHI International Conference on Advances in Computer Entertainment Technology ACE 2006 Convention* New York, NY, 2006.

⁶⁰ Oscar Strik, ‘Nordic Larp’, <<http://www.firstpersonscholar.com/nordic-larp/>> [accessed 12 June 2015].

statements. The goal in these games is to affect the players long term, to perhaps change the way they see themselves or how they act in society.⁶¹

Perhaps these different forms of LARP are the result of a desire to extend imagination further into reality. These immersive forms of entertainment may seem attractive but there are several challenges to playing even the most basic form of LARP. Accessibility can be a substantial issue for new players. The location, time and financial commitment (discussed further below) to the average participant involved with LARP may be daunting. There may also be difficulties in becoming involved for those who perceive themselves as being outside of what is often seen as ‘geek’ culture. Fatland states:

Society has – on multiple occasions – told me that this [LARP] isn’t really acceptable. Friends, relatives, co-workers and teachers keep implying that if I had worked harder towards being able to buy a BMW and a larger house, or feed a growing family, or volunteer to help the poor and the destitute, or sell my talents as a writer or an artist, or kick a ball around on a grassy field – that would all be good. But that the passions I direct towards role-playing, though tolerated (we live in a tolerant society), are just weird and irrelevant.⁶²

Despite these difficulties, there are many benefits to LARP both socially and creatively. In the following section, I describe what LARP is and how to play, illuminating the social and creative aspects of the game.

⁶¹ Nordic Larp Wiki, ‘Nordic Larp’.

⁶² Fatland, ‘Does LARP Design Matter?’.

What is LARP?

LARP consists of a group of people who gather together to create and experience fantasy worlds in the present. They meet on a large, rented field or in a building, dressed as characters they have created from a particular fictional theme and perform role play while immersed in the fictional environment. The events are usually held on a weekend or extended weekend. The role play events revolve around a certain theme, based on a fictional setting. Sometimes, LARP games are developed around a certain period in history, a specific book, a television show or a film which is used as source material in creating the world and environment. LARPer's vary in their adherence to historical material within each genre. For example, *Odyssey* LARP revolves loosely around cultures present and active during the height of the Roman Empire.⁶³ However, the game does not re-enact or re-create actual historical events from the period; such historical recreations are performed by 'Re-Enactment' groups. During my fieldwork, I noted that there was contention between Re-Enactment and LARP participants and I was quickly corrected by both groups if I confused the two. Unlike Re-Enactment groups, LARP does not re-enact history and contains mainly fictional elements, such as 'magic' and 'monsters'. The game designers and organizers create the world narrative, decide the specific rules and provide physical and organizational elements. The designers and organizers build set pieces or dress sets as a form of immersing participants into the fictional worlds they create. These sets can include anything from a basic camp tent to a two-story tavern, or an entire Roman wooded arena, including stalls for players to watch battles. Set design is completely decided by the designers and organizers and is dependent upon limitations of space, money, time and desired detail. However, the atmosphere is often supplemented by the players, who add to the set design through their own props and camping

⁶³ Profound Decisions, 'Profound Decisions-Homepage', <<https://www.profounddecisions.co.uk/home;jsessionid=3a9oac1ykn4flifrmYo0blsxi?0>> [accessed 26 March 2018].

gear specific to the theme, which they bring independently. There are generally two designated playing areas, sections that are marked as ‘In Character’ or ‘Out of Character’ (IC or OOC).⁶⁴ When a player is in the IC area, even if camping overnight, all elements (tents, clothing, gear, language) must reflect the fictional world and thus contribute to the overall fictional immersion of the game. This is a generally understood rule which applies to almost all LARPs, with some organizers being more restrictive than others. The idea behind the IC component is that everyone makes their best effort to be totally immersed in the world and not to obstruct the immersion of anyone else. This even applies to phones and photography. During most games, photography is not allowed, which protects both the privacy of the players and the immersion quality of the event. Some organizers provide professional photographers for each event that dress in character and move as invisibly as possible throughout the game. The games are usually ushered by referees provided by the organizers. The referees can either be dressed as characters in the world or designated deliberately as ‘other’ by the use of a reflective vest, hat or uniform, depending on the immersive quality desired by the designers. The referees have several functions: to make calls within battles concerning the outcomes, to continue plot points through the delivery of information, to determine life or death ‘hits’ in battles, to gather information or decisions and return that information to the organizers, and to monitor adherence to the rules and safety guidelines.

⁶⁴ IC means ‘in character’ and OOC means ‘out of character’, in this case, specific areas at the site field which are designated to maintain immersive qualities.

How to Play LARP



Figure 2: *Odyssey* LARP Game Photo (Photo Credit & Copyright Charlotte Moss LARPIMAGES.COM)

LARP is organized by professionals for profit and by amateur groups. Anyone who wishes to participate in LARP can search the internet for LARP or LRP events. There are several sites that list different themed events which occur all over the world. Interested individuals can also search for a specialist theme, such as *Firefly* LARP or *Star Trek* LARP to find specific groups.⁶⁵ Usually there is a website affiliated with each group that contains the price, dates and location of events. On each website, there will also be general and specific information on the genre, usually in the form of a specifically created ‘wiki,’ containing the history of the world, political themes, history of the different character factions, the suggested costumes and some rules of the game which pertain to the location. It is important to note that the information is written by people who have been playing LARP for an extended period of

⁶⁵ *Firefly* and *Star Trek* are popular science-fiction television shows. *Firefly*, dir. by Joss Whedon (20th Century Fox Television, 2002) and *Star Trek*, created by Gene Roddenberry (CBS Television, 1966).

time, which can be difficult to understand for anyone who is absolutely new to the field. Some websites have very limited instructions, if any. There seems to be an assumption that newcomers will be able to figure out LARP once they play — an experiential ‘learn while you play’ ethos. New participants may be bewildered by the amount of information provided on some websites in terms of character-building information or different types of character factions in which one can join, as well as the lack of instructions describing how to actually take part.⁶⁶

After deciding to play, signing up and paying for the event, the next step is to create a character. In larger professional companies this is done through the website. A new player must understand character classes, races and the occupations offered within the setting, which requires detailed comprehension of the wiki information. In other, smallerLARPs, characters are created using only basic elements, such as a name and occupation, which is then emailed to the organizers. After this step, most communication occurs through Facebook. The organisers may link you, upon request, to a specific closed Facebook group via social media, so that you may introduce yourself or inquire further about specifics. In newerLARPs, Facebook groups are set up sometimes after the first event, thereby one may enter the game scenario with very little information. In the initial stages of character creation, much time, care and often great expense is used to conceive and create costumes and physical representations (phys reps)⁶⁷ of a character and of objects that cannot be real in the present, such as magical items, spells and potions. The process generally begins with a reading of the wiki and costume guidelines, if available. Often costumes are handmade or acquired through

⁶⁶ See the following websites: Herofest LARP, ‘LARP HEROFEST-Live Action Role Playing-Larping Homepage (LARP/LRP)’, <<http://www.live-roleplaying.co.uk>> [accessed 27 September 2015]; Profound Decisions, ‘Empire LARP within Decisions-Homepage’, <<https://www.profounddecisions.co.uk/home;jsessionid=3a9oac1ykn4flifirmyo0blsxi?0>> [accessed 15 November 2015]; Outcast LARP, ‘Welcome to Outcast LRP’, <<http://www.outcastlrp.co.uk>> [accessed 27 September 2015].

⁶⁷ ‘Phys Reps’ can mean anything from how you represent your character to more complex physical symbolic representations of magic items, curses, cures, injuries, etc.

specialist LARP merchant vendors. Individual items run from twenty pounds to a thousand pounds, the latter for a suit of metal armour for example.⁶⁸ Consideration is also given to hair style, masks and make-up. Weapons are also needed for those who plan to fight or feel the need to defend themselves. These weapons are specially made by merchant vendors. They are built with a flexible rod surrounded by latex foam which is formed in the desired shape, then painted and sealed. These weapons usually cost between thirty pounds to five hundred pounds and must pass weapon checks for safety at most events.⁶⁹ Accessories are then added, everything from period style writing implements, to vials of coloured liquid for ‘healers,’ to carrying packs, mugs, plates, utensils, themed food items and even perfumes. To finalize one’s ‘kit’ (all the costumes, make-up, accessories) the player must decide if they wish to camp for the week IC or OOC. IC necessitates camping gear that is suitable to the time period or genre of the game. These costs can be offset by dressing a modern tent both inside and out in the suitable style, but most players purchase period tents or hand-made tents in the genre style which cost hundreds or even thousands of pounds.⁷⁰

Once participants arrive at the location, check in at the main organizer’s tent, and set up their own tent in the designated area (either the IC or OOC area), they put on their costumes to be ready for ‘time in’.⁷¹ And then... nothing happens. There are no starting points,

⁶⁸ See the following websites: The Viking Store, ‘Metal Armour – Full and Half Sets – TheVikingStore.co.uk’, <<http://www.thevikingstore.co.uk/metal-armour---full-and-half-sets-55-c.asp>> [accessed 27 September 2015]; Calimacil, ‘High Quality Foam Gear for Larp (Live Action Role Play)’, <<http://www.calimacil.com>> [accessed 27 September 2015]; LarpInn, ‘LARP swords- Two Handed, Larp Inn Larp Swords- Long’, <http://www.larpinn.co.uk/larp-weapons-larp-swords-long-c-89_90.html?osCsid=fa66c8e2e4ba6b75ef66bda54dd3cc93> [accessed 27 September 2015]; LARP Warriors, ‘Larp Warriors’, <http://larpwarriors.co.uk/index.php/larp-metal-armour-full-half-armour-sets-c-3_29?page=1&sort=2a> [accessed 27 September 2015]; The Velvet Glove, ‘Velvet Glove: LRP/LARP Armour and Weapons, Re-Enactment Costume, Historical Costume, Medieval Costume’, <<http://www.velvet-glove.co.uk/>> [accessed 27 September 2015].

⁶⁹ See the following previously referenced websites: The Viking Store, ‘Metal Armour’; Calimacil, ‘High Quality Foam Gear’; LarpInn, ‘LARP swords’; The Velvet Glove, ‘Velvet Glove: LRP/LARP Armour and Weapons’.

⁷⁰ Medieval Tents, ‘Medieval Tents- Marquees’, <<http://www.medievaltents.co.uk/section.php/2/1/medieval-larp-tents-marquees>> [accessed 27 September 2015]; Histents, ‘Post Medieval Tents – Histents EN’, <<http://www.histents.com/categorylist/post-medieval-tents>> [accessed 27 September 2015]; The Viking Store, ‘Metal Armour’.

⁷¹ ‘Time in’ refers to the start of game time and designated areas are in character only.

designated tasks or even specific information outlining how to proceed. The guidance contained in LARP instructions on websites is simply to set a goal which one's character wants to accomplish, whether that be political, in trading, in magic or in battle. Setting a goal is possibly the most difficult decision for new players; one can only learn the nuances of the game, the political intrigues, other characters and nations to trade with, and agendas of nations, by participating and learning over time. Some battles may have been pre-scheduled for each day, publicised often by word of mouth, or delivered via announcements from referees to political/war leaders. I have noted that in largerLARPs, there can be an event scheduled to occur at a point later during the day, usually a deadline to generate activity, such as a vote on an issue, battle planning, or a political meeting, and so on. However, if you do not interact with specific characters in decision making positions, then you can be left out quite easily. Activities are often organized by the players themselves, so part of the task is to become involved with other players and find out how one can participate in these pre-arranged activities. This can be quite daunting for new players and depends on one's own level of gregariousness and motivation. The game is maintained by a set of assumed rules which are rarely outlined, as stated previously, but which are generally accepted and understood by seasoned players. Games operate on the honour system, and if you are hit by a weapon and it is severe enough, you 'die'. If you 'die' you are then able to regenerate by creating another character and registering it with the organisers. Death is determined by a complex counting system and judged often by referees monitoring battles. However, sometimes hits are not monitored and players are left to be honest and judge their own hits and whether they were 'killed'. Game designer Jukka Koskelin states that 'Cheating and getting caught is a good way of getting yourself a status of Persona Non Grata and committing a social suicide'⁷² within the games, implying an underlying assumption that all

⁷² Jukka Koskelin, 'Designing an Old School Nordic Larp', <<http://www.darkshire.net/jhkim/rpg/larp/NordicLarpDesign.html>> [accessed 25 November 2014].

individuals should play fairly.⁷³

The progress reported on the outcome of the game is sometimes published via the organizer's website at the end of each event. The reports normally do not touch upon specific or individual details but only cover the main events that have occurred, usually involving territory exchanges or a major political coup. The game's narrative and individual stories usually continue to develop over multiple sessions. Therefore, it is impossible to know much about the majority of the action that has happened within each game. This also makes it difficult for new players to participate.

Creating Fictional Worlds within LARP

LARP has several performance elements used to create fictional worlds, including performance to an 'audience' in the form of interaction between players. Characters play to one another by improvising IC dialogue actions to create the stories within the world of the designers, further their individual agendas, create memorable moments and immerse themselves in the fictional world. Within LARP, the internal audience is in and of the present. Play is 'written' as the improvisational dialogues unfold which create the narrative(s) within LARP. In Emma Cocker's paper entitled 'Live Notation: Reflections on a Kairotic Practice,' Cocker states that kairotic practice contains an 'idea of a form of improvisatory performance emerging simultaneously to the situation in which it unfolds.'⁷⁴ This indeed occurs in LARP; improvisation creates the world inhabited and the narrative simultaneously, as it is lived, with the purpose of creating 'great stories' and role playing moments for both the individual and the group. The improvisational nature of LARP creates the imagined world through

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴ Emma Cocker, 'Live Notation: Reflections on a Kairotic Practice', *Performance Research Journal*, 18.5 (2013), 69–76 (p. 75).

unscripted text. Improvisations create the events and the world in real time as they unfold. Words log and dictate the unfolding action of what occurred/is occurring/what will occur in the imagined world. The improvised speech fashions reality and the world through the act of speaking. LARPers follow the conventions of improvisation naturally, without acknowledging the form. They utilise a 'yes and' through unspoken mutual agreement on the field and accept these new realities as indisputable which become tangible for further action. LARPers disrupt and create the action in the form of responding to or supporting each improvised dialogue. Individual responses are then contemplated (sometimes also within a group) and provide further means for improvisation which in best effort are made to engender 'good' storytelling. Cocker also points out that the improviser is consistently negotiating the position of discernment; they must (presumably on instinct) be able to take up a discerning position, constantly gauging where to insert or refrain words or actions in order to keep the story going.⁷⁵ Within the improvisation, Cocker states: 'Rather than giving over responsibility to the inevitability of a rule's logic, within live notation practices the artist consciously adopts a medial position, actively maintaining the conditions that will keep the unfolding of action dynamic.'⁷⁶ These medial positions and improvisational acts serve to 'tell a good story through great role playing' which are two main goals within LARP.

Great role playing moments are also valued OOC and socially, post-LARP. These role playing moments not only spur action and further immerse the players into the world or drama of the game but elicit a viewer perspective or third person consciousness from the player-recipient; just as actors on stage are aware of the audience, so too are players aware that they are performing with and to another player as a proxy audience. The role playing moments are often retold after and during the event (sometimes in IC and OOC) in what is popularly called

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 69–76.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 73.

‘frothing’ about what is ‘hot/not’ about the player’s experience of the event. Generally, people list the parts of the event and their resulting IC activities that they did and did not enjoy, mostly in relation to these great role playing moments. Such moments are often extended long after the event, by IC letter writing from individual characters to one another. Photos from sanctioned game photographers are often shared, as well as player-written fiction stories based on the moments, and their resulting activities. This is an element of not only sharing, but presenting written fictional stories, which are displayed on Facebook to their media audience. Further, social events or mini IC events are often hosted by individuals after a LARP to continue the game experience and generate more material, both physical and emotional, for future gaming. This activity indicates complex social pre-to-post relationships and a virtual social process through involvement in and creation of material in these virtual and live societies.

There is also a very physical aspect to LARP as players must be physically in the location provided and cannot perform a LARP alone or in just any setting as large spaces are generally required (e.g. one to two acres or a building). Another essential physical element is the creation of a character and the manufacture or acquisition of representative objects that make the fantasised real. These physical representations serve as markers of identity, sexual orientation, race and occupational locators, as well as mechanisms for creativity, self-identification and self-determinism. In this way, LARP is very democratic; self-identification is through personal choice, albeit within a prescribed spectrum of the world’s content contained within the wiki or guidelines. The time and costs involved in LARP, as detailed above, show the extraordinary financial and physical commitment players invest in the game in order to inhabit these created worlds. Equally, they represent a willingness to spend time on creativity through imagining their roles, making or investigating purchases. Time and energy are spent on creating and developing characters, character backstories and in-story goals, as

well as an understanding of the rest of the imagined world from information provided by the game designers. This almost always involves additional research around the theme or time period. The durational exercise of staying in character over an entire weekend is a mental and physical feat, often requiring breaks off the field, or in the privacy of one's own tent, to recuperate.

In addition to the physical and mental requirement, the emotional commitment on and off the field of players to one another is remarkable. Within every LARP I played, there were at least two complete strangers who were willing to spend time with me, either explaining the game or making sure I had some connection to an activity, or checking on my emotional well-being. This emotional inclusiveness adds a great deal to the LARP experience and serves to encourage further play by creating a type of support community where needed. I witnessed how emotional support created social groups both within each specific LARP and beyond. I also observed extraordinary emotional performances between players who were role playing. I saw improvised moments that were as truthful and committed as any professional performance I have ever witnessed. Perhaps this is caused by the willingness of the participants to be so thoroughly involved through their own investment, or perhaps, they were emotionally emboldened due to the challenge and acceptance that good role playing is good for everyone. Both the OOC and IC emotional support provide an atmosphere of acceptance and play – even when aggressive behaviour is undertaken within the role. I refer here back to Jukka Koskelin's statement concerning player behaviour and an acceptance of 'what you see is what you get' as a basic tenet of LARP; if an individual plays a deviant or immoral character, 'you cannot judge [a] player's attitude based on how his character acts.'⁷⁷ This means that if a person decides to play a 'bad' or aggressive character, they are not necessarily bad or aggressive in real life. This type of statement and understanding provides a form of

⁷⁷ Koskelin, 'Designing an Old School Nordic Larp'.

permission for role play, encouraging players to take on characteristics and actions that may be different from their own. The statement does not mean that physical or emotional abuse is tolerated, which I discuss at length later in this section. I am aware of the potential problems of these situations, and the specific structures and rules put in place that support care-taking within performance scenarios, including and beyond the emotional support and mentoring that experienced LARP players take on, though such clearly defined structures and rules are not currently present within LARP. Each player must accept the behaviour and actions of every other player while in character (with the exception of direct emotional abuse and physical harm) by reacting to the choices of others in character, and those decisions must not be questioned. This practice of accepting the actions and statements of others within a performance scenario is similar to theatre sport games, where there is always a ‘yes’ given to the hypothetical scenario and to player statements. However, there is potential for conflict within these scenarios, and it is up to the players to decide whether to come to a resolution, whether to ignore abuse and carry on with the game, whether to confront the player, or whether to report the player and the incident to the organizers.⁷⁸

LARP Tools for Creating Futures: Bleed, Heroism, Storytelling, Role Play and Democratic Co-Creation

Emotional impact, empathy and connection are tools utilised by LARP players and designers, as well as within theatre. Emotional stories are told to create empathy, villains and heroes played to affect thought and action. However, in LARP, as the audience/players are directly involved in generating and creating the story, there is arguably an impact that may be stronger than that felt by a traditional theatre audience. In LARP, the emotional connection

⁷⁸ The implications of potential conflict within role playing situations will be discussed further in my practice and within the conclusion.

can sometimes generate a more complex response within the participants, in what is often called *bleed*.⁷⁹

Bleed is experienced by a player when her thoughts and feelings are influenced by those of her character, or vice versa. With increasing bleed, the border between player and character becomes more and more transparent. It makes sense to think of the degree of bleed as a measure of how separated different levels of play (actual/inner/meta) are. Bleed is instrumental for horror role-playing: It is often harder to scare the player through the character than the other way around. [...] A classic example of bleed is when a player's affection for another player carries over into the game or influences her character's perception of the other's character. Many Jeep games [a type of LARP] rely on bleed either to influence player's actions or to achieve higher purposes in the premise. For example, 'Fat man down' [title of a LARP] uses bleed to encourage the players to reflect over society's treatment of fat people. Playing 'Doubt' [title of a LARP] close to home regularly causes bleed as a consequence of using [one's] own experiences in the game and re-living relationship situations or reflecting on relationships. Sometimes, the entire purpose of a game is to create bleed.⁸⁰

Bleed creates a strong relationship between the person's connection to the material or scenario, as emotion crosses between the person's real feelings and those of their character. Here, the person's actual feelings and beliefs are revealed to a certain degree. In creating futures, real feelings may emerge from the fictional worlds created and potentially have the ability to inform behaviour that reveals personal beliefs both concerning the present and the future. If the participants can connect intellectually and emotionally to an 'imagined' character or even a 'future self' with their thoughts and feelings invested in the imagined

⁷⁹ Nordic LARP Wiki, 'Bleed', <<http://nordiclarp.org/wiki/Bleed>> [accessed 25 September 2015]; Nordic Larp Wiki, 'Black_Box_Larp'.

⁸⁰ Nordic Larp Wiki, 'Bleed'.

scenario, perhaps the impact of the material may influence behaviour in some way with longer lasting implications. This type of impact through bleed is particularly desirable in Jeep forms of LARP, as mentioned in the previous quotation. I will be quoting from Lizzie Stark at length in order to lend first-hand and detailed insight into ‘bleed’ and the player experience within these worlds. Stark defines the complicated LARP Jeep form and bleed in the following way.

For the most part, they’re [Jeep games are] set in the real, mundane world. No dragons here, just ordinary people having ordinary problems with their relationships, jobs, and personal lives. Linked to this is the idea of playing close to home — playing characters with whom you have something in common. Playing close to home also means making the story emotionally relevant for yourself by bringing your real life into the game. If I’m playing a relationship game and choose to riff off of that fight I had with my husband last week, that creates a very different play experience than playing on an issue that’s alien to me. Playing close to home can cause *bleed*, which is what happens when player and character emotions get mixed up. In the US, we often think of *bleed* as something to be avoided, but in many Nordic roleplaying games, it is encouraged and managed by the game formats. Playing for *bleed* can lead to insight about oneself and the world, and it creates intense emotions that some players crave.

Since these game experiences are more about the emotion (the inside story), and less about the plot (the outside story), their surface stories often don’t have a lot of bells and whistles. For example, a game might be about a Mother’s support group that turns vicious, or a relationship where at least one of the partners experiences temptation and doubt, or about a drunk guy dying from alcoholism. It’s not uncommon to know how the story ends before the game begins, because the point is not really to discover what happens, but rather, to explore the themes and emotions suggested by the scenario. Similarly, because many of the jeep form games — but

not all — encourage bleed, character sheets are minimal or non-existent. If all I know about my character is that she's an actress, then during the game I'll necessarily fill in from my real-life experience, creating a character relevant to my life.

While bleed can sneak up on you, it's important to remember that players have some control over how close to home they want to play it — you can choose to create a character, a mask, between yourself and the game, or you can try to play it as if you were in the game situation.⁸¹

Despite Stark's statement, emotional bleed can be uncomfortable, as players experience emotional extremes. In 2012, Heikki Holmas, the Minister of western Norway, who is a LARPer, gave an interview about his involvement with LARP from the age of fifteen. He states:

You create real emotions when you play role playing games, real emotions that stick [...]. That's kind of the slightly scary aspect of role playing games, which has to be considered. At the same time, it's what makes it possible for RPGs [Role Playing Games] to change the world. LARP can change the world, because it lets people understand that humans under pressure may act differently than in the normal life, when you're safe.⁸²

If emotional responses can be created within the fictional world scenarios, participants should be able to experience emotional aspects of what a future space might feel like, and this bleed may extend into their current reality. The 'emotional stick' would provide at least a small experience of a future possible reality that may last beyond the actual experience.

Additionally, this experience would allow individuals to explore emotions that may be hidden

⁸¹ Lizzie Stark, 'Jeepform for Noobs', *Inside the World of Larp* (2012) <<http://leavingmundania.com/2012/09/17/jeepform-for-noobs/>> [accessed 12 February 2016].

⁸² A.V. Olepeder, 'LARPs can change the world: At least according to Norway's new Minister of International Development, Heikki Holmås', <<http://imagonem.org/2012/03/27/larps-can-change-the-world/>> [accessed 27 September 2015].

or repressed due to each individual's present reality. Bleed may lead to a consideration of what could exist/happen/be in the future by emotionally experiencing a possible future through a tangible feeling. LARP's facilitation of translating fictional scenarios into real world feelings and experience is garnering attention from organizations as an emotional development tool, such as those now used within some Nordic and American school programmes.⁸³ Holmas continues:

It's not coincidental that RPGs are used in organizations to develop the organizations, and to make people become acquainted and safer with each other. You lower your guard and let out parts of yourself that may not be so present in your regular life. At the same time, you're always partially yourself when you play. You're never a 100 percent in character or a 100 percent out.⁸⁴

Holmas emphasizes the use of LARP as a tool for creating emotional safety to develop individuals within organizations. LARPer are creating not just safety for each other, but emotional safety within a different reality, that of an imagined world. Participants are experiencing something imagined, in a scenario that can become positive and familiar, in the context of difficult situations.

When OOC, I discussed with several people why they were LARPer, and most of the responses led to an opportunity to be 'more' than they were in everyday life, which was why narratives (both individually and collectively) were very important to them.⁸⁵ I found myself,

⁸³ Sarah Lynne Bowman and Anne Standiford, 'Educational Larp in the Middle School Classroom: A Mixed Method Case Study', *International Journal of Role-Playing*, 5 (2016), 4–25, <<http://ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/IJRP-5-Bowman-and-Standiford.pdf>> [accessed 17 January 2017]; Michal Mochocki, 'Edu-Larp as Revision of Subject-Matter Knowledge', *International Journal of Role Playing*, 4 (2013), 56–75, <<http://www.ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/issue4/IJRPissue4mochocki.pdf>> [accessed 17 January 2017].

⁸⁴ A.V. Olepeder, 'LARPs can change the world'.

⁸⁵ I believe it is fair to say that this idea of 'heroism' (being more than what you are in everyday life) is a way of imagining a different life than the one presently lead, not inherently 'better' but different. This was a common

too, imagining my character as an epic hero before and during the games. I began to think about how imagining the potential of becoming a ‘hero’ made me feel possibilities beyond my own shortcomings and invigorated a sense of possible contribution to the world scenario. Yes, this was fantasy, but also, I saw compassion in the imagining, both for myself and for others. I knew then that this idea of heroism and storytelling as a compassionate force (for potential futures) was something worth exploring further within the practice. Some might argue that LARPing is a form of escapism and that the momentary escape allows players to return to the real world with less of a desire to change it. LARP *can* be seen as a mental, emotional, and physical release which might actually prevent people from actively pursuing their personal goals and civil interests explored through the roles they play, having attained this release on a personal level. Escapism may indeed be a motivation for players, and might be necessary for some; however, it does not negate the application of the methods derived from LARP, such as ‘heroism’, and employed within the practice of imagining futures. Additionally, the efforts toward imagining within this practice aim to create awareness and to find solutions for social change. In this way, though future imagining may seem escapist for some, it is intended as a reminder of possibilities and even seeks to begin to identify a path which may harness real-world solutions.

Throughout my field work, I discovered I had difficulty with the improvisational aspects expected during participation in LARP. I found myself lost, confused and aimless despite the generous help from strangers both IC and OOC. After the first year of LARP participation, and as a consequence of game designer Eirik Fatland’s talk on LARP design, I realised that I could not cross the boundary or was resistant to the improvisational aspect needed for LARP role play, which contradicted my twenty years of practice as a theatre maker and performer. I

factor amongst the individuals I spoke to, rather than a general preference of performing a fantasy role or fighting each other.

felt I could not transcend the idea of ‘purpose’ in a LARP, meaning I could not creatively and independently assign/devise myself a goal to achieve, or create an action to contribute alone, on my own. It was as if I was stricken by extreme shyness, despite my willingness. This issue may be one reason why LARP may seem daunting to some players; LARP requires your own construction — individual conjured act(s) — rather than a spectator/entertainment relationship which may feel more familiar. This difficulty I experienced coloured my first thoughts of the practice. I felt that I did not want to place my participants in this same type of uncomfortable situation and that there might be too much to overcome, not only in this discomfort with deep improvisation but also in the physical requirements needed to perform a LARP. Instead, I turned my attention toward Nordic LARP. In Norway, LARP is often used as a storytelling medium and a method for self-exploration. It is a very different type of LARP, one that often focuses on a shared experience through a game, as described earlier in the Jeep form of LARP. Traditional forms of LARP do exist in Norway, but the trend in the Nordic LARP scene is to continue its development into more contemporary forms. Thus, I decided to attempt to incorporate three LARP elements into the practical experiments — storytelling, heroism and bleed — as a way that might provide a more inclusive and accessible approach with participants that would not require the physical, deep improvisational or financial demands of LARP. The fourth and final element I would add would be a process of democratic co-creation.

LARPer are a group of individuals with experience in conceptualising and creating fictional worlds on a regular basis. The creation of a LARP game and to play in a LARP are not mutually exclusive; both happen simultaneously as they engage as co-creators and participants. LARPer inhabit the worlds they play in, simultaneously playing and generating

the material of that fictional world. They are ‘spect-actors’ and co-creators.⁸⁶ This is a unique quality in imagining fictional spaces. The organizers may prepare the imagined scenarios and guide certain activities; however, the organizers also act not just as facilitators, but co-creators with the participant players, adjusting their choices as the game unfolds with the participants. This is a very democratic participative type of imagining as it is carried through from initial concept to embodied performance. Without the players, the fictional worlds could not be played, developed or expressed. The variables introduced by the players (agendas, characters, actions) co-create the narrative. Democratic participation is also self-driven and independent, as each person governs their own contributions and the majority of the decisions made within the world. This democratic co-creation is another aspect of LARP, in addition to storytelling, bleed, and heroism, that I would utilise in the development of the practical experiments within the case studies.

Wider Contexts of LARP

LARP designers and players have argued that LARP can be applied to other areas of growth and development both in the present and for the future. LARP has indeed been used by businesses, in schools as a teaching method,⁸⁷ and within the military as a way of preparing for difficult hostile military incursions.⁸⁸ In all of these cases, immersive role playing practice provided a stimulating multi-sensory arena and effective real-time sense of immediacy toward the subjects explored. Further, both governments and local groups have used LARP as a method of familiarization and a learning tool towards real-time problem-solving tactics between potentially violent cultural encounters. This familiarization and mapping of the

⁸⁶ ‘Spect-actors’ is a term used by Augusto Boal in Forum Theatre, meaning one who participates both and simultaneously as a spectator and actor. Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, p. 122.

⁸⁷ Mochocki, ‘Edu-Larp as Revision of Subject-Matter Knowledge’.

⁸⁸ Eleanor Saitta, *LARP and...*, online video recording, YouTube, 11 February 2015, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgItePMLWbc>> [accessed 18 February 2015].

potential landscape in real-time is seen as training, but in essence, it is exploring potential future outcomes through these constructed realities. In *Performing Self, Performing Character: Exploring Gender Performativity in Online Role-Playing Games*, Osborne argues that roleplaying games provide an arena to develop submerged traits or to explore aspects of one's identity.⁸⁹ There have been several publications which have discussed the use of LARP to explore individual gender identity, masculine/feminine cultural power structures and gender specific alternatives as one is free to choose any gender, race, culture, ethnicity, class and occupation contained within the fictional setting.⁹⁰ This is often encouraged by designers and is viewed as a creative addition to the world and to player experience. Bigotry, racism, violence and oppression are not tolerated and are seen as grounds for immediate ejection from the game; indeed, this is often directly stated by organizers within game rules.⁹¹ Technically, there is some confusion within the role playing endeavour as individuals may take on characteristics that express bigotry and racism (e.g. fairies may hate orcs), and which seem to be accepted as long as these expressions are performed in character. However, physical violence and oppression of another person or character expressed out of role play is not considered to be acceptable, nor is an individual dropping out of character to deliberately abuse someone due to genuine anger. Players may seek help from other players or report any misconduct to the organisers in these cases. There appear to be some undefined boundaries of accepted player behaviour within LARP, which mainly rely on how each player feels and perceives the actions of others. Despite the negative possibilities within game role play, these incidents are rare. However, the risk is there for potential harm and the participants must self-

⁸⁹ Heather Osborne, 'Performing Self, Performing Character: Exploring Gender Performativity in Online Role-Playing Games', *Transformative Works and Culture*, 11 (2012), pp. 1–26.

⁹⁰ Patrick J. Williams, *Gaming as Culture: Essays on Reality, Identity and Experience in Fantasy Games*, (eds) Sean Q. Hendricks, and W. Keith Winkler (Jefferson: McFarland, 2006); Markus Montola, 'The Invisible Rules of Role-Playing: The Social Framework of Role-Playing Process', *International Journal of Role Playing*, 1 (2008), pp. 22–36, <http://www.ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/montola_the_invisible_rules_of_role_playing.pdf> [accessed 17 January 2017]; Osborne, 'Performing Self, Performing Character'.

⁹¹ Profound Decisions, 'Odyssey and Empire LARP' found within Profound Decisions-Homepage', <<https://www.profounddecisions.co.uk/home;jsessionid=3a9oac1ykn4flifrmYo0blsxi?0>> [accessed 26 March 2018].

regulate in order that they do not cross what might be perceived as improper boundaries. While it is important to note such ambiguities and risks within LARP, there is also the potential for similar risks (bigotry, racism, violence) within any group or public activity. LARP has the potential to lend itself to wider socio-political debates through the role-play element and perhaps it is the uniqueness of LARPing and its self-regulation that facilitates such powerful learning experiences. During the 2015 Nordic LARP Con, Flatland argued that LARP contains two main unique qualities: its ability to prototype and its inherent multidisciplinary nature that is required to ‘depict the totality of human life and so must draw on the totality of human knowledge.’⁹² In describing this prototyping, Fatland states:

In the Nordic larp tradition we have simulated the institutional structures of slave-holding societies, of advertising companies and IT companies, of real and fictitious militaries. We have lived in societies with four genders and no genders. We have recreated daily life in the years 1349 and in 1942 and 10,000 BC. We have experienced the inner dynamics of hundreds of societies, thousands of families. Our art might be based in games of make-believe, but by enacting those beliefs with our whole bodies, we make temporary realities. Nobody else does this. No other branch of knowledge or practice can build a religion, test out for five days how it feels to be a believer, how belief affects action, and then use that experience to build another religion next year. The speed by which we can put imaginary social and creative constructs to the test enables us to learn more quickly than any other discipline.⁹³

The application of LARP’s democratic nature and its inherent creative acts are useful in prototyping any imagined scenario. LARPer are free to design themselves as a character in any way they choose, including their individual wants, needs, and goals, as well as their

⁹² Fatland, ‘Does LARP Design Matter?’.

⁹³ Ibid.

methods of achieving them. LARP is designed to form the most basic scaffolding with which the player may interact or build upon as desired. This concept can be difficult, especially, as noted previously, to those not used to this kind of system. However, there is equally an inherent power of individuality and self-creation within this method. In Section One, Fatland described the use of creativity as a mechanism of shared creation: ‘Now let me first tell you something that is not challenging, and it is to direct humans towards a shared purpose.’⁹⁴ It might be more accurate to say that LARP cannot only direct the energies of a shared purpose, but can engineer human creative activities toward a shared purpose, a concept which was further developed in Eleanor Saitta’s 2015 Nordic LARP Con presentation in Copenhagen.⁹⁵ Saitta describes a toolkit derived from LARP that can be used in ‘understanding the cultural and emotional impact of systems that bridge the social and the technical, infrastructural, or political worlds.’⁹⁶ The toolkit she discusses focuses on reading, writing, immersing and embodying ideas and practices from LARP, which can be used to ‘build’ in the modern world. Saitta also delineates how LARP elements may contribute in a broader context:

- *Pastness* - how you understand the weight of historical tradition and what it actually means;
- *Belief* - how you say I believe this thing works in the world that doesn’t work right now, or I want to see how this system feels if I believe something else about the world;
- *Rituals* - socio-technical systems have performances and ceremonies associated with them, (usually unknown until seen in real time);
- *Diagnosis* – for reading power structures out of a social situation and [re]writing the power structures that we like by designingLARPs of new power structures;
- *Affect* – being in a character and embodying yourself into a situation gives you a much finer sense for what a system means emotionally
- *Viability* – [experiencing] what works and what doesn’t, which also prevents

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Saitta, *LARP and...*

⁹⁶ Ibid.

overspending.⁹⁷

Saitta's tools outline an understanding of LARP which is implicit in practice and practical use in its application toward examining situations and patterns of experience. LARPers use 'pastness' as a way to relate to each world, within both the context of the setting and the 'history' unfolding in live action real time. These live action events create the historical tradition and assign meaning, which become 'ritual' signifiers that further embed the player within the character and the world. In terms of 'belief,' players are encouraged to choose roles independently and not necessarily in line with their own beliefs in order to experiment and experience the 'other'. This requires some 'diagnosis,' where players look at their own beliefs against power structures and can manipulate their experiences independently. These experiences create 'affect,' an emotional sensitivity to the circumstances created within the character and the world. Thereby, the situations unfold and the player can test their own actions, decisions or feelings to see if they are 'viable' in these alternate scenarios. All of these tools are mainly developed and experienced independently — at least at the beginning and then later — in cooperation with other independently created characters as they build upon one another in form and content. The democratic co-creative process derived from LARP, will be the fourth essential element investigated within the case study experiments, in addition to the three other core concepts: bleed, heroism and storytelling. Fatland outlines the impact of such democratized building techniques that LARP could potentially foster:

I believe we will find – that we are already finding – that we can put the same tools to use to design “real” symbols and rules and roles and practices, and hence new kinds of culture, organizations and movements. As such, larp design represents a new kind of leadership. Not the leadership of hierarchy and intimidation. Not a kind of leadership that is easily transplanted into our schools or companies. But a leadership

⁹⁷ Ibid.

that works by inspiration, and by invitation. Building better playgrounds rather than pushing children around. A kind of leadership that will found institutions, instigate movements. And that may come to empower us with the rules and roles and symbols we can use to bring forth the best in ourselves, and to work towards realizing our highest aspirations.⁹⁸

In light of building a ‘better playground’ which can contribute to ‘realizing our highest aspirations,’ as Fatland asserts, I will utilise the LARP elements of democratic co-creation in creating narratives (storytelling) through imagined scenarios that reflect heroism and provide an opportunity for bleed. Within the case studies, I translate these elements into various forms of theatre practice to conceptualise imagined futures in Section Four. However, in Section Three, I first investigate additional techniques or principles used by several prominent artists and academics who are creating future spaces, and examine their pursuits of imagining futures.

⁹⁸ Fatland, ‘Does LARP Design Matter?’.

Section Three

Future Practices:

Artist Review

This section discusses artists working in the area of constructing future spaces. Most of the artists discussed herein may not identify their work as creating futures. I argue, however, that constructing future spaces is integral to their work. As stated previously, a ‘future space’ in this context can mean a physical representation of the future, the conceptualisation of an imagined future scenario from the present, or a feeling of a future time being transposed within the present as a part of a performance experience. These artists employ different methods within their work to create futures and some of their content is dystopian in nature, in contrast to the type of content I use in my experiments within the case studies and the stated intentions of my practice. Artists working in creating futures are relatively few. Those selected herein are chosen due to their prominence in the field or the influence of their work which informs the practice within this thesis. Due to the limited amount of published material on some of the artists and the relative infancy of certain techniques and terminology, all known sources will be used, including blog posts and Wikipedia.

The Yes Men

The Yes Men are a political performance duo founded by Jacques Servin and Igor Vamos, whose real names are Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno. Presently, Vamos is an Associate Professor of Media Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Servin is Associate Professor at Parsons New School for Design in New York.⁹⁹ Servin and Vamos are multimedia artists

⁹⁹ Wikipedia, ‘Jacques Servin’, *Wikipedia* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Servin> [accessed 11 September 2016]; Wikipedia, ‘Igor Vamos’, *Wikipedia* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Igor_Vamos> [accessed 11 September 2016].

and activists, and, arguably, contemporary theatre makers. They utilise a satirical approach in their work, donning costumes and character personas to bring awareness of specific political and human injustices. They often pose as individuals representing real corporations or government officials at press conferences and media events. Servin and Vamos present themselves to the media as official representatives (usually of businesses or as politicians) and speak about moral action concerning disasters, climate change or political issues in direct contradiction to current corporate or government positions. They depict themselves as a culture jamming¹⁰⁰ activist group and define their exploits as ventures in ‘identity correction.’¹⁰¹ Identity correction, as employed by The Yes Men, implies that the official stances or actions of certain individuals or corporations need to be altered, reversed, or repaired in view of the position they have taken or the damage they have caused. The concept, as defined by Servin, is where ‘honest people impersonate big-time criminals in order to publicly humiliate them. Targets are leaders and big corporations who put profits ahead of everything else.’¹⁰² As well as posing as official representatives, they often create short-term websites which appear to be professional but which are, in fact, fake and which echo or ‘verify’ the ‘facts’ for the hoax being played. Examples include www.gwbush.com (their satire on George W. Bush) or www.gatt.org (for their World Trade Organization (WTO) stunt).¹⁰³ The websites represent a fictional world created by a virtual piece of fiction. They substitute the imagined world in place of the real world.

¹⁰⁰ ‘*Culture jamming* (sometimes known as *guerrilla communication*) is a tactic used by many anti-consumerist social movements to disrupt or subvert media culture and its mainstream cultural institutions, including corporate advertising. It attempts to ‘expose the methods of domination’ of a mass society to foster progressive change. Culture jamming is a form of subvertising. Many culture jams are intended to expose questionable political assumptions behind commercial culture. Tactics include re-figuring logos, fashion statements, and product images as a means to challenge the idea of ‘what’s cool.’ Culture jamming often entails using mass media to produce ironic or satirical commentary about itself, commonly using the original medium’s communication method. Culture jamming is employed as a reaction against social conformity.’ Wikipedia, ‘Culture Jamming’, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_jamming> [accessed 11 September 2016].

¹⁰¹ Wikipedia, ‘Jacques Servin’; Wikipedia, ‘The Yes Men’, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Yes_Men> [accessed 7 September 2016].

¹⁰² Andrew Lawless, ‘Identity correction – Yes Men style. Interview with Andy Bichlbaum’, <<http://www.threemonkeysonline.com/identity-correction-yes-men-style-interview-with-andy-bichlbaum/3/>> [accessed 6 August 2016].

¹⁰³ Ibid.

The Yes Men's most infamous hoax to date concerns Bhopal, Dow Chemical, Union Carbide and the BBC. In 1984, a large pesticide plant exploded in Bhopal, India, and five thousand people were killed. In addition, over one hundred thousand people became ill as a result of the disaster and suffered the effects without care. The lawsuit over the tragedy was settled by Union Carbide (owned by Dow Chemical) for 470 million US dollars, with each surviving victim receiving less than \$1,000 in compensation.¹⁰⁴ In response to the settlement, The Yes Men created a counterfeit website for Dow Chemical (www.dowethics.com) and were consequently invited to speak with the BBC in 2004.¹⁰⁵ Servin created the character of Jude Finisterra, a 'spokesman' for Dow Chemical. He went on a BBC broadcast show stating:

And today, I am very, very happy to announce that Dow is accepting full responsibility for the Bhopal catastrophe, we have a 12-billion-dollar plan to finally, at long last, fully compensate the victims including the 120,000 who may need medical care for their entire lives and to fully and swiftly remediate the Bhopal plant site.¹⁰⁶

He then announced the liquidation of Dow Carbide as the means of funding the \$12 billion compensation, stating that 'we should have done it three years ago, we are doing it now.'¹⁰⁷

Servin states in the BBC television interview:

this is the first time in history that a publicly owned company, of anything near the size of Dow, has performed an action that is significantly against its bottom line, simply because it is the right thing to do. And our shareholders may take a bit of hit,

¹⁰⁴ Andy Bichlbaum, Mike Bonanno and Kurt Engfehr, *The Yes Men Fix the World*, online video recording, YouTube, 2 October 2013, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajkItiDgTLY>> [accessed 21 August 2016].

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Steve, but if they are anything like me they will be ecstatic to be a part of such a historic occasion by doing right by those that we have wronged.¹⁰⁸

The BBC television interview was followed by a BBC radio interview in which Servin stated:

I can tell you one thing, we are not going out of business, we will continue to make profit, we simply make less profit than normal, but we are doing the right thing. We are comparing though the value of money to the value of human life and there is no comparison.¹⁰⁹

Consequently, Dow's stocks fell by three percent, totalling \$2 billion in losses within twenty-three minutes of the announcement that day.¹¹⁰ These events are documented extensively in the feature film *The Yes Men Fix the World*, directed by Servin, Vamos and Kurt Engfehr.¹¹¹ As part of the documentation footage within the film, the BBC invited The Yes Men to return for a further interview, this time, as themselves. The BBC interviewer stated that 'it was a pretty cruel trick...they [the victims of the Bhopal spill] suddenly believe that, they have got a pay-out from Dow, and then you know an hour or two later they find it untrue.'¹¹² The interviewer appears very angry toward Servin and the hoax, almost as if he was defending Dow, without acknowledging that Dow was the perpetrator, which Servin is quick to point out. Next in the film, you see Servin and Vamos in India, trying to find out the effects of their hoax on the people affected by Bhopal. One individual stated that he did cry when he heard that there was to be some financial relief but that it [the hoax] was 'totally worth it' since it renewed awareness of the catastrophe and that he hoped that others would not suffer from

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

corporate mistakes.¹¹³ Servin and Vamos then interview Rajkumar Keswani, who was the first reporter to warn the government and local officials of the potential disaster of the plant. When asked what Keswani thought about the hoax, he stated ‘I thought it was a wonderful thing to do. We were put into a situation [Dow taking responsibility], which we never thought of, [one] that would actually happen. So, it is just like being in the heaven.’¹¹⁴ Arguably, the participants were affected by the stunt, and as the film was produced by Servin and Vamos, it is difficult to tell if both sides are represented equally. However, the film does evidence members of the public as audience participants in an immersive event, transported into a fictional world created by Servin and Vamos, whether willingly or not. The fictional world was one in which corporations are responsible for the risks taken and take ownership and responsibility for damages those pursuits cause. As a representation of a possible alternate future through the Dow hoax, Servin’s fictional character, the Dow representative Jude Finisterra, replaced for a moment in time, current reality, and also the corporate image and decisions of Dow Chemical with an imagined better one. The individuals affected by the performance are briefly living in this ‘corrected’ imagined world, at least in those few moments. These events are theatrical representations of a potential future. The Yes Men assume a character, perform to an audience and present a potential reality, deviating from the current existing one, that could occur in the future. As Servin states once the hoax is uncovered, ‘It’s an honest representation of what Dow should be doing.’¹¹⁵ Servin and Vamos have an intention of what they would like to see in the future, which is better corporate and government responsibility to the people whose lives are affected by the actions or inaction of corporations. What happens as a result of the satirical hoaxes is a media frenzy, which in turn, of course, raises awareness concerning the issues at hand, often leading to real world action.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

[T]he joke is the vehicle to get the information into people's minds, through the press, of course. The articles that appeared had to explain the background, in addition to the joke itself. They had to explain what Bhopal was, what activists are demanding, what the point of the joke was. If people then went to our website, they would have found plastered across our front page "Click here for information about Bhopal" and we had links to Bhopal.net and to Bhopal.org so people would find out from activists in Bhopal what the situation is, and how they could contribute both financially and practically to the fight for compensation for victims of the disaster from Dow. We did get to meet the activists recently and they did tell us that there was a big rise in donations afterwards, and that by night-time they had come to feel our prank was a good thing, and that it had really worked.¹¹⁶

As we can see from the above, the event elicited real world consequences. There was an increase in charitable donations as a result of increased media attention. By portraying this alternative reality, in the moment of the delivery of the performance, an alternative future is both lived and proposed. The event thereby has the potential to mark a shift in direction, especially as a progressive response, and presented as a potentially feasible path (for Dow) based on mutual desires (in this case, those of Vamos, Servin and the victims).

In another performance, Vamos and Servin created a hypothetical world scenario in which the next major fuel source would be made from the human bodies who are the victims of climate change. They both posed as 'replacement speakers' at an oil summit meeting in Canada. Here, Vamos and Servin gave out 'Vivoleum' candles which were supposed to be made of human flesh from victims of climate change. Their presentation was shut down half way during the commemorative video showing an Exxon Mobil (American oil company) employee who 'donated his body' to make Vivoleum. The commemorative candle in this

¹¹⁶ Lawless, 'Identity correction'.

instance was a piece of design fiction, similar to those used by Stuart Candy in his experiential future practice and which will be detailed further below. The candle represents the callousness of climate change decision makers and a tangible artefact from a possible future.

Another performance hoax involved Exxon Mobil and the victims of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. This time, Vamos and Servin posed as official representatives of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Vamos and Servin first acted as Public Relations executives, falsely claiming to represent — then booking — the Secretary of HUD, Alfonso Jackson, to speak at the conference for a ‘major’ HUD announcement. HUD was systematically closing down low-income homes after hurricane Katrina to allow the ‘free market’ to develop new low-income housing that was not subsidised by the government. The Central News Network (CNN) was to cover the event, and the then mayor of New Orleans, Ray Nagin, made a surprise visit once he had heard that HUD was to attend.¹¹⁷ Servin and Vamos would once again replace the ‘speaker’ when Mr. Jackson was ‘suddenly’ not able to attend. Servin then portrayed a character, Rene Oswin, who they claimed was the Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of HUD. As Oswin, Servin announced at the conference that HUD would re-open all the public housing in New Orleans and that the companies (Exxon and Shell) would take full responsibility for the damage they caused to the wetlands. The environmental damage from these two oil companies was a major cause of New Orleans’s vulnerability to Katrina. The film points out that even though most of the audience members (oil company representatives and politicians) would lose money by this reversal, the audience members cheered. Immediately after the conference, Vamos and Servin had also planned a fake re-opening party at a local closed public housing area and invited all to attend. The hoax began to unravel as a persistent reporter questioned Oswin after the event and then called

¹¹⁷ Bichlbaum, Bonanno and Engfehr, *The Yes Men Fix the World*.

HUD, who denied that Oswin was an employee. Another reporter finally exposed Servin and Vamos during the event, revealing the hoax to the crowd. The film records several of the Katrina victims at the event being interviewed by local reporters, and their reaction to learning of the hoax. One unnamed interviewee stated:

I think what you guys exposed, is that fact that HUD could do these things if they wanted to, secondly, you got the attention of the residents so now they are going to begin to ask well why aren't you [HUD] doing these things, and number three you are creating a controversy to feed off, to organize and to build the struggle to the next level, so in my opinion, everything ya'll did was excellent.¹¹⁸

The media later reported that the hoax was 'sick, twisted, cruel, a cruel joke, trying to give some people some kind of fake hope that they were going to be able to move back.'¹¹⁹ The footage then shows the response of some of the people at the event after the announcement. As with Bhopal, the film may represent only one side of how the victims felt, but clearly there was some support for Vamos and Servin's efforts. As the film shows, an awareness resurfaced regarding different perspectives on the responsibilities that the companies and officials might take and certain individuals were inspired toward further action.

Another type of spectacle performed by The Yes Men concerned the publishing of a fake copy of the *New York Times* and the handing out of 100,000 free copies on the streets of New York. Vamos outlines the purpose of the paper:

We needed to show what real change could [be] like [...] [The paper] would be set 6 months in the future. It would show what could happen if we set our imagination free.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

[...] Things have gotten pretty bad and I think it's hard for people to imagine the world working another way, so we are trying as realistically as possible to present this world as it could be. [...] [a paper] that says we can do all things – why not? We created the system that we have now, so why not create a good one instead.¹²⁰

Vamos and Servin show within the film the pleased and astonished reactions of those reading the paper on the streets. As is clearly evident from the questions, comments and reactions of the people who were filmed, the film records the individuals experiencing for one brief moment the sensation of a different future in the present. One reader interviewed said after the hoax was revealed, 'It's like a dream newspaper. Right? It's like, you wake up and all the things that you wanted became the news.'¹²¹ The fictional newspaper is an excellent example of design fiction which portrays a potential future via an artefact (discussed at length below). Through these works, Vamos and Servin have transposed current reality with a potential future one and were able to evidence the audience's desires of those futures on camera.

Vamos and Servin transpose public experience into new realities. They systematically perform 'actions' that superimpose a future reality onto current reality. The audience is transported, for those moments before the hoax is revealed, toward an awareness of a new potential reality. Their audiences are not voluntary. They are not patrons nor do they agree to be part of the performance which is akin to Invisible Theatre. Fundamentally, the actions taken by The Yes Men expose the audience to ideas of how the world could be better, either from the satirical portrayal of current government and political decision makers or through re-making their ideas into ones of more progressive political and egalitarian inclination. The media response generated by their work and the responses of those involved included some participants who originally opposed the social housing reforms, as well as victims of the

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

injustices perpetrated by corporations and unsuspecting audience members. Given this, The Yes Men's efforts to raise awareness generally appear to be quite effective. By copying the styles and forms of 'the establishment,' they have framed their stunts in familiar settings for those who witness them. Despite some of the more outlandish and improbable design fictions (e.g. the Vivoleum human flesh candle), audiences seem to accept the scenario and the information presented, and sometimes appear to agree with the concepts despite their own potential loss. There are several ethical issues in relation to the spectacles performed by The Yes Men. As discussed concerning Bhopal, the nature of 'giving false hope' to the injured and vulnerable may be ethically dubious. Within this type of invasive Invisible Theatre, the clandestine nature of the 'trick' or 'hoax' violates the Ethical Spectacle Code produced by www.beautifultrouble.org in partnership with The Yes Men. The Ethical Spectacle Code was written in 2004 by Andrew Boyd and Stephen Duncombe in relation to the type of performance art emerging in the United States at the time. It serves as a 'how to' method for other artists. They provided guidelines as 'a way of thinking about the tactical and strategic use of signs, symbols, myths, and fantasies to advance progressive, democratic goals.'¹²²

Boyd and Duncombe state:

the theory's premises are: (1) that politics is as much an affair of desire and fantasy as it is reason and rationality, (2) that we live in an intensely mediated age (what Situationist Guy Debord called the Society of the Spectacle), (3) that in order to be politically effective, activists need to enter the realm of spectacle, and (4) that spectacular interventions have the potential to be both ethical and emancipatory. An ethical spectacle is a symbolic action that seeks to shift the political culture toward more progressive values. An ethical spectacle should strive to be:

¹²² Andrew Boyd and Stephen Duncombe, 'Ethical Spectacle', <<http://beautifultrouble.org/theory/ethical-spectacle/>> [accessed 26 March 2018].

Participatory: Seeking to empower participants and spectators alike, with organizers acting as facilitators.

Open: Responsive and adaptive to shifting contexts and the ideas of participants.

Transparent: Engaging the imagination of spectators without seeking to trick or deceive.

Realistic: Using fantasy to illuminate and dramatize real-world power dynamics and social relations that otherwise tend to remain hidden in plain sight.

Utopian: Celebrating the impossible — and therefore helping to make the impossible possible.¹²³

If comparing The Yes Men to the Ethical Spectacle code, they break the code in terms of transparency; they engage spectators through trickery and deception. The Yes Men also break the participatory rule as they do not always act as facilitators directly; rather, they facilitate indirectly, without providing specific paths toward empowerment. As stated, the beautifultrouble.org website cites The Yes Men as partners in the development of the Ethical Spectacle Code; however, it is unclear from the material and instructions provided on their website whether or not The Yes Men seek to apply the code directly to their own work.¹²⁴ It is clear that they disregard some of the code guidelines in favour of their own approach. The only justification for this approach appears in an interview with American journalist Bill Moyer, where The Yes Men state that ‘these kinds of [corporate and political] wrongdoings are at such a scale – they’re so vast compared to our white lies that we think it's [their

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ The Yes Men, ‘The Yes Men and The Yes Lab’, <<http://beautifultrouble.org/practitioner/yes-men/>> [accessed 5 July 2015].

performances are] ethical.’¹²⁵ Even if aware of ethical practices, individual practitioners may decide to abandon such considerations for the ‘overall good’ which they deem is reflected by their work. Further consideration of ethical responsibilities regarding this type of work and that of other artists will be discussed at length below.

Stuart Candy and Experiential Futures

Stuart Candy was a lecturer at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) and is now an Associate Professor in the School of Design at Carnegie Mellon University. In 2013, he co-founded the *Situation Lab*, an experimental company working in what he terms ‘experiential futures practice.’¹²⁶ This term describes a type of practice by individuals who research and create immersive encounters and tangible artefacts that bring ‘futures to life.’¹²⁷ Experiential futures practice, as coined by Candy, is often achieved through multiple tactics, mainly involving a multi-media type of practice. Candy explains:

Experiential futures practice is location and medium agnostic because it is more about enabling futures than using or advancing a particular mode of expression. Anything that you can cause to happen to, with and for someone is, in principle, fair game; the entirety of experience, the whole of the sensorium, is the canvas or design space. The term ‘experiential futures’ tries to convey this encompassing, transmedia idea of the range of options at our disposal. The corollary is that each intervention within the practice must be highly specific to topic, site, time, audience, etc.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Bill Moyers, ‘Bill Moyers Journal’, <<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07202007/profile.html>> [accessed 5 February 2019].

¹²⁶ Stuart Candy and Jeff Watson, ‘The Situation Lab’, <<http://situationlab.org/about/>> [accessed 23 June 2016]; Stuart Candy, *Stuart Candy*, LinkedIn post, 2018, <<http://uk.linkedin.com/in/stuartcandy>> [accessed 23 June 2016].

¹²⁷ Candy and Watson, ‘The Situation Lab’.

¹²⁸ Stuart Candy, ‘Impacting the Social’, <<https://futurayst.blogspot.co.uk/2016/06/impacting-social.html>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

Often, devices or artefacts are used within experiential futures and are based on the concept of design fiction. The speculative contemplation and creation of artefacts in the form of tangible objects of or for the future is known as *design fiction*. Design fiction is often a large part of the transmedia endeavour within experiential futures. In addition to using design fiction artefacts to create experiential futures, Candy offers the following guidelines within the practice: ‘Don’t break the universe, The Tip of the Iceberg, The art of Double-take.’¹²⁹ Candy has also added ‘Make it Fun’ as the fourth element, asserting that the content must be fun but also challenging to the audience.¹³⁰ He outlines these principles in his PhD thesis at length, providing examples of how they each work.¹³¹ With regard to ‘Don’t break the universe’, Candy explains that all elements must be indicative of the future world and that simple mistakes that break the suspension of disbelief in the world must be avoided. The concept of each project must be fully thought through and plausible. Candy also encourages events to be or include immersive environments for the audience to engage with.¹³² ‘The Tip of the Iceberg’ encourages artists to use multiple media tactics (including design fiction) that evoke the most provocative elements of the world and create a realism that is believable and powerfully representative of the world one is trying to create. The provocative elements encourage the audience to become more curious about the topic and the wider concerns implied by the subject, thereby engaging on a deeper level. ‘The Art of the Double-take’ is

¹²⁹ Stuart Candy, *Guerrilla Futures*, slide presentation, Festival of Transitional Architecture (FESTA), 26 October 2013, <<http://image.slidesharecdn.com/guerrillafutures-131029232943-phpapp02/95/guerrilla-futures-46-638.jpg?cb=1383090037>> [accessed 28 October 2016]; Stuart Candy, ‘A future of design’, <<https://futuryst.blogspot.co.uk/search?q=Don't+break+the+universe,+The+Tip+of+the+Iceberg,+The+art+of+double-take>> [accessed 5 January 2017].

¹³⁰ Candy, ‘A future of design’.

¹³¹ Stuart Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life: Politics and the Design of Experiential Scenarios’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Hawaii, 2010), pp. 189–202 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305280378_The_Futures_of_Everyday_Life_Politics_and_the_Design_of_Experiential_Scenarios> [accessed July 21, 2016].

¹³² Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, p. 191.

based on principles used by Futurist lecturer Jim Dator¹³³ and means to ‘make the audience think twice,’ usually in the form of something strange or implausible that gathers the audience’s attention. This ‘strangeness’ can arrive through two forms, with the first appearing as an outlandish idea or concept explored through a piece of design fiction or an immersive experience scenario. The second form is where the strange concept arrives in a more familiar form, but something about the object or scenario appears unfamiliar, strange, or impossible. Candy explains the second form as ‘a challenging concept about the future [...] packaged in the form of something quite ordinary and unremarkable. But perhaps something does not seem quite right about it, and it invites a second glance; and on a closer inspection its meaning begins to unfold.’¹³⁴ The purpose of both, whichever method is employed, is to encourage the audience to think deeper about the concept which defies ‘assumptions’ or ‘expectations’ associated with the topic.¹³⁵

Candy used these principles in his work with his students at OCAD and at the *Situation Lab* when creating various experiential futures. Candy states:

OCAD U has the world’s first academic program in design and foresight, that’s what drew me there. It’s exciting to help spread this practice to where practitioners are trained. This lets us access a higher leverage point in the system—how emerging designers are acculturated. You try things out by setting briefs and developing methods, then see how a range of different minds adapt and work the process through. The classroom becomes a lab, and students—bringing their own backgrounds and concerns, intentions and publics—extend experimentation into places one might not think or choose to go oneself. I find this a more generative way to work than just doing

¹³³ Jim Dator, a lecturer in the Futures Studies programme at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, contends in his ‘Second Law of the Future’ that ‘Any useful statement about the future should at first appear to be ridiculous’ in Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, p. 202.

¹³⁴ Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, p. 203.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

my own stuff all the time, and it also ultimately makes the work ‘for’ a wider and more flexible constituency.¹³⁶

Candy based some of his class instruction on these principles to create the concept of a ‘Time Machine’ to facilitate the practice of experiential futures.¹³⁷ He designed the Time Machine for students as a method ‘to put audiences into a situation from a future world.’¹³⁸ Under the auspices of the Time Machine, the students invent different concepts and scenarios to create different future outcomes based on current socio-political issues. They create futuristic artefacts and design immersive environments, enacting improvised or scripted scenarios in the classrooms. The public is then invited in to experience the work of the students.

A recent experiential futures project created by Candy’s students in conjunction with the *Situation Lab* is the ‘NaturePod™’. Candy states the project was:

neither a prediction nor a preference, but a provocation. We wanted to use design and performance to invite consideration of how our relationship to nature in cities is changing, and contribute to a dialogue about potential differences between our current direction, and what we might collectively want. The actual project design consisted of a modified massage-like chair and headset that allowed the viewer to see, smell and hear approximately 10-20 minutes of outdoor space.¹³⁹

The device used seems to be akin to a virtual reality headset, utilising technology as one element of the transmedia concept. Candy states that the NaturePod™ was placed into an

¹³⁶ Candy, ‘Impacting the Social’.

¹³⁷ Stuart Candy, ‘Build Your Own Time Machine,’ <<https://futuryst.blogspot.co.uk/2014/02/build-your-own-time-machine.html>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Stuart Candy and Claus Raasted, *RAPC #101: Stuart Candy: How to create the future 101*, online video recording, YouTube, 11 June 2016, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNdkaAaXgqQ>> [accessed 5 October 2016].

annual design exhibition where ‘many who got to try NaturePod™ first hand were immediately enchanted, and prepared to buy or lease the devices on the spot.’¹⁴⁰ Thus, the participants were evidently receptive to the device and the hypothetical concept, filling some perceptual need amongst its audience. Candy reports on his blog in preparation for the event:

A few hints about the future setting were planted, including a full-page advertisement in the Show Catalogue announcing the release of the product in Fall 02021, but we were shooting for present-day realism in the encounter. The aim was to let folks come to their own genuine conclusions about the whole idea before the hypothetical status was revealed.¹⁴¹

The results of the experiment as reported by Candy were both positive and negative. He states: ‘But frankly, reactions were mixed. A few declared their horror at the idea that anyone might try to substitute a new gadget for the experience of a forest. Even so, no one appeared to have any difficulty believing that this was a real product being offered to mitigate the chronic disconnect of modern urban dwellers from the experience of nature.’¹⁴² In an interview at The Living Games Conference in May of 2016, Candy refers to the NaturePod™ as ‘a LARP that the audience participated in and didn’t know they were participating in.’¹⁴³ In his keynote at the same conference, Candy argues:

¹⁴⁰ Stuart Candy, ‘NaturePod’, <<http://situationlab.org/projects/naturepod/>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid. Candy’s use of technology as a means of troubling and subverting the consequences of ‘pleasure’ is also addressed in Adam Alston’s reading of Robert Nozick’s ‘experience machines.’ Alston questions the use of experience machines as a method which might be ‘preferable to the more difficult pursuit of desire in everyday life, as an autonomous individual.’ Adam Alston, *Beyond Immersive Theatre: Aesthetics, Politics and Productive Participation*, (London: Palgrave, 2016) p. 2.

¹⁴³ Candy, *Playing the Future*.

The way we think about the future in our culture has a lot of room for improvement and one potential way of excavating these potential futures is through immersing one's self in these created hypothetical situations, which LARPer are quite familiar with.¹⁴⁴

Thus, Candy too saw the value of LARP in experimenting with futures. One can surmise that Candy means that the NaturePod™ is LARP-like in that it creates an immersive environment. However, it falls short of a full LARP experience as there are no other significant LARP elements — such as creative input or participant role play — other than facilitator performance work by the students. Nevertheless, he does link the two through an earlier statement: 'I think a good way to do that is to make [the future] real, you know to sort of take it out of the abstract and make it performed, make it present.'¹⁴⁵ This type of work may not be a conventional LARP experience, but the link between making an imaginary future concept 'real' and the experiences encountered within a LARP appear 'real' are similar. The experience of the participants (if they are aware of the premise or not) is transportive, at least for a brief moment, as long as realism is employed in a believable scenario and accepted within a setting. This principle of 'don't break the universe' is also a large factor in creating and participating in LARP. The concept of locating the experience within a realistic portrayal that adheres to the world is sought after within LARP, as well as in Candy's work. The physical elements differ slightly, however, in that they can be more complex in what they symbolise. For example, in experiential futures, design fiction often provides the anchor within these environments. The NaturePod™ is, in fact, a type of design fiction; it is an artefact created not only to explore possible future(s) through interaction with the object but also to stimulate thought around a particular subject. These artefacts play a key role in Candy's work. They provide a centrepiece that establishes dialogue between the audience and the experience, as well as serving to locate and navigate the narrative of the experience for the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

audience. The ‘immersive, experiential, radically multimedia’ approach is natural to LARPer as Candy continues to illustrate in his keynote address at a recent Living Games conference in Texas.¹⁴⁶

Experiential futures say, ‘what about just going there? [...] seeing the design canvas as being the situation that we can put ourselves in and interact with it, now this is all pretty obvious to [LARPer]. [...] I didn’t know that LARP existed really until about 3 [three] years ago and I found it enormously enriching to connect to this community of people who get this stuff right out of the gate and use it and play with it well. In some ways I think there’s still some catching up to do in this practice to what you guys take as obvious as a starting point.’¹⁴⁷

However, there are some issues with the links between LARP and experiential futures practice. Candy himself attempts to define this in describing a project where his students turned a classroom into a condo in the year 2040.¹⁴⁸ Candy states that perhaps ‘this is closer to immersive theatre than LARP,’¹⁴⁹ presumably as the audience is participating in an immersive environment rather than co-creating the environment physically, as well as co-creating the narrative entirely through role play, to be called a LARP.¹⁵⁰ In LARP, an audience must engage directly in role playing, where the role is chosen by the player through major investment (time, money, resources) and the narratives are predominately created by the player and dictated by their dialogue and actions, as well as by their contributions to the environment, more so than most immersive theatre practice to date and in contrast to experimental futures. However, arguments for the roles that individuals play on a daily basis,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ An immersive environment or scenario refers to works such as Punchdrunk’s immersive theatre practice, as discussed previously.

as well as with and among audience groups with different spheres of engagement, have been well argued. Perhaps the viewing of the event can be interpreted as a role playing situation, and thus Candy likens the experience to immersive theatre.

Other Forms of Futurism

In addition to experiential futures, there is also a sub-form of Futurism designated by Candy as ‘Guerrilla Futures’ combining ‘strategic foresight and tactical media¹⁵¹ to produce unexpected encounters with possible worlds.’¹⁵² Guerrilla Futures practice functions by ‘Injecting possibilities into the present [and] lets us think and feel new potentials, not “merely” hypothetical, [but] in a mode of exploration squarely located where serious investigation meets play.’¹⁵³ These installations are usually in public spaces consisting of artefacts such as posters or flyers of design fiction, representing or exploring a concept from the future in an effort to consider the potential consequences of socio-political issues. Candy states that the aim of his Guerrilla projects is ‘tweak[ing] of the world we know through unsolicited urban installation of objects [...] unexpectedly manifesting fragments of possible futures in the midst of people’s everyday lives.’¹⁵⁴ Figures 3 and 4 below are examples of a Guerrilla Futures project. The signs were posted as part of Candy’s ‘Foundfutures: Chinatown, 02007’ project. Both images are from ‘The Bird Cage’, which was one of the scenarios within the Chinatown project. The project addressed questions of community well-being during a hypothetical bird flu outbreak in a city.¹⁵⁵ Candy uses the potential epidemic scenario as a device to stimulate thought around a hypothetical future healthcare scare. He

¹⁵¹ ‘*Tactical media* is a term coined in 1996, to denote a form of media activism that privileges temporary, hit-and-run interventions in the media sphere over the creation of permanent and alternative media outlets.’ Wikipedia, ‘Tactical Media’, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tactical_media> [accessed 19 June 2016].

¹⁵² Candy, *Guerrilla Futures*.

¹⁵³ Candy, ‘NaturePod’.

¹⁵⁴ Stuart Candy, ‘Big Shifts Small Change’, <<https://futuryst.blogspot.co.uk/2013/12/big-shifts-small-change.html>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

suggests that the aim of these Guerrilla Futures and experiential futures is ‘to show and, as well as tell, different stories’¹⁵⁶ which represent different possible futures, in this case through signs which are pieces of design fiction. The content of the images is used to present a possible future in a plausible and realistic way that viewers may not recognise as fictional.



Figure 3: The Bird Cage ‘Foundfutures: Chinatown 02007’ (photo credit Stuart Candy)¹⁵⁷



Figure 4: The Bird Cage ‘Foundfutures: Chinatown 02007’ (photo credit Stuart Candy)¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Candy, *Guerrilla Futures*.

¹⁵⁷ Figure 1 image from Stuart Candy from The Bird Cage, Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, p. 239.

¹⁵⁸ Figure 2 image from Stuart Candy from The Bird Cage, *Guerrilla Futures*.

Concerning the creation and use of design fiction in his practice, Candy states:

For a futurist, or at any rate for me and my colleagues, future artefacts themselves are like so many forward-facing MacGuffins, heuristic devices carefully crafted to help tell engaging stories. They enable and animate deeper exploration of the various relationships and values at stake in a particular future scenario, and (I argue with monotonous regularity, from various angles, in this space) their value for that purpose is multiplied many times over when artefacts ‘from’ different future worlds can be devised and explicitly brought into conversation with one another (as in our postcards intervention, among others). This blog contains abundant testimony to the process of futurists discovering that this exploratory function (traditionally abstract — verbal, textual, and statistical) can be carried out much more effectively when an immersive, experiential, radically multimedia approach is adopted.¹⁵⁹

Candy further states that ‘design fiction focuses on objects, and experiential futures focus on immersive situations. Both aim to bring possible worlds to life in a way that enables a deeper kind of conversation about the future.’¹⁶⁰ Candy often collaborates with students, researchers, designers and gamers to create these experiential future projects. In addition to the NaturePod™, he has also worked on *The Thing from the Future*, *1-888-Futures* and *Rilao Remote Viewing Protocol*.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Stuart Candy, ‘Object Oriented Futuring’, <<http://futryst.blogspot.co.uk/2008/11/object-oriented-futuring.html>> [accessed 22 June 2016].

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Stuart Candy, ‘The Thing from the Future’, <<http://situationlab.org/project/the-thing-from-the-future/>> [accessed on 3 August 2018], Stuart Candy, ‘1-888-Futures’, <<http://situationlab.org/project/1-888-futures/>> [accessed on 3 August 2018], Stuart Candy, ‘Rilao Remote Viewing Protocol’, <<http://situationlab.org/project/rilao-remote-viewing-protocol/>> [accessed on 3 August 2018].

In his 2010 PhD thesis, Candy argues the essential value of experiential futures; this value comes from the deep contemplation and consideration of ““possibility spaces” hyper dimensionally, [which] seek to flesh out worlds hitherto supposed unimaginable or unthinkable on a daily basis.’¹⁶² When using the words ‘unimaginable’ or ‘unthinkable’ in this context, Candy is referring to visions of the future that most individuals do not consider in their every-day daily lives from their current vantage points, not *necessarily* dystopian visions, but ones that reflect the possibilities of outcomes not yet considered. His creation of experiential futures practice provides a critical approach to experiential work within the field of Futures. Candy’s work also provides a platform for discussion on how our daily choices inform multi-layered and nuanced possible future outcomes. This concept, delivered through a different approach, is explored further below in an analysis of a performance piece from Forced Entertainment.

Forced Entertainment: *Tomorrow’s Parties* within ‘The Imagination Symposium’

In Forced Entertainment’s performances of *Tomorrow’s Parties*, text is used to summon the future in an experience that both provokes and writes a theoretical future experience. In devising the performance, the group improvised on themes concerning the future, then wrote down these improvisations and edited them to construct the text of the performance. The text covers subjects of life, humanity, politics, health, love, and family. The performance occurs on a relatively bare stage, with two artists standing side by side on a platform in front of coloured lights. Each line of text begins with the phrase ‘In the future’ or the word ‘or’. This summoning of the future through language was the subject of presentations by Tim Etchells, Terry O’Connor and Emma Cocker at the University of Sheffield’s ‘Imagination Symposium’

¹⁶² Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, p. iv.

in 2013. All three presenters discussed different ways in which language and text can be used to imagine the future through an analysis of *Tomorrow's Parties*.

In Cocker's keynote to the Symposium, she stated:

The work [*Tomorrow's Parties*] thus proposes one mode of future-oriented imagining within the *content* of the words that are spoken ('in the future ...'), whilst another is enacted at a methodological level in relation to *how* (through improvisation) that content *was/is* arrived at, even *arrives*. To distinguish between the two modes then: through acts of imaginative projection a 'future-possible' world is seemingly given shape (even scripted) *in advance* of its occurrence; whilst arguably, within the act of improvisation the shape of an unfolding future emerges *simultaneously to* its imagining.¹⁶³

Here, the act of improvising about the future is argued to also be an act of creating a future through the spoken word. By speaking about the future, a new narrative is then formed and the audience is able to consider (albeit briefly) the possible future from the utterances on stage as they are delivered in real time and in the present from the original improvised text. There is a layering of time occurring for both the performer and the audience. The performers improvised imaginings of the future prior to the performance, and then experienced the act of repeating those visions to help the audience imagine different futures in the present. The future imagining carried out by the performers during the creation of the text occurred in the performers' past and is then experienced again by the performers on stage in the present and also newly experienced by the audience. This is a layering of time, both past and present simultaneously, whilst allowing the possibility for the audience to imagine alternate futures.

¹⁶³ Emphasis is author's own, Cocker, 'What now, what next', p. 2.

Forced Entertainment uses the device of improvisation, turned into scripted text, to conjure these possible futures for the audience in this way. However, the solidity of a future narrative is disrupted as soon as it arrives by the changing of each vision, from the ‘or’ pronounced by the performer. This concept is furthered as Cocker defines her own work of kairotic practice:

My proposal, then, is that whilst one mode of future-oriented imagination (projection, prediction, prophecy) conceptualises the future in terms of a chronological continuity, as a linear progression of time extending (often inevitably) forward from *here and now*, the imaginative futurity within improvisation is closer to *kairos*, a will-to-invent capable of leaning into and inhabiting the *void* that opens once that (illusory) continuity is ruptured. Here, then, not only does the interruptive force of ‘or’ rupture or disturb the continuity of an unfolding narrative, but it also produces an ‘edge’ or moment of crisis, into which new invention is *called*.¹⁶⁴

Cocker states that the Kairotic practice unfolds as an opportunity for disruption allowing space for the ‘future’ to emerge as evidenced by the ‘or’ within *Tomorrow’s Parties*. This serves as a disruptive force that allows the narrative (both literally and metaphorically) to be broken and a new idea to emerge. The moment that this new idea is able to emerge is an act of resistance. It is an act of resistance as it opens the space for a new idea or possibility to occur, or at least to be considered. Cocker references Simon O’Sullivan, who summarises the process: ‘the rupturing encounter ... contains ... the affirmation of a new world, in fact a way of seeing and thinking this world differently.’¹⁶⁵ Cocker then uses the arguments of Michel Foucault, Victor Turner and Paulo Freire, among others, to argue that this disruption provides a type of ‘imagining alternative narratives in a world where we are conditioned to imagine that there are none.’¹⁶⁶ Thus, the construction of the text broken by disruption encourages the

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

imagining of something other than what ‘is’. It is here that an essential point is made: the disruption of daring to imagine creates new futures by disrupting perceived restrictions on imagining. This concept reveals itself further within the practice discussed in Section Five, but does so in a different way, not necessarily from external restrictions, but internal ones.

The concept of disruption is continued as Tim Etchells and Terry O’Connor presented ‘At a Later Date’ at the same symposium. Their address concerned *Tomorrow’s Parties* and the use of writing and language as tools for imagining the future. The keynote was performed as interrupted monologues, alternating between Etchells and O’Connor. Where one stopped, the other began, echoing the ‘or’ within *Tomorrow’s Parties*, and leaving space for the audience to witness, conjure or imagine in-between the two motifs. Etchells began with a provocation about writing and words which justified how the future can be created through written text and contemplation of time:

Writing. Writing this, I’m in the past, and here now, hearing it, you are in the future and since I’m reading it aloud here at this symposium I’m both in the past and in my own future already bridging an identity fabricated on screen, asking, mark making and another moment of self-conjuring here in front of you by eyes, tongue, lips, breath and the vibration of the air. Writing in any case appears always to assume a future, it implies it, calls to it, wishes it, you can’t write can you without somehow implying, or imagining, imaging a future.¹⁶⁷

Etchells speaks here to the creation of time reflected in the conceptual timing of words — and even in performance, to a degree. He creates through the text a concept of a past moment, superimposed in the present while reflecting the future from the past. He uses the projections

¹⁶⁷ Tim Etchells and Terry O’Connor, ‘At a Later Date’, transcription from video, unpublished paper presented at *In Imagination: The Future Reflected in Art and Argument*, University of Sheffield October 4, 2013.

of imagination, used while writing, by imagining the speech performed, while writing it in the present and being in the past. All elements are held simultaneously by one being, who both experienced and experiences it, and will experience it. Etchells stated that ‘Writing wants to be read, and its wanting is what calls to the future...writing anticipates a reader, an encounter. Writing anticipates a future moment of exchange.’¹⁶⁸ He continues exploring the theme of how writing lasts beyond the individual, leaving a trace of the person behind and how such writing expects and calls for a future rendezvous even after they are gone. Etchells implies that such writings are conservative, assuming a status quo of existence and of the present, while presuming a hopeful and useful future.

O’Connor then interrupted, discussing the evolution of *Tomorrow’s Parties*. ‘The world could be like this, or this, or this, for which you can all read the world is like this, and this and this...’¹⁶⁹ Here, in this moment, again, but in reverse of Etchells, there is a superimposing of time; by reading the possible futures aloud, O’Connor points out that those designations or imaginings show equally how the world is perceived right now, as well as later.

Etchells continued, highlighting how performance and performance gatherings are both connecting and fracturing, the results of which can only be revealed in a future time. The temporal nature of theatre, with its signs and codes, is familiar and helps to create this dichotomy.¹⁷⁰ He then referred to Bertolt Brecht, pointing out that Brecht’s determination to leave matters unresolved ‘provoke[s] action in the aftermath, in order to provoke action and change outside of the confines of the theatre, he proposed an end in short that is no end in

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ In this context, ‘performance gatherings’ refers to the place in which an audience resides physically, emotionally and mentally for the experience of a performance, from arrival through to departure.

fact.¹⁷¹ Here, Etchell's describes Brecht's use of theatre to inspire activism beyond the performance.

O'Connor then progressed onto the rehearsal process and showed how words can be replayed or erased, even as the re-imagining of the lines occurs. Time is thus rewritten, futures replayed or erased through text. O'Connor states: 'The attempt of it all both constitutes and signifies the process and propels the invitation to the audience to join the game or to take it away.'¹⁷² The provocation, the invitation and contestation are then democratic, ever changing and just as plausible in one moment to the next of each imagined future.

Etchells then outlined how time changes our identity but that he is more interested in the architecture of performance and the impulse of futures:

I think especially about how performance creates an embodied and less purely informational impetus to the future of how the unfolding experience of the work writes directly into the perceptual systems and bodies of those watching. The way the performance works in a moment by moment dramaturgical way to establish demand and install in the viewer new ways of looking, observing or attending.¹⁷³

I quote at length here the precise and evocative language Etchells used to argue how the future is created within performance through a Brechtian cycle of ideas. I critique this below.

Etchells concluded:

It's here perhaps that the most radical call to the future comes from performance that in its endless playful non-utilitarian rearrangement, redeployment and reimaging of

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

the human in relation to social and political structures, bodily limits, the world of objects, and landscapes, in its tireless refiguring of the relations between persons, language sound, bodies, speech and space, in its relentless mission to stage and re-stage, see and re-see, feel and re-feel all these things, that it really calls to us, opening a space that beckons, that asks us to think again, act again, in new ways, to know better who we are. The way that content calls explicitly to the future is easily mapped. But for me the real charge of the event, its real reach to moments beyond itself, lies somewhere else. It's in the way that the work after the fact remains unresolved, as image, as experience, as memory, texture, the way it stays unresolved even in conversation and discussion, the way the work lingers but is not understood and the way that this not understanding, the incommensurable, in fact, stays with us as provocation, challenge, irritant, food and fuel.¹⁷⁴

Like Brecht, Etchells echoes the unfinished, the incomplete, the pondering as a call toward the future. He calls to attention the way in which we view these imaginings and the political and social ramifications that such imaginings elicit. This is an important statement as he affirms the practice of imagining as a political act, which creates new states of being that are constantly called into question by disrupting the status quo of thoughts, language, associations and meaning that are contrived through perception and experiences. Through performance, the future is embodied by the unfinished, always asking to be finished, to re-finish, relentlessly exploring more and more new territory.¹⁷⁵ Thus, for Etchells, the disruption is perhaps essential to the process of imagining, which forever questions and remakes ideas and outcomes. Additionally, he affirms the lasting effect of such encounters. In *Certain Fragments*, as stated previously, Etchells describes the results of the performance by its witnesses, where a performance 'leaves us, above all, unable to stop thinking, talking and

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ See also Etchells's work and descriptions of Forced Entertainment's productions in *Certain Fragments*.

reporting what we've seen.'¹⁷⁶ Echoes of the imagining experience last long after the initial imagining happens, and thus, an unlimited potential of questioning and testing can emerge from the practice of imagining alternate futures. Etchells, O'Connor and Cocker have all clearly reframed the concept of disruption within individual and collective narratives as a form used to create potential futures within *Tomorrow's Parties*. These disruptive devices are also used within the practice experiments, in the creation of new narratives and in the disruption of resistances, as I will examine further within the critique of the practice.

A Call for a Frame of Ethics within Future Performances and Between Performance Makers

In experimenting with futures, there is an essential element of exploration of the unknown, requiring a certain amount of intellectual risk taking. Candy, with others, describes the risks involved with experiential futures as necessary to its ethos:

One doesn't really get anywhere very interesting with futures until one starts to entertain possibilities that deeply challenge current ways of thinking. I'm invoking the spirit of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead here ('It is the business of the future to be dangerous') as well as my mentor, Jim Dator ('Any useful statement about the future should at first appear to be ridiculous'). [...] In any case, the 'dangerous conversation' confronts that which is uncomfortable and vulnerable, and therefore marginalized, but potentially transformative. Likewise, for other kinds of community, and for individuals. Creating a safe space for that means first of all finding ways to suspend the very powerful reflex of avoiding such sensitive topics.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Etchells, *Certain Fragments*, p. 18.

¹⁷⁷ Candy, 'Impacting the Social'.

The risk of exploring ideas on sensitive topics can perhaps have negative effects on their audiences and participants. Candy discusses ethics in his thesis on both Guerrilla and experiential futures. He delineates two areas for ethical ramifications, citing the material as potentially being either ‘distressing’ or ‘misleading.’ Candy suggests that both must be evaluated by the intention of the work.¹⁷⁸ Unfortunately, there is very little other conversation between artists concerning ethics and the subject of creating futures. There must be some consideration given to the responsibility of the practitioners with regard to the public and ethics of performance. As the photos of experiential future artefacts in the section on Candy, above, show, themes and content presented in the form of a relatable and plausible future may be psychologically disturbing or deceptive. Currently, there are no means of explanation or notification that these objects are ‘not real,’ or that they are intended as a theatrical event, artifice, satire or provocation. The suspension of disbelief is required and needed to transport the viewer in time in the form of a ‘hoax’. To complicate this matter further, the nature of the form, particularly in Guerrilla Futures, dictates a sense of realism in form, which can contribute to potential confusions. As evidenced by The Yes Men, there can be a significant impact with possible ramifications on individuals and communities, especially when the objects or immersive practice is designed to be as ‘realistic’ as possible. Further examination of practice needs to indicate *if* and how this tension can be resolved, while maintaining the integrity and full concept of the work. As these design fictional elements are part of an emerging form of artistic practice, there are few artists and few examples in public spheres. However, if this form escalates in frequency and scale, artefacts and events will be more pervasive in public contexts. Currently, this type of public work can largely be ignored due to their infrequency; if their number increases then the landscape could potentially be littered with these relics of artifice. This is particularly evident in projects that concern public health, as artefacts are designed to look as real to observers as possible and thus become

¹⁷⁸ Candy, ‘The Futures of Everyday Life’, pp. 279–85.

indistinguishable from other official notices or documents. It is not unimaginable that a certain amount of public anxiety and problems could occur. If, for example, an artefact such as the bird flu project discussed above coincided with a real bird flu outbreak, the design artefacts could confuse and misdirect the public from official and necessary announcements, warnings and notifications (though obviously Candy is aware and sensitive to such ethical considerations, as he points out in his thesis).¹⁷⁹ It is possible that the proliferation of hoax material left in public spaces might eventually lead individuals to ignore real warnings, perhaps dismissing the material as propaganda or artistic artefacts. Conceivably, a standard of practice could be put into place for other works on this spectrum, including, but not limited to, the removal of artefacts from public spaces after a period of time. Practitioners working in futures and experiential futurists, should consider such measures and discuss further frameworks with regard to potential ethical conflicts.

The potential ethical tensions between artifice, artefacts and audience deception, as well as keeping the integrity of the artist's concept, must be balanced. There are precedents for this type of work, such as Augusto Boal's Invisible Theatre, where artifice is integral to the work.¹⁸⁰ Such ethical dilemmas may never be solved. However, it is prudent to contemplate these issues as the field of performing futures progresses. I, too, encountered dilemmas of artifice within the experiments during the case studies, particularly in relation to language and the use of artefacts. However, I opted to be as consistently transparent as possible, which sometimes worked and sometimes did not, as the following case studies will show. Thus, as the practice began, I was acutely aware of the need for ethical consideration throughout the process, despite the ethical questions and lack of formal parameters raised above. In addition to transparency, I consistently made risk assessments for each project and

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, pp. 143–47.

evaluated the care for my audiences both before and after, the actions to be taken, and the language used toward the aims of each workshop or performance. In relation to the artists discussed above, in the next section I explore how I tested and combined the elements of improvisation and disrupting narratives from Etchells and O'Connor. I test and build upon Candy's insights and principles regarding design fiction and his guidelines of 'Don't break the universe, The 'Tip of the Iceberg' and 'The Art of Double-take.'¹⁸¹ I also examined some of the role play elements used by The Yes Men in assuming characters and providing positive alternative futures. The insights from these practitioners, in addition to the observations and discoveries made from LARP (democratic co-creation, bleed, heroism, role play and storytelling), are combined and tested to find approaches that facilitate modified and new performance territories of imagined futures in the following case studies while employing ethical consideration of participant involvement throughout.

¹⁸¹ Candy, *Guerrilla Futures*; Candy, 'A future of design'.

Section Four

Imagining Futures:

The Case Studies: Empirical Research, Findings and Summative Analysis

The following section contains eight practical case studies. The experiments within the case studies outline my search for methods which contribute to experiences of future spaces and imagining futures within performance. The methods used draw upon the elements inspired by LARP (heroism, bleed, storytelling, democratic co-creation) and the principles of practice from the artist practitioners discussed in the previous section, as well as my own innovations. Each experiment builds upon the previous, examining, questioning and altering the practice in an action-research based process. Within this section, I will discuss the practice and provide some analysis relating to the structures and outcomes. This section serves as both a document of the experimentation and a step-by-step outline of each experiment on how to specifically re-create (or adapt to suit in future iterations) the practice and performance of a Future Theatre. In Section Five, I will draw on the final results and further analyse the practice, findings and achievements, as well as suggest further areas for inquiry.

All of the case studies are framed by the methodology set out in the introduction to the study and are organized as follows: the practice plan and rationale; a description of the practice; reflection and analysis; revised goals; and the context, aims and revisions for the following experiment. This structure of action-based research permitted the process to be rigorous, yet flexible and reflective. In response to the feedback of each session, I was able to develop the researched material and problems encountered within the practice. Where appropriate, I have included documentation within the text to illustrate the lines of thinking and the arguments that shaped the practice. Full documentation for each case study can be found in Appendices 1–8. Participants who asked for anonymity are always designated as ‘X’

within each case study and within each corresponding Appendix section. Their names are also omitted in the acknowledgement sections. Where direct quotations are used from the audio or video, and within the transcript documentation of those sessions, my approach was to use minimal punctuation in order to maintain the feel and integrity of the live speech and pauses.

Each experiment involved different participants, rather than the same group throughout. With the exception of Case Studies Five and Six, there were always participants I did not know and/or who were not familiar with my work or intentions. Case Study One, the *Star Trek* discussion group, was comprised mainly of academics who responded via announcements and flyers. Case Studies Two and Three were hosted by the group *Terra Incognita*, a group of theatre and fine arts practitioners, scholars and enthusiasts. I knew professionally the two organisers of the group and one or two of the participants who attended from the *Terra Incognita* group. I did not know the remainder of the participants from *Terra Incognita*, and several of those participants attended multiple sessions. Case Study Four, The Free Shop performance, was open to the public via announcements and flyers. Case Study Five consisted of undergraduate theatre students and a theatre lecturer from another higher education institution at which I teach. I knew the students and the lecturer and they knew me in a teaching capacity. The students were not familiar with my subject or studies, but the lecturer had attended the first *Star Trek* Discussion Group. Case Studies Six, Seven and Eight were hosted by *Terra Incognita* and contained other participants not associated with *Terra Incognita* who responded to announcements and flyers. There were also some previous attendees present. Throughout the process, I debated the potential limitations and advantages of academic audience members versus a general non-specialist audience. Ultimately, I felt that the participation of academics, even familiar ones who repeatedly attended, supported the methodology process and contributed critical theoretical debates to the research in feedback sessions, leading to extensive examination of the sessions. In terms of backgrounds and

relationships with the participants, for those academics who were part of *Terra Incongnita* (mainly the two organisers), we were familiar with each other professionally and through professional social engagements. Therefore, an established relationship existed with these participants and may have influenced their behaviour and responses in that we were colleagues. This must also be noted for the students who attended Case Study Six from Rotherham College Higher Education Programme. This prior acquaintance with some of the participants potentially fed into the responses of certain activities within the scenarios. For example, there might have been more candour in certain situations or power dynamics present in the student scenario of Case Study Six, as the participants all knew me as their lecturer and each other as fellow students. Therefore, the results of the study are concluded from a mixed group, some participants known to me and others unknown, and also some who attended multiple sessions. Acknowledging these relationships and the dynamics at work during the activities and responses was prudent and may have influenced the outcome of the conversations, though all conclusions should also not be discounted, as the responses were also unique to the individuals, addressing their own desires and anxieties expressed within the context of each experiment, and specifically relevant to their own concerns and positions whilst imagining futures.

Case Study One – *Star Trek* Discussion Group

February 17, 2015

Hawley Building Cutting Edge Studio 2 Mappin Street, Sheffield, S1 4DT

6-8pm

Participants: 10

All Documentation is located in Appendix 1:

Appendix 1.1 Star Trek Discussion Group Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 1.2 Star Trek Discussion Group Audio Transcript

Appendix 1.3 Audio CD of Star Trek Group Discussion Group Case Study One

Appendix 1.4 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

The formation of the *Star Trek* discussion group rose from my initial need for data concerning the thoughts and desires of others about the future.¹⁸² It seemed essential for the first stages of experimentation to begin with imaginings from others, rather than from myself. It was important to me that the methodology began in a democratic participatory way, similar to the co-creation methods of LARP. The *Star Trek* group were self-identifying volunteers (*Star Trek* fans), co-creating the content of the session through the sharing of ideas and expression of beliefs within a fictional scenario (imagining a future earth). Through the shared lexicon of *Star Trek*, the participants could examine some of the specific imagined futures within the *Star Trek* cannon, as well as their own imagined futures. I introduced a set of questions to the participants using *Star Trek* as a basis of imagining, inviting the participants to contemplate the future represented by *Star Trek* and compare or express their thoughts about their own fictional future imaginings. The session plan, notes and transcript are included in Appendices 1.1 and 1.2.

¹⁸² *Star Trek* is a popular science-fiction television shows created by Gene Roddenberry (CBS Television, 1966).

Practice

The participants were invited through local academic and social community groups, as well as through flyers posted in the local area. I required an email for registration to the event and replied to all with full disclosure concerning the research-driven purpose of the meeting and a copy of the consent forms. Ten individuals participated in the event. Seven of the participants were PhD students. The discussion lasted approximately two hours. The meeting was held at the Hawley Building in the Cutting Edge Studio 2 at the University of Sheffield. I arrived early to set out tea, coffee and biscuits. I put on a DVD of *Star Trek* playing silently in the background.¹⁸³ As the participants gathered, I greeted them and introduced myself. I thanked them for coming, invited them to refreshments and provided them with the consent forms to (re)review while waiting for others to arrive. Some of the participants chatted before the session.

The atmosphere was congenial, albeit slightly dampened at first by the formality of the consent form explanation. Perhaps this made some participants slightly uncomfortable, feeling that their responses might need to be more formal. The dampened mood receded as the conversation began. I introduced the topic of the session by asking the participants to consider the following questions: Has *Star Trek* influenced your thinking about the future, and, if so, in what ways? These initial questions were followed by the primary questions: What kind of common goals has *Star Trek* set? Do you agree or not (in terms of what the participants would hope for) with these representations of the future?

My hope was that the questions would focus the participants' thoughts throughout the session on the type of futures expressed in *Star Trek* and would encourage them to share some

¹⁸³ *Star Trek: The City on the Edge of Forever*, dir. by. Joseph Pevney (CBS Studios, 1967).

of their own imaginings. The participants began by discussing some of the narrative structures present in *Star Trek* that enabled certain human advancements in a quasi-capitalist-free society. Some of the participants offered resistance to several threads of the conversation. They seemed to feel that discussion of the future necessarily meant the presentation of some utopian ideal. It was evident that some viewed the premise of the conversation as problematic. A few of the participants felt that the generalisation and discussion of ‘positive’ futures might lead to a homogenous vision of the future in which individuals who did not have the same vision would be marginalised. However, out of this dialogue concerning marginalisation, one of the main themes of the session emerged. The participants expressed a consensus that human ‘greed’ would ultimately prevent human advancement. They argued that there could never really be a ‘better’ future because humans were ‘too greedy’ and greed would override any real chance of creating a more egalitarian future. The mood suddenly declined after this revelation and there was a dampened atmosphere. As the conversation resumed, issues of intellectual and moral growth through education and technology, and the possibilities of society functioning in a post-capitalist world, continued to be raised in response to the greed theme. The group debated which future jobs would be unwanted by the general populace and how those decisions would be made in a capitalist-free society. In the second half of the session, discussions on political views concerning gender, militarism and morality lead again to similar expressions of futility about the possibility of any type of positive future changes. In the final minutes of the session, the discussion moved toward portrayals in *Star Trek* of the military industrial system, gender discrimination and ‘Columbusing’.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ *Columbusing* as defined by the Urban Dictionary: 1) The art of discovering something that isn’t new; 2) When white people claim they have invented/discovered something that has been around for years, decades, even centuries; 3) When someone thinks they have invented something that’s been around for a while or has already been discovered but tries to take first claim to inventing it. The Urban Dictionary, *Columbusing*, <<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Columbusing>> [accessed 21 November, 2017].

Reflection and Analysis

The theme of human greed and an underlying feeling of hopelessness was repeated throughout the various topics during the discussion. The participants conveyed a sense of futility in imagining different possibilities for the future. This sense of hopelessness in creating a better future toward a more egalitarian world is one of the issues discussed in a case study from Naomi Klein's book, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*, concerning climate change.¹⁸⁵ Klein cites a focus group study from the American Geophysical Union (AGU) on attitudes toward climate change:

Many respondents in our focus groups were convinced that the underlying cause of environmental problems is a pervasive climate of rampant selfishness and greed, and since they see this moral deterioration to be irreversible, they feel that environmental problems are unsolvable.¹⁸⁶

Not only was this theme of greed identified within Klein's research, it also appears as a topic of interest in other research and publications on post-capitalism. Colin R. Turner, the founder of *The Free World Charter* (a manifesto and proposal for improving the future), would later publish two books and a video series discussing the same issues of greed and post-capitalist concerns as those revealed by the *Star Trek* group, further validating the agency of the topic through an even wider economic discussion.¹⁸⁷ The *Star Trek* participants had demonstrated an underlying belief that mankind is corrupted by greed, and, critically, this belief limited their ability to seriously consider imagining a better future world. The *Star Trek* discussion

¹⁸⁵ Klein, *This Changes Everything*, p. 60.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Colin R. Turner, *The Open Economy - Part 3: The Practicalities*, online video recording, YouTube, 4 December 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGYAR6OCT_s> [accessed 27 October, 2017].

therefore contributed to the initial stages of the research by identifying a strong theme of human greed as an initial prohibiting factor to imagining positive alternate futures.

Revised Goals

Based on this session (and the ones to follow), it was clear that challenging this sense of hopelessness resulting from greed would need to be considered within conceptualising futures. Within the practice, there would need to be a process which endeavoured to counter these feelings, to create space for new future ideas and to facilitate dialogues about the future and the imagining of new possibilities. I then began to consider the process of imagining and thought it prudent to first investigate some possible methods of imagining, either individually or in groups. I thought that investigating proclivities to imagining might uncover more information on how to construct the practice to encourage future imagining and circumvent the blocks and beliefs uncovered within the *Star Trek* discussion group.

Context and Aims for Case Study Two

The initial case study, then, revealed the theme of greed and a block to imagining the future, providing a potential theme that could be explored through various methods within the research. The discoveries revealed in Case Study One became much more than a survey impetus; they set a trajectory that was pursued throughout subsequent experiments. The participants' reluctance to imagine potentially positive futures influenced the design of the following experiments through addressing the topic of greed in imagining the future and searching for methods to counter the blocks to imagining and the dispiriting beliefs.

My aim in Case Study Two was to utilise the greed theme to explore a methodological approach concerning the effect(s) of participating in imagining futures through individual reflection or through group engagement. This also informed the size of the participant groups needed, as well as the type of experiments to be tested; some would focus on individual imagining and others on imagining through group collaboration.

Case Study Two – Methodology Workshop Considering Greed

Hosted by Terra Incognita

March 19, 2015

The Drama Studio 1 University of Sheffield, Shearwood Rd, Sheffield S10 2TD

4-6pm

Participants: 4

All Documentation is located in Appendix 2:

Appendix 2.1 Methodology Workshop Considering Greed Practice Plan, Notes and Script

Appendix 2.2 Text Excerpt from The Free World Charter and Tableau Photo

Appendix 2.3 Slide Presentation: Tableau and Games 1,2 and 3

Appendix 2.4 Tableau Questionnaire with Participant Responses

Tableau Questionnaire Participant 1 Response

Tableau Questionnaire Participant 2 Response

Tableau Questionnaire Participant 3 Response

Tableau Questionnaire Participant 4 Response

Appendix 2.5 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

As several discoveries were made concerning greed and imagining from the *Star Trek* discussion group, I would explore the theme further, in combination with examining different approaches of imagining by individuals and within groups. I thought it prudent to explore methods which contrasted the imagining process between individuals and groups. This type of experiment would shed light on the design of subsequent practice methods and would help to ascertain whether to focus on experiences that were more singular or group oriented. The workshop process investigated whether private contemplation through an image or text inspired more thoughts or feelings about the future through introspective reflection, or if engagement within a group activity was more thought provoking about the future. I set up two experiments to explore these concepts. The first part of the experiment included a tableau pose (see Figure 5) set against a piece of projected text while the second used a series of three

short games exploring the ramifications of greed as viewed by the individual within a group setting. The tableau was staged by myself under a projected excerpt of text from *The Free World Charter* (see Figure 5 below and also located in Appendix 2.2).¹⁸⁸ *The Free World Charter* is a piece of text written by Colin R. Turner as a new world manifesto concerning the ethical rights of humankind living in a more sustainable and egalitarian world.¹⁸⁹ The text was chosen for its focus on the concept of greed and individual rights for a relatively positive alternate future path.¹⁹⁰ I wanted to use a piece of text as a springboard for imagining a different future, a text that contained provocative but plausible proposals to some of the greed issues encountered in the *Star Trek* workshop.¹⁹¹ The games were devised around the theme of greed, examining the process of imagining in groups collectively. I used a slide presentation as the stimulus for the games. I explain the games in detail below and my notes, as well as the slide presentation for the games, which can be found in Appendices 2.1 and 2.3.

Practice

The event was hosted by the practice-based PhD performance group, *Terra Incognita*, from the University of Sheffield. Two members of *Terra Incognita* were present as well as two undergraduate students I had solicited by word of mouth prior to the session. I arrived at Drama Studio 1 at 4pm and began to set up the space. I arranged a table facing the projector screen and set up my slide presentation. I then set out the consent forms and pens on the table for the participants. Once the participants arrived, I explained my research concept, the consent form, their participation in this session and asked if there were any questions. I then

¹⁸⁸ Colin Turner, *The Free World Charter*, < <http://www.freeworldcharter.org/en>> [accessed 15 August 2017].

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ I acknowledge that presenting a piece of material that discusses positive alternate future outcomes is complex and inherently complicated. However, I wanted to present a piece of material that was ‘relatively’ positive and distinctly not dystopian in its ideas, tone or language to counter some of the greed concepts from the previous session.

¹⁹¹ Another text which might be considered useful to draw upon for the same exercise would be Rebecca Solnit’s *Hope in the Dark* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2016), though this may be less familiar to some.

asked the participants to step outside while I prepared for the first half of the session. I placed the questionnaires on the table, turned on the projector, and put up a slide of text, and took my position to form a tableau gesture under the text (see Figure 5 below). The tableau pose was admittedly an instinctual choice, representative of an open, non-aggressive gesture directed toward the viewer for contemplation. Though the combined images of text and the accompanying tableau pose were open to interpretation, the purpose was to engage the audience in imagining an alternate future scenario based on the participants' interpretation or assignment of meaning between text and human pose as prompted by the projected text and questionnaires. I then called out to the participants to enter. They entered, sat down at the table and began reading the text on the slide behind me.

The Free World Charter

1. The highest concern of humanity is the combined common good of all living species and biosphere.
2. Life is precious in all its forms, and free to flourish in the combined common good.
3. Earth's natural resources are the birth-right of all its inhabitants and are free to share in the combined common good.
4. Every human being is an equal part of a worldwide community of humans, and a free citizen of Earth.
5. Our community is founded on the spirit of cooperation and an understanding of nature, provided through basic education.
6. Our community provides for all its members the necessities of a healthy, fulfilling and sustainable life, freely and without obligation.
7. Our community respects the limits of nature and its resources, ensuring minimal consumption and waste.
8. Our community derives its solutions and advances progress primarily through the application of logic and best available knowledge.
9. Our community acknowledges its duty of care and compassion for members who are unable to contribute.
10. Our community acknowledges its responsibility to maintain a diverse and sustainable biosphere for all future life to enjoy.

Excerpt taken from *The Free World Charter*
by Colin R. Turner



Figure 5 Tableau with *The Free World Charter* text on the rear projection screen (Photo Permission Dana Koellner)

The atmosphere was quiet and introspective. The participants then spent approximately five minutes filling out the questionnaire while I stood in the tableau gesture. The questionnaire and participant responses can be found in Appendix 2.4 and are discussed at length in the reflection and analysis section below. Once they put their pens down, I came out of the gesture and collected the forms.

The second half of the session was a series of three games aimed at engaging the participants in imagining a future world, combining an examination of their own concept of greed within a group scenario. The games were designed for reflection through participation, critical thinking and discussion on how greed might affect the participants' wants and desires of the future in a group game context. Each game aimed to explore the participants' current views of greed within their own lives and asked them to think about how those views and feelings are connected to their own lives. This section of the workshop consisted of three devised games with visual aids in which participants contributed verbally and physically to the prompts provided. The game slides, as stated previously, can be found in Appendix 2.3. The games provided a frame with familiar content concerning the environment and consumerism by which to examine one's motives and views and compare with those of others. The slides and questions within the game were designed to encourage contemplation of material desires and types of personal judgements related to those desires.

In the first game, participants were asked to view a number of slides of objects (e.g. a washing machine or a private jet – see Appendix 2.3 for full listing) and to move to the right of the room if they wanted the item or to the left if they did not want the item. The game appeared engaging to participants. There were many expressions of joy and laughter as well as self-commentary throughout as each person considered and contributed their views on each slide. The conversation was generally dispersed equally amongst the group members

throughout.

The second game contained additional slides of objects and was coupled with the question ‘Is it greedy to want this?’. Participants were asked to respond with a yes or no to each slide. The word ‘abstain’ was also offered mid-way through to several participants who could not decide. Their answers were seemingly uncensored in the jovial atmosphere. About half-way through this game, the participants began discussing the slide images in more depth, which led to discussions concerning greed, desire, escapism, unattainable reality and goal achievement. The discussion continued between slides and this was important as it conveyed some of the personal internal and external societal debates on each topic. There were also conversations about the future environment, distribution of wealth and education system prompted by some of the slides in relation to greed. At the end of the second game, I asked the participants to consider the following questions: What do the images address in terms of how we currently perceive greed? How much is enough?

Game three was aimed toward a problem-solving approach. The slides were focused on societal welfare and were designed to stimulate thinking about the decision-making process involving entire groups of people rather than the individual. The instructions of the game were as follows (though due to the number of players I combined the Facilitator and Dispenser roles):

This is a Game. The rules of the game are:

I need one person to act as a Facilitator - they may only ask a question or summarize the answer, they may not add their opinions to any commentary.

I need one more person to be The Dispenser:

(Tell the person privately - Dispense the coin to the person if you think the answer

represents an influence of greed on society)

The remaining are the audience, the audience can answer the questions put forward or ask additional questions.

All responses may only last for up to 3 minutes.

There will be a bell that sounds, signalling when the 3 minutes are up and we will move on to the next slide.

You will receive a coin for certain answers to the questions.

The coins will be collected at the end of the game.¹⁹²

In this section, the participants considered larger issues affecting groups or society as a whole through specific pre-written questions in combination with the slides. Interestingly, despite the complexity of the questions, the participants were able to debate answers and, in some cases, come up with suggested solutions.

Reflection and Analysis

The first half of the session (the tableau) considered the possibilities of a different world individually through personal reflection and individual meaning making. The tableau questionnaire with participant responses is located in Appendix 2.4. The questions asked on the tableau questionnaire were perhaps slightly too abstract regarding a direct imagining of the future in an attempt to avoid leading questions. However, overall, the participants were able to draw a connection between the text, the tableau and how they imagined the type of world represented by the manifesto. Two of the four participants used the following three descriptions of their experience in response to the initial questionnaire: ‘danger threat,’ ‘fear’ and ‘challenged,’ despite the positive affirmations within the text and the tableau. Although

¹⁹² From notes in Appendix 2.1.

the tableau and text were meant to be positive, it still evoked some negative associations for a few of the participants. As a result of these comments, I began to consider if there might also be a predisposition toward something frightening or dispiriting when imagining the future, no matter how positive or encouraging the future material is. In future experiments, I would attempt to use more fact-based material to test this result further and the later case studies would begin to shed light on this question.

The second part of the experiment consisted of three games. Each game solicited discussions that created personal links between greed (e.g. examining one's current purchasing habits) and possible alternate futures based on the participants' current views concerning greed in a group participation scenario. With the remaining time left, I had asked for feedback on the games session. There was quite a lively discussion in the feedback session around the topics and the participants did not seem overwhelmed by the rather large complex questions put before them. The entire group thought that the game was more effective in imagining the future than the tableau. They felt this was due to the active mental engagement elicited by the game context and discussion in comparison with the singular, more personal reflective imagining process of the tableau experience. However, through the reflective engagement in the tableau/text portion, some but not all of the participants expressed that the tableau/text was inspiring and might be effective in circumventing *some* of the feelings of hopelessness in imagining a future world. Overall, there was a preference for imagining within groups; finding agreement amongst the group through identifying personal and societal greed issues and practices felt proactive to the participants, at least in the sense of awareness, mindfulness and creating solidarity to counter feelings of futility toward the nature of humans and greed. Based on the results of the experiment, I decided to focus on collective group imagining within the following experiments to foster that sense of group engagement and solidarity.

Revised Goals

Determining initial points of agreement through self-expression and dialogue seemed to serve as a counter-balance to some of the hopelessness or futility issues concerning greed. I would pursue these areas of agreement again in Case Study Five, further testing these reflections and responses. In the meantime, I had been offered the use of space at a performing arts centre and felt that I could use the opportunity to experiment with some of Candy's principles in creating a future immersive space while responding to some of the issues of greed presented in the previous two workshops. I would use the space to explore the concept of greed in a different way, by constructing a fully immersive future environment (based on the principles of Candy) as a performance, reflecting the concept of a future world where everything was 'free'. Creating a fully immersive future environment seemed the most daunting aspect of this work, so I opted to tackle this early on in the practice.

Context and Aims for Case Study Three

I decided to test the concept of a fully immersive environment first as a workshop. In the following case study, I endeavoured to explore the conceptual elements needed to create a future space which would contribute to the physical environment. This initial workshop would allow me to experiment with some of Candy's principles and design fiction elements first, as discussed in Section Three. The concept would then be refined and coupled with the fully immersive physical environment as a performance in the arts space in Case Study Four.

Case Study Three - The Free Shop Workshop

Hosted by Terra Incognita

November 26, 2015

Hawley Building Cutting Edge Studio 2 Mappin Street, Sheffield, S1 4DT

5-7pm (Tea and Coffees from 4pm)

Participants: 4

All Documentation is located in Appendix 3:

Appendix 3.1 The Free Shop Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 3.2 The Free Shop Flyer

Appendix 3.3 The Free Shop Sign

Appendix 3.4 The Free Shop Feedback Questionnaires

Feedback Questionnaire Participant 1

Feedback Questionnaire Participant 2

Feedback Questionnaire Participant 3

Feedback Questionnaire Participant 4

Appendix 3.5 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

Continuing with the theme of ‘greed’ addressed in the previous sessions, I decided to make a show that might provide the experience of a post-scarcity future world. Post-scarcity is defined by John Maynard Keynes and Robert Chernomas as a type of economic freedom from ‘mother nature and human nature.’¹⁹³ Generally, most think of post-scarcity as a world where humans have harnessed both their natural resources and technology in a way that redistributes resources equally and freely to all. However, Keynes adds a change of human consciousness to that definition, where humans are no longer pre-occupied by consumerism and consumption, and in fact, become averse to consumption in such a way that society would

¹⁹³ Robert Chernomas, ‘Keynes on Post-Scarcity Society’, *Journal of Economic Issues*, 18.4 (1984), 1007–26 (p. 1010).

regard overt consumerism as a mental illness.¹⁹⁴ The workshop concept would be called The Free Shop and was a first attempt to create a form of practice that might embody a physical immersive experience of an imagined post-scarcity future space. My hope was that the workshop might provide a physical sensation of a world in which there was a better management of resources for all as a counter argument to issues expressed concerning greed, and in experiential support of Keynes' theory. This workshop would also be my first attempt to draw on theoretical practice used by other artists, specifically that of Stuart Candy, discussed in Section Three. Candy's work often focuses on the construction of an immersive realistic future space (particularly with his students at UCAD) which is centred on design fiction artefacts and which utilises a multimedia approach. In creating an immersive future space, Candy (or his students) comes up with a concept he wishes to explore and evaluates how best to simulate this experience and stimulate a dialogue through an environment. In some cases, Candy uses an object as the stimulus; in others, he creates an environment that encapsulates the concept as a stimulus. Here, I would attempt to create an environment to stimulate an experience of a post-scarcity future. My aim was to render an environment that not only offered a space to contemplate some of the greed issues discussed previously but also to stimulate a feeling or sense of what a post-scarcity world might feel like. The immersive space which Candy creates is usually fabricated by several people, is seemingly well funded, and includes substantial technical resources (i.e. a set or a design fiction piece such as the NaturePod™ which was a virtual reality machine built from a massage chair). The approach I took was an attempt to create a financially feasible immersive project that could be managed by one artist. My hope was to shape a performance that was practical in financial consideration and manageable to artists working alone in an atmosphere of austerity. Fictional immersive environments could be quite costly and I wanted to attempt to see if I could create

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 1009; John Maynard Keynes, *Essays in Persuasion. Vol. 9 of The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes* (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 329.

one of these environments in an economical and feasible way that tested some of the concepts of physical immersive spaces as relayed by Candy. How I devised the concept and the results are detailed below. The documentation for the experiment is located in Appendix 3.

Practice

In order to create the immersive world conceptually, I needed to find out how much information was needed to trigger the idea of a post-scarcity future. This information would contextualise the experience of my immersive environment in the upcoming performance. I would first try some of the ideas in a workshop with *Terra Incognita* prior to the public performance. I created a flyer (see Appendix 3.2) that contained a brief provocation about the experience as a post-scarcity event with the following wording:

A Post-Scarcity World

The Free Shop is a space to experience a Post-Scarcity world.

We have enough money, enough time, enough resources, enough technology, enough free energy to feed, clad, house, educate and maintain the health of everyone on the planet.

Our collective focus as a capitalist society is outmoded and dysfunctional. It is time to realise that we have the ability, will and the desire to transform our world into a clean, green and healthy environment, undoing the damage of the past for all to live in a better future.

Through this text, I unintentionally ‘Broke the Universe’ — one of Candy’s principles discussed in Section Three. I called specific attention to the present rather than speaking as if entirely ‘in’ the future which revealed the artifice of the fictional world. This choice

ultimately revealed the struggle I was having concerning a conflict in the presentation of time between the future and the present and revealing the artifice of the piece. I interpreted the purpose of the immersive space as a transposition of time, the future onto or into the present. I attempted to create an overlay of the future onto the present through the text, where the audience was provided with a stimulus for a plausible futuristic scenario in order to see what the world could be like, but also to mark how it was directly related to the present. The essential goal was to create a feeling of the future now, so people might ‘feel’ how different life might be in the future. This was anchored in language of the present on the flyer — an overt but somewhat clumsy political act that revealed the artifice of the premise. However, there was something about the idea of making a direct correlation between the imagined future experience and the present which I could not let go. I considered this ‘mistake’ more and more after the workshop and realised that departing from Candy’s principle made the experience feel more politically active or charged in its reflexivity, rather than just a physical representation of the future to experience and contemplate. I felt that this discovery of representing time only as a ‘future time,’ not indicative of the present, should not be a requirement for all future practice. The intent and language about time should be clear from the start and governed by one’s own inclination about each piece of work’s content and context.

My next task for the workshop was to create a physical environment of a plausible representation of post-scarcity. Candy advises that one of the challenges of creating these future spaces is providing enough balance between the recognizable and the future object or concept.¹⁹⁵ To combat this balance issue, I decided to create a venue which was not dissimilar to a charity shop, which would probably be familiar to the participants and plausible in a free

¹⁹⁵ Stuart Candy, ‘Could this be the future of parenting?’, <<https://futuryst.blogspot.co.uk/2017/07/nuturepod.html>> [accessed 18 January 2018].

society of the future (i.e. a place for recycled goods no longer wanted). The challenges of creating a 'real' environment were immense, and for the first time I was encountering one of my greatest concerns about the premise of creating immersive future environments as stage or performance sets; I wanted this method to be accessible without significant financial costs to other performers. To that end, I needed a space that would serve the idea without extensive modification. Items would then need to be added to the space at very little cost. Additionally, the items within would need to be somewhat familiar to an audience, as Candy advises, so that the audience is not confused by the setting and does not spend too much time considering what is unfamiliar, which may detract from the experience. The aspect of familiarity circumvents excessive explanation that might distract from the topic, in this case post-scarcity. The Hawley Building was a part of the Theatre Department at the University of Sheffield and the regular meeting place for *Terra Incognita*. The Hawley Building space would be very costly to entirely transform and would thus be unlikely to present a realistic representation without great expense. Transforming one room, however, was feasible. As the main purpose of the workshop was to test certain aspects of the performance concept, such as expectations from the time and language cues, the frame and mechanics of the piece and what the audience interpreted from the form in general, I needed only a representative environment for the purposes of an initial workshop.

Three weeks prior to the workshop, I solicited my department for donations for the experiment. In addition, I donated my own property to the experiment. The workshop was held at the Hawley Building at the University of Sheffield on the 26th of November 2015. I was very familiar with the building and chose a small, non-descript room at the rear of the first floor for the workshop. I removed all unnecessary items from the space and began to set

up the room to resemble what might look like a contemporary charity shop.¹⁹⁶ I placed the donated items around the room on tables, shelves and on a clothing rack, attempting to replicate a charity shop. At the last minute, I decided to place a large sign inside the ‘shop’ that read: ‘Welcome to The Free Shop! Everything you want is free, take whatever you want. If you have any questions, see the lady behind the counter.’

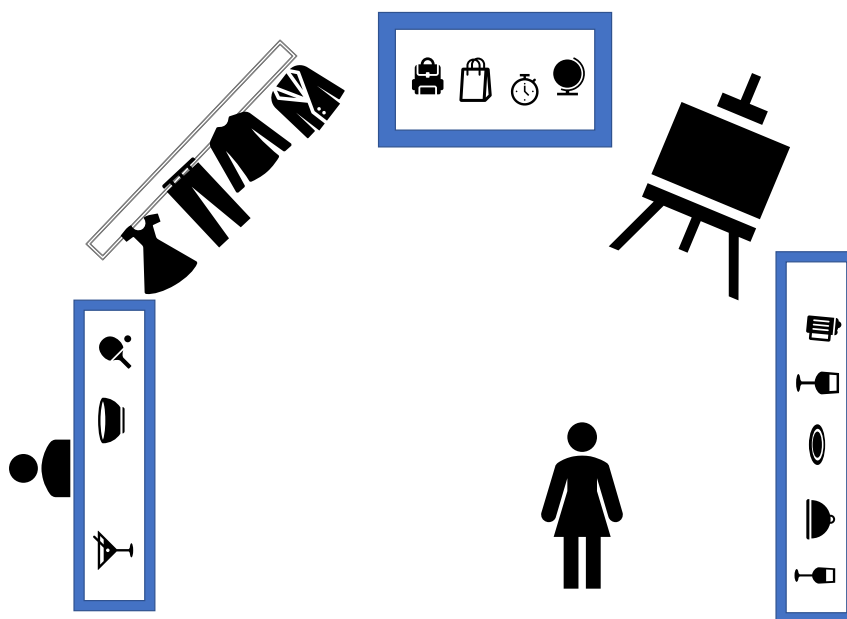


Figure 6: The Free Shop Workshop layout

Participants gathered in the kitchen room prior to the session for tea and coffee, as was the practice with *Terra Incognita* before every workshop. The flyers were handed out as the participants arrived. While we were waiting for the arrival of the remaining participants, there was a brief conversation about the meaning of post-scarcity and post-capitalism. This conversation was not intentional but, due to the waiting circumstance, I felt that I should

¹⁹⁶ Please note that this is not intended as a site-specific work, as defined by practitioners such as Brith Gof and Forced Entertainment, where the site informs and is generated of or from the space specifically and is intrinsically tied to that space for aesthetic or historical exploration and meaning making - see Nick Kay, *Site Specific Art* (London: Routledge, 2000). I did not intend to draw upon the space as site-specific to inform the piece in this instance, nor in the following performance. I utilized both spaces for pragmatic function and transformed them in a more utilitarian way to indicate the conceptual idea of a ‘shop’. I discuss the effect of the ‘shop’ representation in the analysis section below.

respond. Once all participants had arrived, I went through the consent form and asked if there were any questions (there were none). I told the participants that I would collect them in pairs to visit the shop and, once inside, they would have as much time to browse as they would like. I randomly selected two of the participants, asked if they would like to go first and then brought them into The Free Shop room. As the pair entered, I took a seat behind a long table and pretended to read so they would not feel they were being watched. There was a bit of awkward silence as they read the sign, then participants one and two started to look around the shop. One participant asked me questions about a post-scarcity world. I stated a few facts about post-scarcity extrapolated from literature on the topic such as: 'There is free energy and therefore free goods for all people, for anything that you need,' using the present tense. Participant 2 did not ask any questions. Eventually, the participants ended up in front of the large table where I was seated. After both had selected a few items, it was apparent that they did not know how to 'finish' or exit the shop. I asked if they would be willing to fill out a questionnaire, but this felt as if it was breaking my rule of 'no exchange'. One of the underlying thoughts in support of the post-scarcity world within the project was a concept of 'no exchange'. The premise of no exchange was an effort to move beyond a goods-for-service or remuneration mind set. I tried to embed the feeling within the experience that there need not be an exchange in a post-scarcity world. The lack of remuneration, I hoped, would trigger a physical sensation of awkwardness or lack of comfort (different from now) to inspire the imagining of a future post-scarcity experience — one that is different from the present. Therefore, this feeling of 'no exchange' was very important within the frame of the workshop and performance.

I thought that the participants would leave as they would in a normal shop and had thus neglected an exit strategy. As they approached me, I thanked them for coming and asked if they would step into the next room and fill out a questionnaire. I decided to use feedback

forms for the workshop in order to record the experience of the participants and to gather feedback that might not occur on the day of the actual performance. By asking if the participants would be willing to fill out a questionnaire at the end of each round, the question could be interpreted as a request rather than an exchange. However, it felt like an exchange at the time — ‘you experienced the event, now please do this’ — as well as a way of ending the immersion experience. I felt as if it was breaking the ‘no exchange’ rule at the time and it drew attention to the research and away from the experience. Nevertheless, the questionnaire was necessary at this stage to gain feedback on the concept and form and there was no indication from the participants during the feedback session that they felt the questionnaire presented an exchange of any sort when asked.

I then led the second group into The Free Shop with the same instructions. Participants 3 and 4 did not ask any questions about post-scarcity, only about the purpose of certain items. These participants seemed more comfortable within the scenario. One asked if they could have a particular item to which I said ‘certainly’ and that they could have anything they would like. As before, when they looked as if they had finished and stood before me at the desk (which felt like they were going to the register to pay and check out) I again asked them if they would fill out a questionnaire and escorted them into the next room. Upon reflection, I should have not directed the participants by breaking the scenario (telling them about the questionnaire). It perhaps would have been more impactful to have let the awkwardness stand, or to have moved my position closer to the entrance rather than the exit. This would have forced the participants to go against the flow of the shop, returning to me would signal some type of habit of paying, perhaps as ‘shop keeper’. If left awkward in the moment, it might have furthered the concept in terms of analysing habitual responses, such as those of payment and the consideration of the remuneration process of goods and distribution. Otherwise, an

exit strategy could be provided at the beginning of the workshop or as the participants entered the shop, with a simple instruction to ‘exit the shop when you are ready’.

I gave the participants approximately ten minutes to fill out the form and then came back in for a discussion. We continued the conversation with the remaining session time and I collected the feedback and consent forms, thanking them all for participating as they left the room.

Reflection and Analysis

The feedback responses are located in Appendix 3.4. The participants provided fairly detailed, in-depth feedback, therefore I will first discuss each one individually. Participant 1 viewed the space as if it was set in the future. Participant 1 felt it was fun to browse but decided not to take an object only to regret that decision when another participant took an item. The participant stated that although the instruction was clear, they were not sure if they *must* take something and that they did not want to take something for the sake of it. This confusion could be avoided if further instructions were added at the beginning; however, doing so might limit the experience by providing specific parameters within the shop. The participant was also unsure whether picking up an item (or abstaining from doing so) might trigger something else to happen. It is perhaps the ‘theatre workshop’ context that may have caused this thought — a certain expectation of events unfolding. Despite Participant 1’s questions during their browsing time and according to their feedback form, this participant did not think about the experience as a post-scarcity world. Although there was some mention of post-scarcity at the beginning of the workshop from the informal dialogue in the kitchen area, the participant felt more interaction afterwards would consolidate the experience and that the experience was a good stepping stone based on their familiarity with a shop concept. When asked if they had

ever considered a world in which everything was free during the feedback session, the participant said that their ‘mind was hitting a barrier with the concept as though it just seems impossible.’¹⁹⁷ Though this participant did not elaborate on the statement, the feeling expressed may be related to the ideas concerning futility that arose from the *Star Trek* group. In any case, for Participant 1, the concept seemed to trigger a block to imagining the possibility of a post-scarcity future.

Participant 2 said that the shop felt familiar but that ‘without prices’ it was hard for them to gauge if the item was a ‘bargain’ or not. Additionally, they felt some concerns about taking objects and potentially appearing greedy. This person stated that the experience did make them think about a world in which everything was free, stating ‘perhaps there really is enough to go around.’¹⁹⁸ I assume they were referring to enough resources in the world that could be shared by everyone. Here, post-scarcity was considered, perhaps also through the contemplation of value (e.g. a bargain), though the feedback does not express further specific elements that might have influenced their experience.

Participant 3’s experience was deeply rooted in guilt for taking things that ‘someone else might need.’¹⁹⁹ They stated that in the ‘present capitalist world everything is so hard won.’²⁰⁰ The participant identified that their experience fluctuated between real and ‘theatrical mode.’ They also commented on the label of ‘theatre,’ which lent itself to suspend their disbelief toward a type of representative future experience. The participant called this ‘theatre mode.’ Because it was theatre, they did not know if they could keep the item. In addition, and revealing even more complex feelings, the participant felt that their concept of theatre meant that ‘this was play’ and the fact that they could actually take things they wanted, despite the

¹⁹⁷ Appendix 3.5 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 1.

¹⁹⁸ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 2.

¹⁹⁹ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 3.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

needs of others in the present, made them feel conflicted.²⁰¹ Here, the ‘realness’ of the experience was confusing, taking the participant both in and out of the reality of the post-scarcity concept, where, to this participant, theatrical play meant not receiving something (a tangible item) for real. Receiving tangible items in performance is not a new concept within contemporary theatre, such as the practice of giving gifts to your audience or ‘other.’ However, the realness and perhaps unfamiliarity of this scenario meant the participant was uncertain about the effects of taking an item. The post-scarcity concept, where one could and is able to have something for free, was conflicting in the present time of scarcity in reality to the participant. The participant defined this as ‘having to think in two modes “the real” [and] “the Unreal or Fantasy.”’²⁰² This participant was very aware of the duality obviously contained within the experience, the real and the ‘theatrical mode’ of experiencing. However, thinking in both the real and the theatrical mode seemingly did not negate the purpose of thinking about the possibilities of the future. The participant said that the experience was ‘very thought provoking’ and that they ‘will probably go home thinking about it.’²⁰³ They also expressed that ‘it seems inconceivable that in the future goods would flow freely.’²⁰⁴ Here, then, when thinking of the future, there echoed a pessimistic expression about the potential of the future, simultaneously both inspired by and blocking the imagining of a future world different from the present.

Participant 4’s experience was heavily weighted by a concern over ‘entitlement’ and ‘deserving’ of taking things, to the point that they felt they had to explain why they were taking things.²⁰⁵ Additionally, the participant felt the shop was ‘surreal’ due to the different type of items contained within and that it was ‘interesting to come to the experience with a

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 4.

purely capitalistic head on.²⁰⁶ Here, it is assumed that the view from the start of the experience was challenged at some point during the work. Significantly, this participant spent the rest of the questionnaire discussing the concept of work as a post-scarcity future. The participant said that the experience made them think of how ‘human nature (as we have been taught to think of it as quite negative and predatory) might come into play to find new ways to exploit the weak and to establish different hierarchies based on these new ways of thinking/acting.’²⁰⁷ This expression echoed the comments of the previous workshop, concerning the negative nature of humans. Participant 4 also felt that the shop raised questions concerning the future and the concept of work versus leisure. They said that the experience was quite difficult, as it raised capitalist questions of entitlement, so much so that they had to justify their reasons for taking objects.

In the feedback discussion, the conversation began with my asking generally about their experience of The Free Shop. All of the participants had issues with entitlement, seeming greedy or, conversely, the need to be polite in that they had concerns someone else may have greater needs. This echoed their responses in the questionnaire: ‘thought provoking’; ‘made me think’; ‘I felt guilty about taking things that others might need more than me’; ‘I really wanted to take more of the glasses, but felt guilty’; ‘I wanted to take the large pot, but did not know if someone else might have wanted it’; ‘it made me think, if I really needed the item.’²⁰⁸ Additionally, there were comments concerning the value of items: ‘It made me think about the money value, if I was in a charity shop and I saw an item for fifty pence, I would think it was a good deal and would buy it, here I asked myself if I really wanted the item and I did not value it as much as it wasn’t a bargain.’²⁰⁹ The experience

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participants 1-4.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

seemed to elicit feelings of guilt and consideration of value in all of the participants. The guilt was presumably a feeling that came as a result of perceived behavioural and societal norms (i.e. taking something without paying for it). The lack of remuneration within the experience triggered a consideration of value, as the participants in the post-immersion discussion pointed out. The result of this workshop, based on the feedback, seemed different than the previous two sessions. The experience seemed to affect the participants on a deeper, more personal level; the responses felt as if choices were made during the experience and those choices caused a level of emotion followed by an awareness in self-reflection. While participants were in The Free Shop, there was also a type of unstructured improvisation happening naturally, whether in the form of playing along with the premise or by figuring out the meaning of the premise individually. The scenario created a thinking and imagining process, either in a state of playing along or through interpreting the experience.

The question of context was put to the participants, specifically whether or not there needed to be more information regarding post-scarcity. Participant 3 said that they did have to ask the assistant (me) questions (presumably about the context of the scenario), though no specifics about expanding the context or exactly what the participant meant was provided.²¹⁰ Participant 4 said that it was interesting to come to the experience with ‘a purely capitalistic head on’ but then it was nice to hear about post-scarcity after the experience of the shop in the post discussion.²¹¹ Participant 1 would have liked more context after the experience rather than prior, perhaps in a second stage in which participants could question and respond. I was somewhat confused by this response as that is precisely what we did. The context of *Terra Incognita* as a workshop scenario might have negated the feedback session as indeed ‘part 2’ of the scenario. Here, then, clearer designation as a post-immersion discussion must then be

²¹⁰ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 3.

²¹¹ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 4.

made. Participant 1 did not think of the future during the experience, stating that they were more engaged with choosing/not choosing items and thought about past experiences in charity shops, but that the shop was a ‘stepping stone to look to the future’ and perhaps needed more context after the experience.²¹² This indicated that there needed to be a more formal signal or cue that we were entering a discussion about the event. Another question put to the participants concerned the methodology of the time ‘cue’ mechanism contained within the wording of the flyer (*Come experience a Post-Scarcity world*). I asked whether the vague wording concerning a ‘different time’ was enough to impart the concept of a future space or whether more information was required (i.e. in the setting, such as through posters or signs). Participant 2 said that the experience would then possibly ‘become more of an exhibit and perhaps less of an experience’ with more indicators such as signs within the shop as stated previously.²¹³ The remaining responses indicated that, with the exception of Participant 1, all participants had enough information to understand the event as located within some future time. The mocked-up representation of the ‘real’ shop and the time indicator did establish an in-world experience which commingled the future and the present time. The experience encouraged the imagining of a possible new post-scarcity world as an actuality in and through the space. I would, however, test this again in the following performance, with a different audience and a more realistic approach (in terms of overall appearance and contents of the shop) in another location. Based on the results and feedback during this workshop, it is important to note that immersive environments can be created in a conceptual or representative way, if handled effectively. These spaces can establish in-world experiences that intermingle a future time within the present and thus stimulate the imagining of this future, in and through the conceptualized representative space.

²¹² Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 1.

²¹³ Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 2.

In relation to context, I had made a last-minute decision to add a sign in the room that read: 'Welcome to The Free Shop! Everything you want is free, take whatever you want. If you have any questions, see the lady behind the counter.' In hindsight, I realise that this was perhaps a mistake. Afterwards, I felt the sign drew overt attention to the scenario. In a free shop in the future, there would not be a sign, as everyone would know what to do. Moreover, the wording 'If you have any questions, see the lady behind the counter' potentially opened a dialogue without time frame parameters that could be confusing, meaning that if the participants asked a question about the future, the performer would need to answer the question in the present or as if from the future. The sign also unintentionally signalled to the participants that this was an imagined scenario; providing instructions to the participants would not be necessary in a real scenario and, more pedantically, there was no 'counter' really, just a table. I think I did not trust the time cue on the flyer enough or I wanted to circumvent awkward dialogue in the scenario about instruction. This was not necessary as people asked questions anyway and I concluded that such a sign should not be used in the actual performance piece. The flyer and the sign are both artificial and suffer from the same non-realistic context (e.g. the flyer and the sign would not be present in a real shop of the future) and both serve as theatrical devices to facilitate the performance experience. However, the flyer does provide the basic time cue to differentiate the scenario from a present-day charity organization and is therefore necessary for the context. In addition, the language on the flyer serves as a socio-political stimulus, as discussed previously.

From the participants' discussion and feedback forms, it was clear that most of the participants had imagined the experience to represent a shop set in a distant future. The participants made an imaginary leap, pretending that the event was set in the future. They suspended their disbelief under the auspice of 'theatre mode,' imagining and imposing the flyer cue literally as an alteration of time under the assumptions of a 'theatrical' performance.

The assumed ‘theatrical space’ provided these individuals with permission to impose their own imaginings with only a small and vague cue. As I developed the project, I felt confused at times within the ‘theatrical workshop’ context of the theatre group *Terra Incognita*; the participants might not view this experience as a realistic representation of a future time but rather as a symbolic representation due to their expectations of theatre-type work as normally explored within the *Terra Incognita* group. The group, as theatre makers and artists, would have an inclination toward ‘suspension of disbelief,’ which might support the workshop for its purpose in the Hawley Building as a mock-up set with issues of realism in its portrayal, but not what I was ultimately aiming for in the following performance. I knew that the space and set decoration would not pass entirely as a realistic shop in this session of *Terra Incognita*, despite my attempts at a realistic portrayal. Instead, I settled on trying to create a ‘real’ atmosphere of what the future might feel like in a post-scarcity world. ‘Real’ in this sense meant a tangible physical space, where experiencing the acquisition of something for free — which is usually paid for — might trigger both imagining and thought around a post-scarcity future. This concept was successful, as the participants’ points of view changed as a result of the experience or provoked thoughts concerning scarcity and resources, as noted within the feedback responses. I think that my own lines of delineation between the ‘real’ and the ‘performance’ became confused in the devising and execution of this workshop. I was trying to create something realistic, similar to a genuine shop of the present, while simultaneously calling the concept a representation and being aware of its performance elements and conceits. It is important, therefore, to consider not only the time indicators while working toward creating performance futures, but also the overall intended effect, particularly with regard to the language used, as pointed out by the above example. In this case, where I was drawing awareness to present concerns as well as representing a future space/time possibility, ‘The Free Shop’ title sets up a dichotomy in the nomenclature and was intentional on my part, as ‘shop’ infers consumerism and acquisition while ‘free’ contrasts the capitalist notion of

acquisition through exchange. Therefore, titles (and indeed all text where used) should be given considerable thought as they can foreground the subject of the piece and indicate the context of the experience (at least to a certain degree).

Overall, the imagining of a post-scarcity world was achieved to a large degree despite the lack of total realism within an immersive environment. It is likely that if such shops existed in the future, people would behave differently as these types of spaces would not be an unfamiliar novelty. However, in the present, such shops do not exist and so the contemplation of alternate futures triggered by the environment, contents, and actions is the desired outcome, which is more significant than providing an entirely realistic setting. The question being examined here, and in the next workshop, is *how much* realism was needed to trigger future imagining within the scenario. This workshop illuminated the artificial devices utilised in the construction of the space, highlighting the performance elements used to set up and construct the representative space. From the round-table discussion afterwards, it was not clear whether the participants desired an opportunity for post-discussion, or more of a context for the performance, or both. Part of these conflicting ideas may be due to the conversations held prior to the performance amongst the participants about post-scarcity. The label of 'theatre workshop or theatre mode' acted as a space for imagining rather than literal presentation in some cases. Within the session, the suggestion of a minimal time cue enabled the majority of the participants to imagine being in a future world, specifically, what a post-scarcity world might be like in the future.

Revised Goals

My next goal was to see if The Free Shop performance would achieve the same or similar results when opened to the public. The environment would be different in that it would

accommodate a more realistic charity-shop look as an immersive future environment. I would then be able to test the environment fully in relation to the performance concept and with a public audience using the time and language cues tested in the workshop.

Context and Aims for Case Study Four

The aim of The Free Shop performance was to present a possible future in the present as a fully realistic immersive installation performance piece for a public audience. As the alternative future (a post-scarcity world) is performed through The Free Shop experience, a suggestion for the future is proposed and portrayed in the delivery of the performance. The event thereby facilitates the opportunity for imagining different future potentialities or alternate future outcomes, especially as a progressive response in this case, where the management of resources could be a feasible solution to meeting the material requirements of the present.

Case Study Four – The Free Shop Performance

Hosted by Bank Street Arts, 32-40 Bank St, Sheffield S1 2DS

December 12, 2015

12:30-4pm

Participants: 6

All Documentation is located in Appendix 4:

Appendix 4.1 The Free Shop Performance Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 4.2 The Free Shop Flyer

Practice Plan and Rationale

The Free Shop performance was based on The Free Shop workshop. However, this time it was at a public venue and was open to the general public as a fully immersive environment. The performance contained theoretical elements from both Candy and The Yes Men. Like The Yes Men's and some of Candy's installation projects, there was no post-immersion discussion for this event. I did not play the role of an official or representative from a corporation or government, as The Yes Men often do, but took instead the position of a 'regular' citizen of the future running a place for the free selection of new and recycled things in a resource-managed world, just as I had attempted in the previous workshop. In terms of Candy's practice, this was my first fully immersive future experience. I diverged from Candy in that the entire shop was the artefact and that there were no specific pieces of design fiction. Both Candy and The Yes Men incorporate a level of deception in their performances, as they do not provide the context prior to their events. I diverged from this practice as well, using the same flyer wording that mixed the present with the future, as discussed in Case Study Three. Thus, the project was different from those of Candy and The Yes Men in that there was some context given to the performance by the flyer. My notes and the flyer can be found in Appendices 4.1 and 4.2.

Practice

The Free Shop performance was open to the public and performed at Bank Street Arts, an art house venue within Sheffield. Bank Street Arts is a community-based multi-story art space that curates local art events and artists' work. This event would be an immersive installation, open to the general public. The exterior and the interior of the building resembled a high street shop, including a front window. Here, I felt that I would be able to create a realistic appearance of a shop without major rental costs or aesthetic alteration.

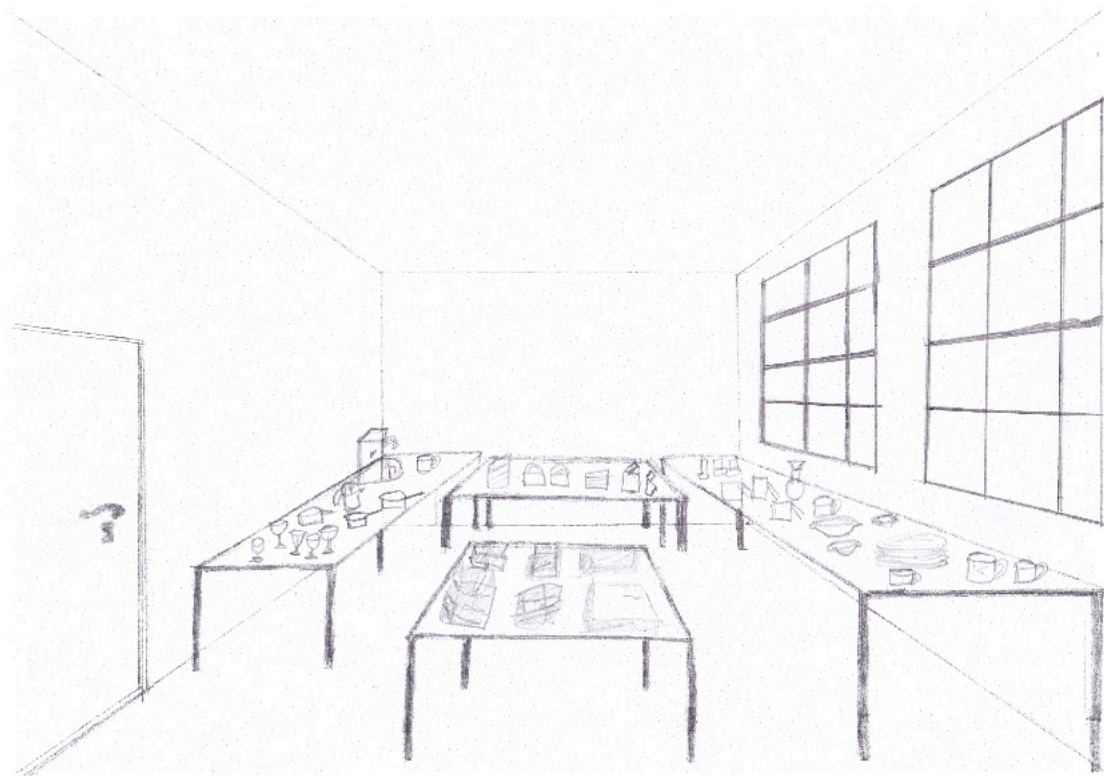


Figure 7: The Free Shop Performance interior drawing (Copyright Dana Koellner)

It is important to recognise that Bank Street Arts is an arts centre and performance space. By holding The Free Shop in a pre-established performance space, this associates the event with performance and not an attempt to create an entirely realistic locale, as, say, converting a high street store or constructing a pop-up domain would. The realism that I was attempting to

achieve had more to do with the interior of the shop experience and the cue mechanisms, to stimulate contemplation of the future, rather than with connotations of this being a ‘real’ shop. As stated before, if this was a real shop in the future, the behaviour of the people coming into the location would certainly be different, as this would be a familiar setting. The name of the location would also probably not include the words ‘free shop’ as the concept of ‘free’ and ‘shop’ would be outmoded. By calling it a ‘free shop’, I indicated the concept of duality between consumerism of the present and a post-scarcity future located within the experience. Therefore, the concept in itself indicates that this is not the recreation of something which is entirely ‘real’; instead, it draws attention to the contemplation of a novelty experience directly, in this case through a performance installation. It is a realistically portrayed immersive environment representing a future post-scarcity possibility. Whether or not one attempts to construct a space entirely replicating an imagined future is dependent on the original concept of the experience and is also likely to require a great deal of both financial and technical resources, which I have indicated is not one of my aims – I seek methods available to all to create experiences toward imagining the future, without such financial requirements.

The weather was extremely cold and pouring with rain for the entire day, which I think contributed to a poor participant turn out. Upon my arrival, a volunteer from Bank Street Arts met me at the door and showed me the space I would be using. As I set up the shop, the Bank Street volunteers asked me questions about the performance and the concept of post-scarcity. After discussing the concept, two of the volunteers asked if they could take part, which I agreed. I had solicited a volunteer from my department, a Masters student, who passed out the same post-scarcity flyers used in the previous session, both before and during the event.²¹⁴ The volunteer canvassed the flyer approximately one square mile within the vicinity before

²¹⁴ See Post-Scarcity flyer located in Appendix 4.2.

and during the event in the horrid weather. There was a total of five attendees for the event, consisting of a couple, a man and three volunteers from Bank Street Arts.

The man took a bracelet, a cafetière and three items of clothing. The couple took a CD. The Bank Street workers took quite a bit of clothing, a large new coffee maker, a large pot, some glasses, mugs and jewellery. The man was very grateful, asked no questions and politely thanked me for the items. The couple asked what the shop was, I explained that it was a performance installation piece related to the experience of a post-scarcity world, and that they could have any items they would like. They could not believe that the items were free and asked me twice just to be sure. They appeared very tentative, inspecting only a few items. They were not speaking English, so I couldn't understand what they were saying as they perused the items. The performance ended at 3pm at which time I thanked the volunteers and began packing up the remaining items which I then donated to a local charity shop.

Reflection and Analysis

I felt the small number of public participants coupled with the terrible weather hampered the performance to a certain degree, as individuals who did participate might have felt slightly intimidated, awkward or pressured when entering the shop without other people in the room. I tried to alleviate this by chatting casually whenever my volunteer was in the room to lighten the atmosphere. I often had the feeling that I needed to explain the post-scarcity concept but managed to curb this impulse with some difficulty. The language I used was in the present tense with three of the five participants during the performance. Two of the volunteers that had asked me about post-scarcity prior to the event attended and I remained in character with them throughout. I broke character with the two participants who appeared to be a couple, as they began to ask me more detailed questions about post-scarcity. The participants asked me

if they really could take the items for free multiple times. It is possible that the participants might have felt unsure or guilty about taking something for free. As the project was meant to simulate a realistic future space, there was no post-immersion dialogue to confirm what the participants thought or experienced. When I was in character and interacting with the participants, there was no evidence of any contemplation of a post-scarcity world through the dialogue.

The future space in this context felt more like an experience where some participants were both learning of the scenario and looking at the possibility of the future simultaneously or consecutively, rather than entering the scenario as an alternate world, despite the flyers. This type of experience is perhaps similar to the democratic participation principle within LARP where information is learned, contemplated and then experienced by all participants (in this case individually) through a new understanding based on the information and the environment provided. In the case of The Free Shop performance, the concept of the performance was perhaps more appealing than the actual experience, and the dialogue created around and through the concept was perhaps more conceptually desirable and provocative than the actual experience.

Revised Goals

It was impossible to determine the impact of the performance without participant feedback. My observations were that it seemed that the overall concept might have been more intriguing than the actual experience. However, this was only assessed from my own point of view and there was no way to determine whether the concept ultimately elicited thoughts about the possibility of a post-scarcity future. This lack of confirmation does not necessarily negate the concept and execution of the performance piece. I would trial the immersive environment

component again in Case Study Seven using a different approach. After The Free Shop performance, there were other elements which I thought needed to be explored further. I wanted to return to the idea of imagining in groups and, additionally, to test how a LARP-like role play scenario might work in the context of imagining futures.

Context and Aims for Case Study Five

I was not satisfied with the immersive environment performance which I had created. The idea seemed more provocative than the actual experience. Also, I felt that a shared or co-created performance might provoke more dialogue about the concept of imagining different potential futures. I decided to retest some of the elements from Case Study Two involving individual and group imagining. I added a role playing scenario which I adapted from my studies of LARP. The role play scenario was designed to test participant investment in imagining, to create a shared or co-created experience, and to compensate for providing a less physically immersive future environment.

Case Study Five – Greed and LARP Workshop

Rotherham College of Arts and Technology

May 16, 2016

*Higher Education Hub Rotherham College Room 201, Town Centre Campus Eastwood Lane,
Rotherham S65 1EG*

1-3pm

Participants: 9

All Documentation is located in Appendix 5:

Appendix 5.1 Greed and LARP Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 5.2 Slide Presentation for Game 1 Tableau

Appendix 5.3 Slide Presentation for Game 2 Art Show

Appendix 5.4 Participant Character Sheets, Questionnaires and Feedback Forms

Participant 1 Character Sheet

Participant 1 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 1 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 1 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 2 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 3 Character Sheet

Participant 3 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 3 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 3 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 4 Character Sheet

Participant 4 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 4 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 4 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 5 Character Sheet

Participant 5 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 5 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 5 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 6 Character Sheet

Participant 6 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 6 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 6 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 7 Character Sheet

Participant 7 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 7 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 7 Feedback Questionnaire

Participant 8 Character Sheet

Participant 8 Tableau Questionnaire

Participant 8 Role Play Questionnaire

Participant 8 Feedback Questionnaire

Appendix 5.5 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

The purpose of the next workshop was to attempt to stimulate engagement between individual imagination and a future scenario by incorporating a role play LARP element. The experiment examined whether one's imagination, and the types of thinking stimulated via an image or symbol or text, were more or less engaging than participating in a physical, emotional and imagined role play scenario. This furthered the concepts tested within Case Study Two and added the role play element from LARP. The participants were asked to create new personas via a character sheet and then provided a fictional future scenario to role play. Similar to LARP, the participants were not given an objective or a set task. The experiment details are outlined and discussed at length below.

Practice

This workshop was held at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, where I lecture in Drama in the Performing Arts department. I had invited all of the HE students, prior to the workshop. I booked a room online for the workshop in the Higher Education Hub, which was familiar to all the HE students and a plausible neutral space that was devoid of any significant time indicators of the present. The room was on the first floor of the building and had a set of french doors that overlooked the city landscape. I closed the blinds to all of the windows. At 12:30pm, I set up the room with tables and chairs down the middle so participants could face each other and easily see the front projection screen. I loaded my slide presentation and set out food and drinks on a small side table. The participants entered on time at 1pm. I began the workshop by explaining the parameters, purpose, nature and scope of the workshop to the participants. I read through the consent form with the participants and asked if there were any questions, reminding them that they could choose not to participate at any point. There were nine participants attending this workshop consisting of Performing Arts students of level two

and three in Higher Education and one Performing Arts HE lecturer. The workshop consisted of two exercises, each accompanied by a questionnaire form. The atmosphere was jovial; all the participants knew each other and were familiar with both myself and the other lecturer as well.

As a continuation from Case Study Two, the first exercise consisted of the same tableau image with the same statement from *The Free World Charter* projected behind.²¹⁵ I stood at the front of the group and made the same open arm gesture, holding the gesture for five minutes with the projected piece of text behind me as they filled out the first questionnaire. The difference in this tableau was that I added the line ‘We are now in the year 2142’ at the top of the slide, which verbally indicated the future space. I added the line to stimulate the idea, directly, that we were ‘in’ or imagining a future space.

In the second exercise, the participants were given a ‘character sheet’. This activity began as a process similar to that used within LARP, where individuals create a character and form an identity in an imagined world scenario. The questions on the form were designed for short answers, to help the participants create a character quickly. Information about the future scenario was provided via a slide presentation and can be located in Appendix 5.2. The character activity was followed by the role play scenario. The participants were told that they were attending an art show set in the year 2142. A slide show of futuristic art was presented and looped during the game and was accompanied by food and non-alcoholic drinks that the players could consume. During the scenario, several students got up and went to the food and beverage stand, creating conversation between them which seemed awkward, often smiling and laughing and making jokes between them within the scenario. The role playing lasted for about fifteen minutes. This was the largest practical workshop to date and the dynamics were

²¹⁵ Turner, *The Free World Charter*.

quite different as these participants all knew one another. After the feedback forms, I asked for comments or suggestions from the group.

Reflection and Analysis

Participant 1 did not feel that the tableau/text stimulated an experience of the future as they felt that the text was too idealistic and this made it difficult or ‘impossible’ to experience.²¹⁶ They said they were ‘transported’ into the future in exercise two due to the ‘interaction with different characters and hearing their backgrounds.’²¹⁷ Participant 2 wished for a more immersive environment for the text portion and provided the suggestion of a vocal recording possibly with sound effects. They also felt that the first half of the session made them think ‘about’ the future, but the text was problematic in that ‘these things [the new laws presented in the text] aren’t practiced/in place now’ and they had an adverse reaction to the word ‘laws,’ preferring, instead, the word ‘goals’. Participant 2 did not partake in the role play exercise.²¹⁸ Participant 3 felt the same as Participant 2 regarding the idealism of the text. They stated that ‘having interaction with others helped to stimulate the creative half of the brain...and by designing our own characters, more interaction and personality helped bring forward a more utopian future.’²¹⁹ Participant 4 felt the text and tableau made them feel ‘hopeful,’ yet found the role playing difficult because they ‘didn’t know what to do’ yet they were interested in feeling ‘part of something in the future.’²²⁰ However, they later stated that the role play did give them a feeling of being in the future through creating a character. They suggested a larger environment with more areas ‘to explore independently and pose a unique viewpoint.’ Participant 4 said that they were more oriented toward participatory performances. This

²¹⁶ Appendix 5.4 Participant 1 Tableau Questionnaire.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Appendix 5.4 Participant 2 Tableau Questionnaire.

²¹⁹ Appendix 5.4 Participant 3 Tableau Questionnaire.

²²⁰ Appendix 5.4 Participant 4 Tableau Questionnaire.

participant wrote at length on the tableau/text concerning how the piece could influence the future, including possible reasons of how this type of future might have been brought about.²²¹ Participant 5 felt that the tableau/text had more of an effect of being ‘in’ the future.²²² The role play made this individual feel like they were ‘devising, rather than being immersed in a new time period.’²²³ This individual felt that they were ‘seeing an idea that represented the world, mostly because there was already a structure for it, and everything else could be built around it.’²²⁴ Participant 6 was not specific, only stating ‘yes and no’ to both exercises but noted that the exercises made them think about the ‘years to come.’²²⁵ Participant 7 felt that the art presented during the role play was not futuristic enough, but improvised the idea that it was a presentation of art from ‘years gone by.’²²⁶ Participant 7 felt that both exercises made them feel as if they were in the future, especially in the role play section because ‘it always helps me to act things out.’²²⁷ They also felt that interacting with the other characters was very beneficial.²²⁸ The experience of interacting with other characters helped this participant to imagine justifications for the scenario. Participant 8 felt the tableau/text made them think about the future, whereas the role playing made them feel as if they were in the future.²²⁹ The element that contributed most which elicited a feeling of ‘being in the future’ was creating their own character, which in turn made them think about their ‘ideal life and how that would be much easier to achieve in the world described to us.’²³⁰ ‘Socializing’ with other characters felt more immersive to this participant and to ‘act as though I am in the future is more effective than seeing an image.’²³¹ The room setting was a detracting factor for this participant. In the role playing game, the interaction with other

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Appendix 5.4 Participant 5 Tableau Questionnaire.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Appendix 5.4 Participant 6 Feedback Questionnaire.

²²⁶ Appendix 5.4 Participant 7 Tableau Questionnaire.

²²⁷ Appendix 5.4 Participant 7 Tableau, Role Play and Feedback Questionnaire.

²²⁸ Appendix 5.4 Participant 7 Feedback Questionnaire.

²²⁹ Appendix 5.4 Participant 8 Tableau Questionnaire.

²³⁰ Appendix 5.4 Participant 8 Feedback Questionnaire.

²³¹ Ibid.

characters made the experiment ‘more realistic’ for this participant as well and they found it specifically interesting to discover what they contribute to society as a talking point.²³²

Participant 9 did not comment. The results of the participants were mixed, with some believing that the environment did not entirely work as an immersive experience and the responses regarding the element of role play in half of the cases added to the imagining process whereas the other half felt it detracted, becoming more of a devising session and an awkward improvisational process.

At the end of the session, I asked for additional feedback or suggestions from the group. One of the participants suggested having a recording for the text portion for those with reading difficulties. Another suggested that in the tableau/text portion, ‘more visuals and proof’ would perhaps have made one feel more in the future. Another participant stated that more practical details in the text and more history concerning what has happened in the world would benefit the work. Additional suggestions were made concerning the location, for example, more art spread around the room, better images that represented future and a different physical space. Another participant suggested that the language should not be limited to specific words such as ‘living on earth’ when more possibilities exist. Several stated that the setting and food helped the scenario. They also stated that elements of the outside world were visible, though, actually, there were no elements visible through the windows of the room or other decorations within the room which might have indicated time. Perhaps it was familiarity with the room that made them feel as though the room was not ‘futuristic’ enough.

The scenario contained several stimulus items such as the art, food and drink to serve as improvisational and immersive catalysts. However, the scenario did not really work as the level of expectation could not be met in the setting; the participants did not believe the setting

²³² Appendix 5.4 Participant 8 Role Play Questionnaire.

looked ‘futuristic’ enough and the role play and improvisation was revealed to be awkward. Despite the students’ proclivity toward role playing, there seemed to be a very strained awkwardness during the exercise from an observational point of view and as noted in some of the responses from the group. This indicates that role playing as a method of imagining future scenarios in this type of immersion is slightly less effective as a tool to stimulate imagining due to the awkwardness of group role play and improvisation — even with an experienced group of practitioners. These results confirmed my own feelings about this type of role play, which are set out in my autoethnographic study of LARP. The participants felt that a group activity coupled with some physicality was more engaging than solely using personal imaginings with the tableau to participate in a future scenario, which was congruent with the findings from Case Study Two.

Revised Goals

Given the similarity of outcome of this case study and Case Study Two, I decided to explore a different type of role play that might work better than the previous LARP-like process and to integrate other elements from my LARP study: storytelling, bleed and heroism.

Context and Aims for Case Study Six

During my studies about the future, I was reading quite a lot of formal and informal writing about speculative futures and technology. One of the main topics that was often discussed concerned the loss of jobs by the creation of new technologies. I wanted to explore this topic as it presented a counter-argument to the greed theme provided in Case Study One. I needed a method of presenting enough technological information and terminology to familiarize the audience with the issues. It seemed that a performance lecture might best facilitate the

information and provide a way for me to explore the LARP elements of heroism, bleed and storytelling discussed in Section Two through a different type of role play. My aims for the next case study were: to test the performance lecture as a potential platform for facilitating conceptualised future spaces; to utilise the elements of heroism, bleed and storytelling within a selected topic; and to add role play to this conceptualised future scenario.

Case Study Six - Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture

Hosted by Terra Incognita

October 24, 2016

Hawley Building, Cutting Edge Studio 1, Mappin Street, Sheffield, S1 4DT

5:30 pm-7pm (teas and coffees and chat from 4pm)

Participants: 8

All Documentation is located in Appendix 6:

Appendix 6.1 Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 6.2 Slide Presentation Performance Lecture

Appendix 6.3 Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Audio Transcript of Feedback Session

Appendix 6.4 Audio CD Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Feedback Session

Appendix 6.5 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

This session was designed to examine the themes of bleed, heroism, role play and storytelling from my experience of LARP through the form of a performance lecture, where new information that was potentially unfamiliar (advanced technologies) might prompt new considerations about the future. Here, I wanted to test the performance lecture as a potential platform for facilitating the technical information and to utilise the elements of heroism, bleed and storytelling within the topic of ‘Mastery and Reputation: Contending with Universal Wage.’²³³ This theme was derived from thinking about what would happen if there was a sudden loss of jobs due to an increase in artificial technologies which might decimate certain

²³³ *Universal Wage* also sometimes called *Universal Basic Income* (UBI) ‘refers to a concept of a fixed national wage paid by the government to each of its citizens in order to compensate for job losses due to technological advancements or the redistribution of resources that make certain jobs redundant. The concept of Universal Wage as of 2017 is being tested within the governments of Canada, Kenya, Netherlands, Finland, and Uganda. In addition, other countries, such as Switzerland, Germany and Spain, have considered forms of UBI.’ See Wikipedia, ‘Basic Income’, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basic_income#Existing_basic_income_and_related_systems> [accessed 28 February 2018].

industries. I also drew upon an article about *Star Trek* from Wired magazine written by Manu Saadia about the economics of *Star Trek*.²³⁴ The elements from LARP served as tools that were used within LARP not only to aid in imagining, as discussed in Section Two, but also as an empowering response to combat the continued theme of greed and hopelessness conveyed within previous sessions when considering the future. I used a slide presentation for the performance lecture, which, along with my notes, can be found in Appendices 6.1 and 6.2. I constructed two tasks that fed into a co-created performance scenario, which are detailed at length below. I also held a feedback discussion after the performance and the transcript of the feedback and audio are located in Appendices 6.3 and 6.4.

Practice

The session was hosted by *Terra Incognita*. I arrived at the Hawley Building at 4pm to set up the space, as the arrangement of the room and lights was very important. There needed to be a clear division between a conversational area for the introduction and feedback part of the session and the performance space. I first set up a ring of ten chairs that would be lit with standard room lighting.



Figure 8: Mastery and Reputation introduction and feedback session area (Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

²³⁴ Manu, Saadia, 'The Economic Lessons of Star Trek's Money-Free Society', <<https://www.wired.com/2016/05/geeks-guide-star-trek-economics/>> [accessed 1 October 2016].

I then placed several square tables in the second half of the room and set ten chairs behind the tables as the performance area. I focused various coloured lights on the tables and chairs. I then added a few of the coloured lights on a single spot about one metre in front of the audience and the projection screen, where I would later sit.



Figure 9: Mastery and Reputation audience set up

(Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

I set two extra chairs behind the tables and another to the side that would be moved later into the middle of the space in front of the tables and chairs.



Figure 10: Mastery and Reputation set up for placing letters on chairs (Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

I went upstairs and took a few minutes to greet participants and hand out the consent forms where they had gathered for customary tea and coffee. The participants entered the performance space at 5:30pm and were directed to sit in the space set up outside of the lighted area. I introduced the session by explaining the research and release form. I then asked the participants to introduce themselves, to state one of their hobbies, and to name a charity to which they contributed, if possible. The introduction stimulated the participants into thinking about what they would be interested in ‘making better’ in the present and to consider what they enjoyed doing in their spare time. These questions introduced the concept of heroism in the context of individual interests that promote personal action within society. I began first by stating that I did not know what my hobby was and that the charity work I was interested in acquired water for children. By starting off with an ‘I don’t know’ response, I felt this would provide space for those who might feel ‘put on the spot,’ that it would set a precedent, and it

would give participants permission to be open and to express the unknown.

After everyone introduced themselves and answered the initial questions, I moved the participants into the performance area of the room. I put on the stage lighting and turned off the regular overhead room lights. This created an intimate performance space in terms of proximity to the participants and atmosphere. I began the performance lecture with a slide that read ‘Mastery and Reputation: Contending with Universal Wage’ followed by a short Ted Talk video about the universal wage (also known as the universal basic income, or UBI).²³⁵ I was very careful within the presentation to balance both the positive and negative aspects of the topics throughout, showing both sides of the arguments concerning UBI and Artificial Intelligence (AI) (see the Slide Presentation in Appendix 6.2). I ended the slide presentation with the following rhetorical questions: If most of us were living under the universal wage, what would you pursue in your life? What type of life would you have? I left a few minutes for the participants to consider the questions. I then passed out pens and paper and asked the participants to write a list of the things they would like to pursue in the next twenty-five years.

The exercise was juxtaposed with a slide of a futuristic city scape labelled 2066.

²³⁵ See Slide Presentation in Appendix 6.2; Wikipedia, ‘Basic Income’.



Figure 11: Mastery and Reputation future letter writing set up (Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

The list-making exercise invoked the concept of ‘mastery and reputation’ discussed within the lecture and was an invitation to consider ways of improving one’s self and how one might contribute to society if ‘economic survival’ was no longer an issue in a future world. Once completed, I asked the participants to role play by writing a letter to themselves from fifty years in the future in which they gave themselves advice concerning the potential obstacles and pitfalls that they may face through the hypothetical coming years of UBI and AI. The letter-writing exercise was a means to consider individual contributions to society, as well as elements of creating a ‘better you’ through time, thus in a sense, role playing a self-mentor and hero to one’s self.²³⁶ The activity also asked the participants to consider how they might

²³⁶ The letters are not included here to preserve anonymity.

cope with sudden technological advancement that rendered a large part of the workforce jobless. When the participants had finished, I asked them to place their letters on one of the two chairs set up behind the group: the left chair if they wished to share their letters anonymously, the right chair for those who did not want to participate. All participants placed their letters on the left chair to share. I then changed the slide on the projector to a landscape of Sheffield's city centre with the date 2016 written on it, bringing the imagined concept of the future back to the present. I collected the pile of those who wished to share and sat in front of the group in the stage lighting. I asked the participants to raise their hands during sections that they thought might pertain, concern or be relevant to them individually.

I began reading each letter aloud starting with 'Dear Dana...', and then read randomly selected portions from the letters. My choice of beginning with 'Dear Dana' was meant to both personalise and draw links between our shared concerns, hopes and fears in both the present time and in an imagined future. This served to draw us together, creating and sharing together simultaneously these imagined future scenarios, as the following sections from the dialogues show:

Clare McManus: I thought you reading the letters 'Dear Dana' was really powerful actually.

Dana Koellner: Thanks, how or why? Could you tell me a little bit more?

Clare McManus: Um cause obviously they were our letters, except you hadn't said we had to write so you could read it, so you couldn't read mine (laughter). But it was just...and also 'cause you set it beautifully, so the lights and the chair and things. And just you go 'Dear Dana' reading this and I ah thought maybe she's done a top one you know to start it off but it was just obvious that you were reading other peoples and

somehow it made it... it made it more personal cause even they weren't yours, the fact that you were saying them all was more personal than if you'd said this is a list of things people have said, cause we could have written it on post-it notes or something but it made it intimate.

The feelings of intimacy created through the sharing of the letters and the heightened/otherworldly setting of the space created by the lights are significant as each element created an effective environment and circumstance for participant imagining.

Zelda Hannay: Yea, I really liked that as well.

Hayley Alessi: And universal as well because there were lots of us putting up our hands thinking yea I feel the same about that yea. [...] ²³⁷

The letter-writing exercise asked the participants to specifically think about how they would be a 'hero' to themselves and what advice they would offer as their future selves. Here, in playing hero through the concept of mastering one's future, the individual acknowledges the fears of what they might face in the future. This concept of heroism as a component to combat fear was also recently tested in a study at Yale University.²³⁸ In the Yale case study, the researchers asked a group of liberals and conservatives to choose between the superpowers of flight or being invulnerable to harm. They then compared their answers both before and after the imagining process. The conservatives who chose to be invulnerable, changed their conservative political positions and became significantly more liberal. The researchers stated:

²³⁷ See Appendix 6.3 Transcript from Case Study Six.

²³⁸ John Bargh, Jaime Napier, Julie Huang and Andy Vonasch, 'At Yale, we conducted an experiment to turn conservatives into liberals. The results say a lot about our political divisions', <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/amphtml/news/inspired-life/wp/2017/11/22/at-yale-we-conducted-an-experiment-to-turn-conservatives-into-liberals-the-results-say-a-lot-about-our-political-divisions/>> [accessed 20 February 2018].

In both instances, we had manipulated a deeper underlying reason for political attitudes, the strength of the basic motivation of safety and survival. The boiling water of our social and political attitudes, it seems, can be turned up or down by changing how physically safe we feel.²³⁹

This finding illuminates some attitudes related to how feelings of safety might be associated with political views. This example of imagining might contribute to the further understanding of individual fears and also a reconsideration of how political views may be shaped by such fears. By investigating what we are afraid of in the future, we might be able to better understand our decision-making processes and the subtle influences that shape our views in the present. The concept of heroism, as explored within the session, helped to identify and unburden our fears. It empowered us in a small way to face those fears of the future through comprehension and sharing. In this way, we were empowered to write these new stories of ourselves, new narratives that examined alternate processes and possible outcomes.

Reflection and Analysis

Narratives were pervasive throughout the session and were created utilising several methods: through the contemplation of technology and possible future outcomes; through my telling of the story of how UBI and AI might change the world; through invoking the idea of mastery and development through each written story; through personal narratives extrapolated from the possible future scenarios that were created and shared through the letter writing exercise and performance; and also by a shared experience of acknowledging individual and collective concerns. The performance of the letter writing and the raising of participants' hands told a collective story of our shared concerns both in the future and now. In the creation of new

²³⁹ Ibid.

imagined futures we shared the creation of possible worlds and our stories with each other as I read out the letters.

Bleed occurred as a result of the participants' emotional connection between the role played (creation of a character of an imagined, future self) and the present real self. The participants' creations of their 'future selves' were based on their current beliefs about the future. Here, bleed was used to create a relationship between the connection of the audience individually to the material and imagining themselves within the fictional worlds. If the audience could connect intellectually and emotionally to an 'imagined' character, or even a 'future self' with their thoughts and feelings invested in the imagined scenario, perhaps the impact of the material might influence behaviour in some way and generate consideration of the ideas expressed beyond the exercise.

My initial impression of the performance lecture structural form was positive: it moved easily and cohesively from one section to another and the topics appeared to carry some weight for the participants while relaying a rather large amount of technical information. However, as the feedback session continued, several issues arose. At first, the participants wanted to discuss the ideas of UBI, AI and how these issues might affect their own lives. They all seemed quite keen to have a conversation about these topics at length, sharing what they found interesting or concerning. Midway through the feedback session, I attempted to navigate the conversation toward commentary concerning the form of this workshop. Three of the participants said they did not believe this was their future, despite or because of the information provided on UBI and AI. These three participants said they wished that either they could have had a discussion about the facts, been given a chance to debate the scenario or would have preferred a more conventional performance approach that would have forced them to accept the future scenario by setting clear performance markers (such as a heightened

character type) to induce a suspension of disbelief.

X: I felt that more in the lecture. I felt the lecture... I wasn't convinced by the lecture in a way. And I either wanted you to go at it really as though this is absolutely the truth, this is you know, a real performance regardless of how factual it actually is but as though this is I'm telling you that this is the truth um so its performance rather than any sense of reality.

Dana Koellner: Ohh.

X: Or I want us to have a chance to challenge 'cause there was a lot in that I wanted to challenge and I didn't have a chance and then I was a bit confused when we got to the next bit and that was partly 'cause we didn't have a chance to challenge. I think.

Several: Yea, Yes, yes. (more inaudible) [...]

Bridie Moore: I think the idea sorry I think coming back to you saying that 'I want you to imagine' is a good premise because you don't have to be somebody other than yourself and asking the participants to imagine. And I think it's just coming at it from that angle, what really made me go the hairs/(?) on the back of neck stand up is this claim that this will happen, in fact you didn't even say this will, I noticed it in your language it was by 20- uh something has happened, you sort of presented it as if it was already the past. There was a really interesting linguistic construction that made me go ohhhh I don't like that because it won't necessarily [happen] even if you are claiming something you say will happen I feel more, I would have felt happier about that sort of language because then I would feel more like, well, then it might happen, it might not happen, it's more conditional.

Dana Koellner: Yes

Bridie Moore: So what I'm trying to say is that really choosing your language will be really important and I think imagining that something will happen, imagining, I'm putting this as a premise, as a possibility that might prevent your audience from really resisting it whereas saying something that already has happened –

Dana Koellner: I kind of like the fact that you are resisting it though – it's a little bit –

Bridie Moore: Yea yea true

Zelda Hannay: I was just going to say that I think it ties in with the exercise we did as well 'cause I think future is a very personal thing and I think for me that what was a tricky... ok, because... ok, here is a universal kind of objective view of what the future would be and then you are being asked to put yourself in that but my version of the future doesn't look like that at all and I have all sorts of questions, critical questions about that of... kind of... when that was presented to me like this is what is what's going to happen, like well I don't think it will, so then I struggled to put myself in that, if you see what I mean, I found it really difficult because I don't really believe in this future so I don't know what I would do to some extent.

Here, there was some confusion between what was being presented as fact and what the participants were being asked to imagine. One of the difficulties was that the technological information needed to be provided in a way that was linguistically consistent. It is possible that I stated as a fact in the presentation that 'by 2020, cars will be automated,' in that several countries are moving toward autonomous self-driving vehicles, including UK contracts for

2021.²⁴⁰ The participants' comments expressed an apparent request for me to be more direct in terms of telling them what to do ('I want you to imagine...') and at the same time not telling them what to do ('the future might look like this'), especially during the lecture portion where the fundamentals of the technical terminology (i.e. UBI) were presented. It was also very difficult to refute the claims that some of the participants felt that those future elements will not ever exist or happen. Those participants desired a dialogue experience where they were given a chance to debate the premise or facts presented. It is possible that the participants also wanted a form they were more familiar with, one that allowed them to accept the premise by directly setting up a world framed by theatrical conventions and qualifications that would provide permission for a suspension of disbelief, despite the clear use of theatrical convention through the lighting and audience/stage spatial relationship. I had hoped that the spatial relationship and lighting would indicate the performance nature of both the lecture and the exercises. However, this was not the case. Instead, the blur between reality and fiction did not serve to transpose the future into now, but appeared more confusing for the participants. I was attempting to alter reality through a set of well-researched facts that displaced the possible future of the participants' worlds in real time. However, this is not how the participants experienced it. They experienced a power structure problem based on verbal cues. They wanted to be asked to join the premise or to be given the chance to debate its real-ness. In essence, they wanted to be set up to buy into a fantasy world through a recognizable performance state or frame. Telling them that this is the world to come made them want to have their own voice, to debate or rebuke it. By *not* providing these two frames directly ('I want you to imagine...' or 'what would you say to...' for example), a large amount of

²⁴⁰ Anne Perkins, 'Government to review law before self-driving cars arrive on UK roads', <<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/mar/06/self-driving-cars-in-uk-riding-on-legal-review>> [accessed on 2 April 2018]; Auto Express, 'Driverless Cars: Everything You Need to know about Autonomous Vehicles', <<http://www.autoexpress.co.uk/car-tech/85183/driverless-cars-everything-you-need-to-know-about-autonomous-vehicles>> [accessed 27 March 2018]; Aarian Marshall and Alex Davies, 'This week in the future of cars: the robots shoulder the load', <<https://www.wired.com/story/uber-starsky-robotics-trucks-mclaren/>> [accessed 27 February 2018].

emotion seemed to have occurred on another level. The participants invested themselves into the debate through denial (e.g. this might not happen or this won't be possible for me), which is actually a form of bleed. They, as characters (themselves now and in the imagined future), engaged with the world and had external feelings left over from their parts played as a result of the proposed world and communicated their own feelings from the present resulting from the imagined scenario (i.e. fifty years from now). Bleed also measured their level of personal investment.

Overall, I felt that the conversation in the feedback session pointed to a more profound power structure problem in transposing time through language. The scenario was presented in such a 'real' way, despite the fact that I was telling the story of what might happen — a story which was inherently fictional, as there is no real way to truly predict the future. I spoke of the factual data at first to define terms and then to formulate a possible scenario through asking the questions: 'What happens when capitalism is removed from life as we know it through UBI and AI?' 'What becomes of us and what will your story be?' Here, I must acknowledge that in setting the scenario, my tone of delivery might have been more educational and less conversational, as there were many new terms to introduce. However, I intentionally set out to make my tone more formal in presenting the information in order to remove any traces of my opinion through inflection. In doing so, however, one of the participants felt that my language, or the material presented, was too direct:

Bridie Moore: Do you know that sort of way of putting things, just pull back on them, reverse a bit, if potentially this will... if potentially this might happen, make it more conditionally, unsure, possibly, or if you are going to go for the full, like, 'this has already happened' then set this up more as a fiction. As more science fiction. Because there is benefit in fiction isn't there? It is about imagining a possible future. And that's really the strength of what you've done here is make us imagine a possible future.

The intention of my performance of the lecture was to make my dialogue neutral, not declarative or authoritarian. I wanted the audience to draw their own conclusions, thus enhancing the possibility of *bleed* by drawing on their own thoughts, imaginings and conclusions. This concept was evidenced in the feedback by one of the participants:

Zelda Hannay: Yea and that's what I was thinking about, [the concept of] futures is so personal so in the exercise somehow built into that was your own... the possibility for each person to imagine their own future but not to have it kind of well this is the scenario but to just be able to do that yourself.

Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, I was also trying to transpose time democratically by imagining the future through each individual's own personal extrapolations and imaginings. The choice of material presented was not neutral; indeed, the choice was highly political to the extent that it could even be considered as a political act. However, if I presented the information from as neutral a position as possible, and the audience drew their own conclusions through imagining the possible outcomes, there was a chance that the facts presented would provide a stronger connection to an imagined future than if I presented my own vision or influence through recognizable conventions. My aversion to setting direct frames of 'imagine this' or 'in the future' became apparent. I attempted to bring states of imagined future scenarios into now, transposing the future 'time' through language and imagining democratically and independently, which was unsuccessful for the participants.

X: Only when you resorted to fiction... its only when you resorted to reading our letters that it became fictional it actually had that more present intimacy and resonance because I [inaudible] fighting this privileged image of the future that you were giving us.

In fact, I was not presenting a single privileged future proposal as I had offered data that could lead to many possibilities: the problems of mental health issues due to universal wage and the loss of jobs, the decrease in the mortality rate, the elimination of poverty and hunger, the possibility of more free time coupled with the loss of purpose. The material presented was specifically constructed not to present a single utopian or dystopian ideology.

Dana Koellner: It's funny because I don't feel like at any point I ever said this is the scenario but presenting this information says this is potentially what can happen, do you know what I mean? Like, I didn't say this is gonna happen but –

Zelda Hannay: But you did though – that is very much how it seemed – that is the impression yea.

Bridie Moore: That's the impression because I was thinking now what is the language that you are using.

Dana Koellner: Yea because I was very careful about...

Bridie Moore: That is making me have that impression. And at some point, you literally said it as if it has already happened so by... we have done this and by... 2020 such and such we have done all jobs have already been automated these types of jobs.

Dana Koellner: Yea or these jobs have or yes those [facts] did that, for sure I'll think about that yea.

As seen from the exchange, the argument is more of an impression or feeling from the participants as the evidence is not clear. I did not want to rebuke the participants' opinions, as

their impression — factual or not — was relevant to the experience. It is difficult to tell the level of neutral language in the lecture part of the presentation, both expressed by myself and interpreted by the participants. However, the issue was clear: there was no invitational language that signified the openness as a conversation or stimulus for imagining, and this caused an issue of power dynamics in the presentation and the material.

In the performance section, I asked the participants to create their own future ‘artefacts’, which was the letter they wrote to themselves from the future. I brought those different artefacts into the present conversation by reading them out in a different context (from the point of view of myself by beginning the letters with ‘Dear Dana’ as I read aloud). When the participants raised their hands, this act bridged and unified the artefact from the future with the present in a show of both solidarity and consensus between the fears and doubts of the audience. The facilitator/performer must be well-versed in the subject matter in order to deliver information necessary for the dialogue in a concise way and provide counter arguments to combat some of the dystopian interpretations and underlying beliefs. Several of the participants’ statements expressed a desire for a stronger performance stance on the material in order to suspend their disbelief. I feel that a stronger character stance would take away from the reality of the concept, taking us out of the present real-ness.

Revised Goals

Based on the previous responses from the participants, I needed to refine both my linguistic construction and character portrayal in the following workshop.

Context and Aims for Case Study Seven

In an effort to address the previous session's language and character issues, in the next case study, I wanted to test some of the additional principles offered by Candy from Section Three concerning experiential futures. My aim was to extrapolate some of Candy's principles and apply them in a future performance focusing on possible future technology which might raise questions about integrating technology into the human body. I would address the problems highlighted in the previous workshop by becoming a character in a future immersive scenario.

Case Study Seven - The Care Chip Performance

Hosted by Terra Incognita

February 23, 2017

Mining Block Lecture Theatre 14 (Mechanical Engineering Department) and Hawley Building Studio 1, Mappin Street, Sheffield, S1 3JD and S1 4DT

5-7pm

Participants: 4

All Documentation is located in Appendix 7:

Appendix 7.1 The Care Chip Performance Practice Plan, Notes and Script

Appendix 7.2 Slide Presentation of The Care Chip Backdrop

Appendix 7.3 iPad Thumbprint Care Chip Agreement

Appendix 7.4 Participant Superpowers and Actions

Appendix 7.5 The Care Chip Performance Feedback Discussion Audio Transcript

Appendix 7.6 Audio CD of The Care Chip Performance Feedback Discussion

Appendix 7.7 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

The Care Chip performance was designed primarily in response to the previous workshop and in combination with Candy's work of creating future experiences through environment and design fiction. In The Care Chip performance, I portrayed a representative from the NHS (a doctor) for people who were considering the implant of a new health chip in their skin. The concept of this performance was in line with Candy's experiential futures — experiences that explore socio-political issues in an effort to consider potential beliefs and consequences. The Care Chip performance offered an experience of exploration in personal choice concerning nano-technology as a means of future health protection. Candy's four main principles — 'Don't break the universe, The Tip of the Iceberg, The Art of Double-take, Make it Fun [provocative]' — were tested again through a different form.²⁴¹ Additionally, heroism (as

²⁴¹ Candy, 'A future of design'.

utilised in LARP) was also incorporated through the consideration of empathy and action within one's own life and within each individual's communities. The documentation for this experiment is located in Appendix 7.

Practice

The event was hosted by *Terra Incognita*. I booked a large lecture hall in the Engineering Department at the University of Sheffield as the immersive environment.



Figure 12: The Care Chip Lecture Hall

(Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

The hall added a feeling of scientific legitimacy and official status to the performance. I used a projected slide as a backdrop which had the name of my fictional tech company, *Microdyne*, and the NHS logo in bold letters (see Appendix 7.2). My costume consisted of a white lab

coat and a lanyard labelled NHS with my name. Within this performance, I used design fiction artefacts as supplemental aids to indicate the future time setting. The devices were designed to be believable and as realistic as possible to support the futuristic environment as promoted by Candy in his 'don't break the universe' principle. I used an iPad as a fictional, futuristic scanner, capable of reading not only the biostatistics of a human but also their emotions. The iPad was a familiar object that people could recognize without much explanation. In addition, I created a small device made from plastic and metal that would be the tool to 'implant' the Care Chip into the participants. The implant device was mostly unrecognizable and was devised as an object of future technology that would illicit curiosity. This element served the principle, 'Tip of the Iceberg,' in that the unfamiliarity and function not only helped to establish the future setting of the performance but also served as an impetus for considering the larger unknown issues (such as the physical ramifications of post-human technology).

As the audience arrived, I welcomed them in character (playing a doctor) and thanked them for coming. I utilised a pre-written piece of text (full text located in Appendix 7.1) to explain why the audience was invited and to set up the idea of the Care Chip with as little room for improvisation as possible and to keep the language consistent throughout. I then explained the creation of the Care Chip and its purpose:

The Care Chip was invented by Dr Ron Adeshi. The purpose was in his mind to combine a holistic physical health device and mental stimulator. The chip itself is Nano-technology. It works with a free app that is directly connected to the NHS and your registered GP. You can monitor all information yourself via the app at any time, night or day. The chip monitors all aspects of your health: blood, cholesterol, sugars, hormones, white cell counts, free radicals etc. Additionally, it connects to your frontal cortex and acts as a mental stimulator to increase your sense of empathy for ten hours

per week. For these ten hours, you will simply be more inclined to help others, to get involved with community, to be an advocate of goodness and charity into the world. It is 100% side-effect free and has been thoroughly tested over the last five years in human trials.

Are there any questions?

There were several questions regarding the side effects of the chip, which I answered. I then asked for those who wished to continue with the implant to imprint their fingerprint on my iPad consent form. I then used the implantation device to 'implant' the Care Chip either in their neck or hand as they desired. Half the audience accepted, the other half declined. I explained that we then needed to calibrate the Care Chip and we were to do this through a series of fun little games. All participated in the games, though I did not point the iPad at those who declined the chip. This provided an 'opt out but still participate' scenario for those who did not wish to have the implant. The 'calibration' games consisted of the participants writing down a superpower on a piece of paper and then an action or gesture that they felt they could do that might benefit their own community. They then shared their responses with each other by using the superpower and action to tell a short story to the person next to them, while I 'monitored' those with the Care Chip through the iPad. The game provocation served as a means to think about how each individual might better serve their own community if they were empowered with a super hero quality. It also provided an experience of creating a positive narrative concerning something each participant cared particularly about within their own community.

First, I would like you to write down on this blue paper a super power, as if you were a superhero, which power would you love to have?

(COLLECT THEM)

Great. Now I would like you to close your eyes and think about your community. This could be in any community, the one in which you live, your friends, the community of your workplace. Whatever comes up first for you is correct, there are no wrong answers.

(TAKE MEASUREMENT [with iPad]) Wonderful.

Now I would like for you to write down on this yellow paper one very small action that might help your community. It can be anything — buying someone a bunch of flowers, having coffee with someone who needs help, picking up trash in your community, organizing a food drive — anything you can think of that might help your community.

Now I am going to give you a super power. (DISTRIBUTE THE SLIPS OF PAPER).

Now, I'd like you to imagine yourself several weeks from now. I would like you to turn to your neighbour and tell them the story of how you performed your one action that you just wrote down using the superpower I just gave you. So, you will tell them the story of how you accomplished your action using your superpower.

Brilliant. (TAKE MEASUREMENT [with iPad])

Aside from calibrating your Care Chip, which we have almost completed, your health measurements have increased two points! I don't know if any of you remember this, but a long time ago there was a program called PayItForward, where individuals performed random acts of kindness to complete strangers and reduced their stress levels significantly by performing compassionate acts towards others. So, aside from

calibrating your Care Chips, you just boosted your serotonin level by 3%! Well done.

I will now come around and scan you individually. You may leave as soon as I have scanned you and, as a specialist for Microdyne, I just want to thank you for your participation. If you have any questions please visit the NHS website or contact your GP. Thank you all so very much and have a wonderful evening.

All participants then returned to the Hawley Building for the feedback session.

Reflection and Analysis

I had intended to audio record the performance as well as the feedback but the first part of the performance recording unfortunately failed. In the feedback session, I stated that I thought I had skipped a paragraph during the performance. This is particularly relevant as two of the participants said they felt they needed more information or for certain subjects to be repeated as they became confused with all the new information at times, particularly in the section concerning empathy. There was also a suggestion of more images in the slide presentation. One of the participants stated that they prefer more visual and kinaesthetic learning and that the information was completely new and there was a lot of it to absorb and they needed more time or signposts to digest it all. I suggested a flyer or pamphlet at the beginning and there was agreement by several others. A participant said that items such as the flyer would add to the world created through the performance. In this case, additional artefacts that would have introduced the world would perhaps have been more beneficial for the participants. Based on the discussion, such comments may also be an expression of wanting to know more, which is also an objective of Candy's 'tip of the iceberg' principle, where artists are encouraged to evoke the most provocative elements of the world as a stimulus.

In terms of Candy's methods, I did 'break the universe' through a mediated approach with my representation of an NHS doctor. I used my own name in the performance instead of a character name, which I had rationalised at first as 'making it more real.' After the performance, however, I initially thought this was a mistake; a character name would have been a clearer indicator of a performance. Obviously, if there were audience members who did not know me, then this would not necessarily have made a difference, but as this was a *Terra Incognita* session, it was highly likely that the participants would know who I was. Oddly, in the feedback session, no one commented on the use of my real name; instead, they debated about heightening the presentation of 'my character' even more. It was strange that the participants' feedback comments seemed to indicate an acceptance of me as both Dana, the person they knew, and Dana as a 'character'. I wanted to dismiss this as confusion but, upon further contemplation, I found this very interesting. Their view of me and the artifice of putting on a character spoke to a type of meta construction within the roles played between myself as facilitator and performer. The choice of playing a character and the use of my actual name blurred the line between the real and unreal, which I was hoping to achieve to a certain degree in order to foster a sense of 'reality' in the performance. I opted for a realistic portrayal in my style of performance with a few elements of 'strangeness' added in (e.g. assurances that the chip was 100% safe), yet I still played a different 'character' which, together with the 'strangeness,' I thought, would provide the indicator of the piece's political position, as discussed in Case Study Six. However, later in the feedback, some of the participants said they would have indeed liked even more of a heightened character to clarify the piece's political position. A few of the participants felt (and wanted more of) a 'Dr Strangelove' character. In the performance, I could have been viewed as playing the villain (Dr Strangelove) in a potentially positive scenario (health monitoring). The opposite also could be true, where I could have been seen as portraying a positive person in a negative situation (privatisation of the NHS and corporate monitoring). If I presented a less realistic portrayal of

a doctor (more the mad doctor or the revolutionary), these participants felt they would be able to situate the context within a performance state and political position. However, my choice was to play a realistic character in the hypothetical scenario with a few (minimal) odd elements, to allow space for the audience to draw their own conclusion and make meaning.

I also asked the participants whether there was too much science or terminology. They agreed that there was not and one participant commented that it was almost simple. Other participants interrupted, stating that they liked that it was simplified and it reminded them of the 1950s or 1960s and suggested that the flyer could be reminiscent of *The Jetsons*.²⁴² Some of the participants then questioned their ability to ‘reject’ the implant in terms of whether the possibility of audience rejection was built into the performance. The project was designed for that option. I explained that the language I used in presenting the material put the participants in the scenario as having already agreed or at least considered being implanted but that I still wanted to leave the decision open. One of the participants felt it would be more interesting if I did not provide the ability to opt out. They argued that they would maybe still feel ‘slightly uncomfortable but in a good way.’²⁴³ The participant felt more uncomfortable about saying yes to the implant because they wanted to help with the fiction. I pointed out that my aim was to provide a future scenario where people will be faced with similar choices. Another participant felt they were ‘unsold’ on getting the implant because I said there were ‘no side effects’ to the chip, which presumably seemed to be implausible or like I was being deliberately deceptive. There was disagreement amongst the participants, as the 100% safety record was a critical political choice in the language I chose. If the scenario was very realistic, the participant said that it would appear as if the performer was in agreement and making a statement in support of something in particular. The slight strangeness, however, made them

²⁴² *The Jetsons*, dir. William Hanna and Joseph Barbera (Screen Gems, 1962). *The Jetsons* is an animated television series.

²⁴³ Appendix 7.5 transcript of feedback Case Study Seven.

aware that the performance was critical of the subject matter.

X: But that weirdness... it's got that feeling of not knowing where it sits, is it real or not...

This was exactly what I had hoped for and this element of the performance echoed Candy's principle in 'The Art of the Double-take.' Part of the discussion from this participant referenced the blur between reality and the imagined. This is very important, as the concept of blurring real with fiction was exactly what I was attempting to create. The strangeness was created by both my 'neutral' delivery and oddities in the text, like the 100% safety record which seemed like an unrealistic sales tactic. This echoes 'The Art of the Double-take,' providing the opportunity for the participants to think about the dubiousness of privatisation and health monitoring and served as a critical awareness marker.

The conversation then continued to the neutrality of an artist's position in performance. As one of the participants commented, 'doing it [a performance] is never neutral.' I agree; however, my argument was also that there are degrees within performance that may heighten the criticism and/or self-awareness of the piece. In truth, I believe one of my overall goals was to present a future scenario for people to consider as independently as possible from my own opinions and position. Language and performance can never be entirely neutral, as critical theory on semiotics illuminates. However, I do think it is worthwhile to try to construct democratically based shared experiences in order to encompass and encourage as many diverse thoughts and feelings as possible. After this dialogue, there was a long conversation where I discussed what other futurist artists are creating and what I am exploring within this context. An issue of the time frame then arose and one of the participants caught my reference to speaking of a future date in the past, 'in 2019 when the NHS was privatized.' One of the

participants said they did not catch the reference but did feel that they were in a different time frame, while the other two participants said they felt as if it was approximately ten years in the future. Another participant then stated:

X: When you said the NHS is going to be private in 2019 that was a political statement so then you are trying to be neutral and it is that kind of tension that I find quite difficult whereas if you went more towards what Zelda was talking about...

Indeed, the participant's statement expresses confusion in terms of the context of language, the time cue, and neutrality. As stated, I felt that my approach and choice of language was intended to reflect degrees of neutrality. Perhaps the tension also balances the precariousness between the real and the fictional, in a way that might be beneficial, by raising the question of ambiguity in both my position as performer and the material (what is real or not?) while simultaneously asking the participant to consider their own view on the topic without being made aware of the performer's clear position.

Aside from taking a more overt political stance within the performance, the participants also discussed that the areas chosen were quite current and if the topic was something that they were unfamiliar with, there might be less resistance from the participants. One of the participants then suggested that if you simply imagined yourself in the future, it might have a different effect than the current issues explored. Presenting material in a realistic fashion, without a more overt performance stance, made some of the participants inclined to reject the premise and view it as the performer instigating a solution or vision rather than a question. One of the participants felt that they were being asked to be complicit and that also made them want to rebel against the scenario:

Dana Koellner: But now I'm specifically telling you something and you're not

rebellious though?

X: Yea but you're not asking us to do it.

X: But yea and you are very clearly saying that's my opinion.

My direct opinion is what I was trying to avoid. Of course, my opinion is present within the piece, in both the political nature of the topic and the choices that made up the performance. However, I wanted to provide as much space as possible for the participants to formulate their own opinions about the topic. The debate then turns abruptly into issues of complicity in the following:

X: So as long as you are asking us to somehow be complicit in what you are saying then...there is a sort of lack of control or something, I don't know.

Dana Koellner: But that's in every case of everything that you do, I mean if you are giving the option to do it or not do it then you are always going to be complicit in whether or not you do it or don't do it. I don't know what other form that you could make that frame so that you don't feel challenged or you don't feel... do you know what I mean? Does that make sense?

X: Yea it does, I'm trying to think of a specific example... its 'cause I have done, it is to do with the laws and lines and the boundaries and how much it is that I am understanding of what is going on.

Here, the issue is complicity in participation. For one of the participants, their issue with complicity was a result of feeling confused without lines and boundaries that they felt were clear. I surmised that this confusion was a result of my attempt at creating a type of realism

within the setting and the performance rather than any issue with boundaries, as the audience *was* given the option of declining. When I asked the participant to clarify how this could have been different for them, they said that that they needed more information from the start (this was the participant who needed a more visual or kinaesthetic approach) and felt that it was about playing a game and there needed to be clearer boundaries. At that moment, another participant refuted her idea, defending the position that a theatre maker does sometimes purposefully attempt ‘to get an audience to feel uncomfortable.’ Another participant said they felt safe because I had an alternative plan (that they could carry on with the activities) which made her feel more comfortable:

X: I preferred this one because you seemed to be ready, I can't, I had a word for it...
you seemed to be ready to have an alternative and I felt more comfortable with that
because yea that's ok then, we'll go this way, so I think you have to have more
branches of...[interruption]

The participant who first stated the issue of complicity later reversed their position by saying that they felt safe because they had the choice to leave or not. As the conversation continued, the issue of audience acceptance of the chip in ‘real life’ began. Most of the participants agreed that they would not have a chip implant and, here, I pointed out that this may be different with other individuals who prefer technology, an opinion with which the participants agreed. One of the participants then suggested that I had a ‘rosy idea’ of the future. I explained that I did not feel that way, that there would be benefits as well as negative examples of how technology might influence our choices. I provided several examples of this, such as: how the phone has changed our lives for better and for worse; how driverless cars might change our lives by making travel safer and providing more freedom for the elderly and vulnerable and providing relief for the NHS; but simultaneously, driverless cars may decimate an entire workforce of cab and lorry drivers. The participant then stated:

X: See maybe do it in the manner of Bobby Baker, 'cause I could really spend an evening listening to what you are telling me if it was in the manner of Bobby Baker [...] maybe it's kind of the manner of your performance, telling me it in a different way...your style of...²⁴⁴

There is a type of rejection of the performance style in the above statement. In reference to the Bobby Baker comparison, the comment relates more to the presentation of a heightened persona that is readily identifiable or assumes a performed political stance (revealed by the participant in the feedback session), which I discuss at length below. However, the participant does acknowledge that the information, even the debate, is interesting, but they indicate that the realistic style I have chosen does not appeal to them in a manner they are familiar with/desire.

My realistic approach in terms of persona was intentional as it was an effort to remain as neutral as possible. It became problematic for two of the participants, partially due to my failure to explain my choice clearly in the feedback session. I do feel that the style of the performance was important to provide more of an opportunity for the participants to consider their own positions within the moment, rather than analysing my performer stance then contemplating their own position. This neutral stance, though clearly uncomfortable for at least these two participants, was a tactic that I would adhere to and would not abandon in future performances of this nature. It serves to create a performance that is somewhat ambiguous in the delivery method of content and unfamiliar in approach as it asks questions of authenticity. Such tactics serve to call into

²⁴⁴ Bobby Baker is a contemporary artist and performer. It is unclear what the participant means by 'manner' as Baker draws on many styles of performance. However, in the context of the conversation, I surmise she means a type of heightened and stylized character. For examples of Baker's work see Bobby Baker, 'Daily Life Ltd.' <<https://dailylifeld.co.uk/bobby-baker/>> [accessed 23 March 2017].

question audience expectations of the performer and incorporate Candy's principle of 'The Art of the Double Take' as it seems simultaneously odd and yet familiar. The participant apparently felt a different approach would have been more effective, and their feelings about the scenario and my approach conflicted with the 'what you see is what you get' principle. It was difficult for this participant to accept my role within the scenario. In the following experiment, I would adjust this approach, not my position as described above. I would add a blanket statement about role play to see if qualifying the possibilities of 'what you see is what you get' through acknowledgement of potential role play would counter such conflicts.

What I did not communicate well in the feedback session, and which probably had a large influence on the conversation, was my use of the word 'neutral' in terms of the performed political stance earlier in the session. This led to an assertiveness that what I was doing was political, which I agreed with time and time again (see transcript in Appendix 7.5). What I failed to articulate clearly in the moment is what I meant by the term 'neutral'. I meant that I was trying to avoid my own direct opinions, albeit through degrees, by not stating what I felt outright. Of course, I recognized that the performance was political, not only by topic but by all of the choices I made in the provision of information and the types of exercises. However, I wanted to provide a platform for imagining the future where my own degree of political assertion was not directly obvious and intrusive, allowing more room for the audience to both consider and imagine their own and different possibilities within alternate futures. Political assertions were mediated in a way that provided a scenario for the provocation which contained a less definitive performance stance overall. This allowed more room for all sides of the conversation about the future space being explored. However, the method in this form appeared to be too confusing for the participants and they viewed it as suspicious rather than open. The result of this 'suspicion' is similar to the conversation in

Case Study Six concerning a stronger performance persona, such as a melodramatic character. The call for a stronger performance stance was evident in their statements in order for these participants to suspend their ‘suspicion’. I disagreed with this method, as it calls attention to the performer and away from the co-created democratic position I was attempting to foster. However, their participation in the performance, particularly by generating fictional narratives from the super powers and their stories of compassionate action within their communities, were most compelling. The narratives created here and during Case Study Six in writing letters from the future ultimately provided a foundation for the final session on how to re-write some of our thoughts about the future, through the use of precise language and a clear political stance.

Revised Goals

From the combined workshops, it was apparent that the use of language and implied political stance of the performer were crucial elements of contention within the performances and workshops. I then began to think about Candy’s work in experiential futures and how participants often reacted to each scenario provided and then discussed their experience afterwards, as I did in the post-discussion sessions. I felt throughout this practice that the feedback dialogue seemed to have more of a thorough, co-created, shared experience of the future imagined world. This imagining together seemed more immediate and impactful than experiencing an event and discussing it afterwards. I felt I needed a more devised, collaborative approach, that is, a collective creation and sharing of the workshop or performance experience and ‘script’ which was dictated by the topics that concerned the participants most. Additionally, I needed to provide a way that eliminated or at least reduced the potential conflict of accepting the ‘what you see is what you get’ issue that arose.

Context and Aims for Case Study Eight

In the previous case study, I felt that I had reached an impasse on the approaches explored. More precisely, I think I was looking for a more democratic experience, in that the subjects and solutions would be derived in conjunction with the participants, co-created by and with them in the moment.²⁴⁵ I also wanted to explore further the storytelling concept I experienced within LARP. It became apparent from the previous workshops that design fiction could be used as one tool to help formulate a space and stimulate imagining a future world. Dialogue and linguistic construction were essential to the creation of a shared, co-creative experience of an imagined future. Here, I abandoned the methods of others. I wanted something new that encapsulated more of a democratic, shared approach. I decided to use a performance lecture and minimalist performance elements which also included a single but complex question to stimulate imagining.

²⁴⁵ I am aware that collaborative experiences may include certain divisions of labour which form into hierarchies, and that my role as initiator and facilitator did place me in a position of control by providing the original provocation and organizing the responses. However, I largely handed over this power by asking for mutual collaboration and participation in the mutual generation of material, which echoes the concept of democratic co-creation within LARP previously described in Section Two.

Case Study Eight – Writing New Future Fictions Performance Workshop

Hosted by Terra Incognita

April 27, 2017

Hawley Building

5-7pm

Participants: 5

All Documentation is located in Appendix 8:

Appendix 8.1 Writing New Fictions Performance Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Appendix 8.2 Slide Presentation Writing New Fictions

Appendix 8.3 Document Image of Participant Ideas

Appendix 8.4 Document Image of Flip Chart

Appendix 8.5 Transcript Excerpts from Feedback Session

Appendix 8.6 DVD Video of Writing New Fictions Performance Workshop Case Study Eight

Appendix 8.7 Participant Acknowledgement

Practice Plan and Rationale

It was fortuitous that at this point I came across a podcast by historian Yuval Noah Harari concerning AI.²⁴⁶ Harari suggests that through new technologies, such as the use of virtual reality devices, our brains will be augmented enabling us to experience different realities.²⁴⁷ He discusses not only AI, but also how storytelling shapes our collective future. Harari states that what we believe, the stories we tell ourselves, make up our reality now and will consume our reality in the future through new methods of experiencing stories. I thought about his point of constructing our own reality through storytelling and the similarity of how LARPer's construct new worlds to experience by imagining and creating new stories through improvisational dialogue. To me, then, it seemed a type of *improvised speculation* was the logical next step in creating a new future story through collective imagining, as well as

²⁴⁶ Sam Harris, 'Reality and the Imagination: A Conversation with Yuval Noah Harari', <<https://www.samharris.org/podcast/item/reality-and-the-imagination>> [accessed 19 March 2017].

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

attempting to come to some agreement on what we might collectively desire as a means of shaping those stories.²⁴⁸ I again put together a slide presentation (see Appendix 8.2) to provide a context to the workshop. I then devised a short game based on the answering of a question that I had hoped would facilitate dialogues about new futures and thereby create new narratives on how we envision the future. I called this a performance workshop, as I was unsure whether the form would entirely yield what could be designated as ‘performance’ by my definition.²⁴⁹ The form contained all the *elements* of performance by my definition, but I was unsure whether the role play and dialogues would work in this scenario. This felt like new territory, or perhaps more precisely, refined and combined elements in a new way based on the previous experiments. I discuss the results of the performance workshop in the Reflection and Analysis section, as well as in the Conclusion, and provide suggestions for further study. The entirety of the workshop is video recorded on DVD and can be found in Appendix 8.6. Significant portions of the video have been transcribed and are located in Appendix 8.5. Timecodes are listed beside the start of each quoted section below for reference directly to the DVD recording.

Practice

I arrived at 3:30 at the Hawley Building (as described previously) to set up for the 5pm workshop. It was a sunny Thursday afternoon and the building was empty. I had prepared a slide presentation (see Appendix 8.2) and wanted to make sure it was visible in the stage

²⁴⁸ *Improvised speculation* is the term I am designating which concerns the act of individuals imagining possible alternate futures to solve current and potential future problems. It is the process of thinking about, imagining and discussing the possibilities of ideas and improvising possible solutions within performance. Solutions or areas of improvement are specific to the participants’ needs and desires and may consider broader views. Improvised speculation is discussed at length below.

²⁴⁹ I defined Theatre/Performance previously as the opportunity in which individuals come together to hold a dialogue with a witness participant in a space designated as ‘other’ in some way (i.e. verbally or atmospherically by, for example, lighting or sound), marking the space as different for a particular purpose and time. There is also an awareness of the potential roles being played within the given scenario on a meta-conscious level or intentionally, and also a conscious awareness of the actions as potentially ‘different’ than norm because we are calling attention to the event as a performance state.

lighting I was planning to use. I entered the space and formed a circle of chairs in the middle of the room. I then turned on the computer and lighting desk and set the colours on the overhead lamps. I aimed the multi-coloured stage lights at the circle.



Figure 13: Writing New Fictions Performance Workshop space (Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

This warmed the space with swathes of colour and separated out a performance space from the remainder of the room, similar to Case Study Six. It was necessary to set the lighting, as it provided ambiance and set the scenario as a performance space, differentiating it from the classroom state that the normal lights signified.



Figure 14: Writing New Fictions Performance area

(Photo Credit & Copyright Dana Koellner)

Importantly, the lights served as a reminder to the participants during the workshop that we are in a performance state. As was customary, the organizers and attendees began arriving and went upstairs for tea and a chat until the time came to begin. Prior to the workshop, I provided more information than previously on the email announcement concerning the subject and content of the workshop. I had hoped to address some of the issues of ‘complicity’ raised in Case Study Seven, by outlining more of the content for the participants. As a supplement, I provided an article to be read prior to the workshop with a statement about the strong views not necessarily representing my own. During the later coffee/tea session prior to the start of the workshop, I asked if anyone had read the article (they had not). Before the session began, I went through the consent forms as required.

I began the workshop with a brief statement about the difference between this performance workshop and previous sessions and I asked for collaboration in today's work. I had hoped that an invitation would set the tone for the workshop, placing both myself and the group in collaborative positions. The slide presentation would provide a context to the workshop, outlining the progress up until now, the key elements previously investigated, and the stimulus material for the workshop (see Appendix 8.2). The stimulus material was an introduction to Harari's ideas concerning A.I. and storytelling as means of constructing new narratives. Additionally, the final slide provided the provocative question that the workshop would be centred on.

The first slide provided the same information from the email announcement about my aim for this workshop and a statement about the roles that might be played during the discussion.

My aim is to explore methods of investigating hypothetical futurized situations while negotiating areas of agreement between a variety of perspectives, ideologies, ambitions, needs and pressures.

The topics we will discuss are necessarily political, though may not be our actual feelings, as we are playing roles. Some of the thoughts and feelings shared, however, may be real.

The statement declared the political nature of the discussions that might occur and that some statements made by the group may or may not be true as some participants may assume certain roles within the session. I wanted there to be an option for the participants to role play directly and to be aware of the roles we might play in the performance workshop. The disclaimer also provided space for controversial expression or dissent. One of the participants

immediately asked me about the role playing and I explained there is an option to role play, and that we are all playing roles, such as my own role play as facilitator. I was opening the boundaries of experience in the form of roles that may be assumed (both real, imagined or fictional) within the session and that expression within those roles may not necessarily represent entirely one's beliefs or even truth, necessarily. Simultaneously, the advent of new future scenarios placed us in the position of considering what role we might play within these different future narratives. For example, a discussion about how we might change education in the future directed our thoughts to how our roles as educators or learners might be different in this future narrative. Within this workshop, my performance role was that of facilitator and I identified myself to the participants as playing this role. I did not assume an exaggerated character or persona, as had been suggested in previous workshops. I did not choose to play a character with a firm political opinion that was seeking to provoke or challenge the audience with a point of view. Instead, I came with an open invitation as facilitator to explore the idea of storytelling a new future, one that was generated from and by the participants collectively. A participant then asked if they were able to stop participation if at any time they were uncomfortable. My response was 'absolutely at any point, yes,' which was also covered in the consent form read out before the session. I explained my ideas concerning bleed, heroism and storytelling as related to my LARP experience (see the slide presentation in Appendix 8.2).

After the slides relating to bleed, heroism and storytelling, I moved into the storytelling section by explaining that I felt the recent work of the historian Harari illuminated another possible route to discussing the future. I began by providing a short introduction to Harari's work and introduced some of his concepts as outlined in a recent article and the podcast concerning the power of writing new fictions.²⁵⁰ As I worked through the slides, I engaged the

²⁵⁰ Yuval Noah Harari, 'Humankind: The Post-Truth Species', <<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-04-13/humankind-the-post-truth-species>> [accessed 24 August 2017]; Harris, 'Reality and the Imagination'.

participants by asking them questions such as ‘is that clear?’ or ‘what do you think?’. After the context slides on Harari’s work, I ended with a statement followed by a question: ‘So maybe it is about how to write a new human story from this point forward. How would we begin [to tell a new human story about what we want for the future]?’ I then stated that in past workshops I had provided ‘futurized experiences’ for participants to comment on or debate but this time I was actually more interested in how they would begin to write a new fictional story ‘about humanity, about the future, about what you want, and that’s where I’m at.’ I asked if that was clear, they agreed. There was a bit of uncomfortable laughter – I reiterated the point about what do ‘we’ want in the future and if we could find some small area of agreement then we could move forward. I also made a joke/reassured them that I did have other things planned in case no one said anything – which caused a laugh and broke the tension. Several people spoke over each other saying – ‘it’s such a big question/political systems/I don’t want capitalism/I want something else’ and another participant interjected ‘but even if you pick on that particular thing then where do you start, where do you go into it?’ Accidentally, I derailed this question by responding to another participant’s question, which led into a long conversation about sex robots. It is important to note that there was room for discussion from the start of the session, both in the form of what we were doing, as well as the various topics raised, which integrated the elements of a post-immersion discussion within the actual session and encouraged the participants to direct the conversation in the way they wished. The conversation then moved back and forth between fears of technology and the participants’ individual concerns. At most stages, I tried to counter their ideas with opposing positive arguments, integrating the ‘or’ principle into the dialogue.²⁵¹ Much time was spent on discussing issues from governmental control, education, training for workforce, and living a life free from conventional capitalism. Of particular interest was one

²⁵¹ The ‘or’ principle, discussed previously in relation to Tomorrow’s Parties from Forced Entertainment, is used as an element of disruption.

participant's argument that our experience of the past defines our wants of the future – that our past is irrevocably linked and should make us decide about our future, which was directly related to Harari's narrative theory. We discussed then whether it is possible to imagine something not connected to the past and the consensus was that it is generally not the case, though possible.

Later, in speaking about LARP and role playing, another participant argued that endowing yourself with a new character frees you to think about other choices you might not otherwise make in a scenario.

43:25 Dana Koellner: [...] and how they [LARP] do that going back to what you want, I mean part of it is the costume, part of it is the, um, endowment with a new self a new role, you know, 'what am I interested in' kind of idea.

X: I think there is something quite... to me there seems something important about that because that frees you up to think about different things in a way that if I'm me I'm not free to do that. Does that make sense? [...] So, like the Care Chip, I was sort of in a way freed up to go 'no, I'm not doing that' 'cause that was the role I'd taken on.

Dana Koellner: Yea that does make sense.

X: So that sense of being more immersive I think is, to me, [it] is quite an important part of it.

The participant brought up The Care Chip performance, stating that they were free to make another choice because that wasn't 'them' in The Care Chip session whilst being immersed in

the dialogue. They had taken on a character role without a prompt or invitation. However, this was the person arguing about complicity and clear boundaries during The Care Chip session. Their perspective seemed to shift between the sessions. In this performance workshop a very clear statement of the potential of assuming roles was given at the start.

44:19 Zelda Hannay: Yea that is, it's interesting that idea of like giving people permission somehow in a theatre space, giving people permission to sort of act certain roles and imagine certain futures, you know what are the different roles that we could be put in that would mean that we would act out certain futures.

Dana Koellner: Yea because I remember like if you try to tell somebody what's happened then you automatically – no I don't believe how that is or whatever, that comes back at you which is interesting in itself because that shows what the people are believing and how they're thinking.

Zelda Hannay: Yea.

Dana Koellner: So that kind of put them in a role automatically, which is a different way.

Zelda Hannay and others: Yea yea, it's a different position.

Together here, we acknowledged that permission to role play acted as a stimulus and revealed individual position on each topic in a different form of role play than the participant was first contemplating. This led to a discussion about the *Medea Hotel*²⁵² versus Punchdrunk

²⁵² Hotel Medea ZU-UK, 'Hotel Medea ZU-UK', <<http://zu-uk.com/hotel-medea/>> [accessed 15 May 2017].

performances and some qualities of some types of immersive theatre that the participant found difficult.²⁵³

46:26 Zelda Hannay: Yea well yea and he [the director of Hotel Medea] was sort of saying well I don't think that immersive this idea of immersive theatre gets bandied around all the time and actually you have to be really careful to think about what is immersive and what isn't and he talked about hospitality, and sort of generosity and openness and sensitivity and all these things and I thought it was really interesting 'cause I've only seen one Punchdrunk show and as much as I did like it I find it very, it was quite aggressive, I found it quite sort of exclusive, and quite kind of... I don't know, it isn't... I had sort of problems with it, a few problems with it and stuff, this anonymised, you have to wear this mask and your sort of milling around with this 600 other people in masks and all the actors ignore you, and you know well that's not very inviting, it's great, it's fun, so I don't know yea yea exactly but what is immersive then, so I actually feel quite cut off even though I'm in it physically in the set.

I understood what she meant, as I had similar feelings during the physically immersive experience of LARP. I found elements of LARP exclusive at the start and I too felt anonymised as I was not able to participate and thus felt ignored. It appears that we were coming to another element that was important in delineating not only immersive spaces but also this experience – an aspect of feeling included and not excluded or anonymous. It is not necessary that a 'Future Theatre' must be immersive by any definition; however, it did seem that an added feeling of inclusivity was important to this participant and to me, evidenced

²⁵³ It is important to note that different practices of immersive performance use different mechanisms for immersion, each with different intentions for the audience. The participant is clearly exploring her own definition of immersive experience. For further examples of immersive mechanisms, see James Frieze, *Reframing Immersive Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Theatre* (London: Palgrave, 2016), Hotel Medea ZU-UK, 'Hotel Medea ZU-UK', <<http://zu-uk.com/hotel-medea/>> [accessed 15 May 2017], and PunchDrunk's *The Drowned Man* in Josephine Machon, *The Punchdrunk Encyclopedia*, (London: Routledge, 2018).

further through the feedback below. I then said to this participant that what I was arguing at this point was that if you are writing new fictions, you are telling new stories and you are thinking about the future, which is immersive in itself, as you are involved with the making, the creating, the thinking and imagining and then projecting yourself through time and space by thought into a different scenario.²⁵⁴ Another participant brought up *Star Trek* and assembling old pieces of ideas to create a new hybrid of material. We had a brief discussion concerning the behaviours of certain science-fiction groups and then I introduced the exercise, as we had spent the first third of the time allotted for the session. I handed out pieces of paper instructing the participants to write down any topic they would like to discuss about the future:

Please write on the piece of paper what you would like to talk about in terms of the future. For example... the NHS, AI, employment, relationships, etc.

I collected their topics and folded up the pieces of paper. It seemed then that people needed a short break, so we took a necessity break for ten minutes. Upon their return, I changed to the next slide to:

In the future, I want the...(insert the topic) in my opinion, to be more like...
(complete the sentence).

One of the *Terra Incognita* organizers provided a paper flip board. I asked each of the participants to pick one of the topics that were folded up in my hands. They picked a topic and

²⁵⁴ I refer back to the previous definition of 'immersive', for the experience we were discussing is participatory and the audience is integral and necessarily affects the outcome of the work; it involves one of the senses; and it is held in a location that indicates or encapsulates physically a particular idea, concept, feeling or meaning which differentiates and marks the environment as a separate space for performance, derived from Machon in *Immersive Theatres* (pp.72-88).

then I wrote each topic on the board. We then went through each topic and reframed it to fit the sentence from the slide: 'In the future, I want the (insert the topic) in my opinion, to be more like...' I started to write some of their responses from the discussion on the board under their questions. There were many imaginings about what we would like to create and change in the future as we attempted to fit the topics into the sentence. The participants seemed to agree with each other during the discussion more often than not. The 'in my opinion' portion of the statement seemed to provide space for personal comments and also allowed the possibility of taking on different positions or considerations. Larger topics of morality and the way the world works, both now and how it could work in the future, were discussed as well.

The mood became quite sombre at certain points but still engaged, and there appeared to be frustration occurring during certain topics, particularly anything related to capitalism. At points where I felt the conversation was moving into more dystopian visions, I would provide counter-arguments toward the benefits of technology and the positive aspects of technological advancement using the 'or' to facilitate alternatives. This act of counter-arguing seemed to regenerate the group and, in certain cases, some repositioned their views on the topic (see transcript in Appendix 8.5). I spoke about the technological advancements that were already developing and how these advancements could help us to create a world that we wanted. I felt myself looking for ways in which technology could support the desires expressed or, in some cases, counter the dystopian visions. In terms of this type of practice, the facilitator would need to have knowledge of advancements in technology in order to counter some of the arguments that might disrupt the imagining which focused on more dystopian aspects. The imagining and discussion continued around additional issues, such as concerns of ethics in government and how the government actually functions (see video in Appendix 8.6) . All the individuals were engaged in the imagining process and asked questions, added comments, personal beliefs and anecdotes. Here, we had accomplished what I was trying to achieve: a

minimised and accessible state of performance that incorporated democratic co-creation through speculative imagining of alternative futures utilising the ‘or’ of Forced Entertainment, the storytelling and role play derived from LARP, and the minimised role (the realistic neutral stance) of the facilitator derived from Candy’s ‘Art of the Double-Take’.

Feedback Session

In the last ten minutes of the session, I asked for specific feedback on this workshop in particular, as all but one participant had attended the previous sessions. The following transcribed excerpts extract the major points from the feedback discussion, which are recorded in full within Appendix 8.6:

1:37:42 Zelda Hannay: Yea yea I thought it was, I really liked being invited – it makes me sound like an egomaniac – but I really liked being invited to talk about possible futures sort of all together and there was a sort of, yea, that sort of discussion and I really liked actually, umm, kind of voicing some of the stuff that I think about, learning about what I think about it so I thought about what I think in new ways I think ‘cause a lot of this stuff is unresolved for me and I think about it all the time and it goes just round and round and I just feel really depressed about it so actually, umm, it was really nice, umm, to hear myself saying it out loud.

X: I think it was interesting in that sense of, like you said, voicing and generally we had moments where we weren’t sure whether we were talking about the same thing but then we came to an agreement and I think that’s interesting what you [Dana] are saying about having that agreement but I think there’s a thing again about the fact that are we likely to agree with one another anyway and is it a case of should we be having other people into this discussion who disagree with us on varying ideas and how would that discussion make us feel then if it became more argumentative’ cause it hasn’t been

today — it's been quite nice and quiet. Umm, I'm not saying I agree with everything everybody says at all but what I have I felt like I was being listened to and felt that I was able to persuade somebody for what I was saying or at least they would listen and not shoot me down in that sense that wouldn't necessarily always be the case but what I just came into where you said but if we all agree on these things why can't we change them because we don't have the power maybe we should have maybe we've got more power than we realize but that's whole different question but... but those people need to have this discussion to find out if they agree and that's the issue.

I agreed with the 'dissenting voices' comment: expressions of others with different views than those expressed by these participants as alternative opinions might change the dynamics of the session. However, even within this group, there were dissenting voices. Such debates and alternative perspectives propelled ideas forward by offering exciting alternatives and thus should be encouraged; all hypothetical alternative arguments should be included and debated as part of the democratic process in a respectful way as indicated by the participant.

Another participant then asked me if my goal was to be active or whether the goal was to have people think differently about the scenarios through role play (more like the aims of Boal). I said that 'I had thought about both those routes but am not sure yet.' I felt resistance in myself to describe what I was doing or might be doing that was similar to previous forms as I wanted to leave space for new areas to develop within the session. I then asked another participant what they thought:

1:42:23 X: Umm my thought is it's like thinking about the future and all the scientific part of it is so... it's such a different kind of... different bag to the sort of, the kind of political discussions that a lot of people I know have. It's almost like same old same old on the political front and the scientific front is like forging ahead all this amazing

new stuff, new materials, all kinds of incredible things are happening and yet, yet again, it's almost like the actual humans aren't there, it's like this great huge divide.

The above comment was a revelation for the participant and a reversal in thought about the previous fears associated with technology expressed throughout previous sessions. I agreed and we then discussed the media's role in controlling the information. I then stated:

1:43:40 Dana Koellner: But as a piece of theatre, if we called this a piece of theatre right now, I think for me you are discussing exactly what I would want to have discussed, not to come up with any solution, but to be thinking about this scenario or these scenarios.

Karen Mulcahey: You know when you say a piece of theatre, I mean would you set up a frame like what Boal does Forum theatre, would you set up a new framework in order to discuss these things or create these new fictions, that isn't just sit and discussing, do you know what I mean, do you know what I mean that's the idea.

Dana Koellner: That's the goal yea, how it works, what does work, what doesn't work.

I agreed here in some way with the participant, despite the conflict of what I was feeling and the resistance I had to answering the question. I did not want to commit to a form without understanding what was being achieved here within this performance workshop through analysis. I was resistant to defining the work as one thing or another until I had examined the outcomes of the session. In discussing the form further, another participant stated:

1:44:25 X: One of the big things with how it started was you asked such a massive question, that we did all go kinda...Ohhh..(stammers) I can't remember it what now even... 'how do you see

the future?’ Or ‘how you —’ It was such a big question, but yet we did get in from it, I don’t know how you did that. But there was some way that became a very open conversation, umm but yea, ’cause I got a bit kinda floored by the question and again with that ‘write down something that you want to talk about’ and again, it was massive, I could have written anything and I think that was quite interesting – ’cause interesting that you’re saying that we talked about what you wanted to talk about, not what you wanted us to talk about but like you didn’t guide us in that at all, I suppose that you did the opening did to a certain extent. But...

Dana Koellner: I could have left that whole opening out actually

X: Yea it wasn’t it was fairly... we’ve done your workshops before so we’ve got an idea of what you are interested in but then actually I don’t think any of us particularly picked those things we’ve done.

Karen Mulcahey: Well I was new to that wasn’t I, I suppose, but if you are going to talk about the future or anything you can only like you said you can’t get rid of the past so you are thinking within the system and institutions and so, yea so I guess that kind of there’s still things gonna be, we gonna be thinking about but just in a different way.

Dana Koellner: Yea.

Karen Mulcahey: I think it’s difficult is so it’s not abstract it’s so strange and new the concept that we’ve only got the past to go on and it’s like there is a massive gap that we need to take a massive leap to create something new and we almost haven’t got the language to do it.

However, they did ‘do it’ without realising; through collective imagining, they were able to discuss and debate new narratives. There was no resistance to the topics in this workshop as experienced in previous sessions. Despite the enormity of the topic and the unfamiliar form, the

participants engaged without any of the issues of authority or complicity discussed previously, as arising within Case Study Seven.

1:46:16 Dana Koellner: Like, yea, and talking about the form [meaning more familiar forms such as one-to-one performances], like, just even the question there is a resistance [from myself] an automatic resistance to the question and we've been through several iterations of resistances and agreements as well and new insights and now what I am trying to figure out is how, why is this one different other than me asking you rather than presenting something for you to look at, can you think of any ways that this was different 'cause I was asking a question problem larger than every other topic.

X: Yea yea cause the other questions have been more specific about...

Dana Koellner: A particular thing.

Zelda Hannay: I think its 'cause so you said, um, 'write down on a piece of paper' and you put the thing on there and it said something in relation to the future and you put in brackets e.g. and I thought well I don't actually want to talk about those but because you said e.g. so that meant I was invited to talk about a part of the future that I was really interested in, and that for me was the difference. Because I guess before, um, you know, when you said before ok that we are going to talk about the universal wage or we'll talk about you know the chip and so on, I suppose my reaction to that is that I would always go 'well what about this, this and this' before I actually talked about those things you know I'd always go 'yes but, you know,' whereas because you said well what do you actually want to talk about and didn't give me a kind of, well, it's this particular thing, that was open enough for me to go 'ok, well these are the things that I've been thinking about' and they don't have yes 'buts' in front of them, it's me, do you know what I mean? And I think that was the difference and feels... that to me feels very very hospitable and open and good, it feels good.

Karen Mulcahey: Yea and like arts, I didn't really have a way of putting it into, put it in that question, but I just knew it was important to me and so that was quite open I suppose that helped yea.

Here, the participants state that there was no resistance to any of the topics because I provided space, by the type of language I used, for us to discuss anything, and the topics came directly from the participants. This, for me, was a key point, as I felt the idea of discussing what the participants were imagining was much more democratic and supported the co-creation concept from LARP.

1:48:14 X: There was also quite a nice thing that you said early about this that we might not be saying what we think, which again just frees you up to just say well this isn't ness.[stops mid word]..so you don't know how much of what I said is me and that is quite nice.

Dana Koellner: [...] And that lets you pick another role.

X: Yea and that might be me and it might not and... but that, just that little edge of possibility means that you've got a little bit of freedom to go 'oh yea I get that'.

The experience was open for the participants to create whatever roles they wished within the discussion, as noted from the statement which provided a type of 'permission' in the beginning of the session. The above comments denote that there was an opportunity for the participants to play a role which was separate from themselves if they wished, as well as a caveat for expression that may or may not represent their own personal and genuine feelings.

1:49:01 Dana Koellner: Would you call this a piece of theatre?

X: I wouldn't call it theatre, I might call it performance.

Karen Mulcahey: Oh I don't know, I think I'd go the other way around, I don't know I'd have to now go back and define those terms again.

Dana Koellner: Can you just throw out a coupla reasons why, just anybody.

X: I'd call it a cooperative environment.

[Agreement sounds]

Karen Mulcahey: That's probably more like it isn't it?

1:49:38 Karen Mulcahey: [...] I always think of the theatre as sort of an arena in which things happen, even if you go back to Greek tragedy –

Dana Koellner: 'cause this was an arena.

Karen Mulcahey: Well that's why I say theatre rather than performance if you know what I mean, but then, I don't know.

Dana Koellner: What about for you?

X: I think of theatre as something that is happening over 'there' in a way that I tend to think of it as having an audience, whereas performance I see...[...] But that sense of performance being I'm performing this part that thinks these things and so I'm performing for you as an audience in a way.

Zelda Hannay: In the same way we do in our lives.

X: In the same way you do in your presentation and you know...(inaudible)

One of the participants then asked if I might consider a more straightforward game in which I assigned roles. Originally, I had planned to hand out character objectives on pieces of paper if the first portion of the discussion fell flat or more stimulus was needed. However, due to the engaging nature of the discussion, I abandoned this tactic. Something more profound seemed to be happening during the discussion and I wanted to see how it would play out. At this point, the profound feeling was related to the exciting precariousness of role play, where the in-betweenness created a space that was both real and imagined. There was something more interesting about providing the opportunity for role play but not knowing if roles were being played. There was a type of precariousness happening between the 'real' and the potentially 'not real' within the discussion. I felt that this was more profound and impactful, rather than potentially forcing the role play concept further. There was a good feeling of exploration, debate and solidarity achieved through the discussions, which I believe came from expressions of what each individual wanted or was thinking about.

1:51:49 Zelda Hannay: [...] I wonder if you know a first exercise could be the kind of playing different roles and things and playing around with it a bit and then maybe a second exercise would be more like this one so potentially you've been freed up by a bit by a sort of a performance sort of interaction and that freedom that we get from playing other roles and then we feel freer perhaps to talk and try ideas out without feeling like we've terribly offended somebody and you've terribly offended me and stuff.

X: Yea, yea.

Dana Koellner: Yea, I do like, I do like the element that know that you can carry this out with you that these are your thoughts in so form or not, but that they are probably potentially more than if I said 'ok, you're an architect' or 'you're a doctor' and something and I said 'right, we're going debate the NHS' you know.

Zelda Hannay: Yea yea.

X: Something about, I want that immersive idea is that integral to your work?

Dana Koellner: Not necessarily no, but go on, go on.

X: but I was just thinking about that immersive idea and whether, which is more immersive, whether I'd be more immersed I don't know, cause I've not done it whether I'd be more immersed if I was taking on a role that wasn't me because I could just throw myself into it or whether I was more immersed because we just got into the discussion and I had to respond to things that people were saying.

Dana Koellner: Well because I – oh sorry.

Karen Mulcahey: No, I was just saying well they're both immersive aren't they, just different.

My observation was that they were fully immersed and engaged throughout. They did not sit back and let the story or discussion unfold, but actively participated in attempting to create new future fictions through the dialogue.

1:54:20 Zelda Hannay: How is it different then from you know a sort of political conversation sort of thing, because I was just wondering you know because I'd imagine sometimes what can happen with these kind of conversations is, it ends up being a kind of critique of everything

that's happening now and sort of slagging off a bit and those endless political conversations you have with people and what the left gets told off for doing constantly just talking about stuff so I wonder how is it different, how could it be different?

Dana Koellner: Well the setting is different, so that it's kind of self-referential in its setting that would be the basic level, but at the end I think what I would do is I would have an agreement, so the whole thing is that we come to at least one agreement that we can agree on, one thing that we can all agree on and then the question I was thinking of before and either take that further, like into an action like you were suggesting, or have them enact out different roles, both sides of the agreement but I don't, I'm not leaning towards that now so I don't know.

Zelda Hannay: I think that would be quite meaningful to have if that was what was going to happen, to then have an action, you know it wouldn't necessarily have to be something kind of like that people wouldn't want to do or something...

Karen Mulcahey: I'm loving that, that's ace! Because actually you do, like you said critiquing everything and going it's really rubbish and there's all this power and when somebody does surprise you with a thought and you go well actually yeah that, yea, it lifts you a little bit and it opens your mind a little bit and you get (gestures).

In the above, Karen Mulcahey pointed out how the mind can be opened to a new thought about the future and in that moment as you are imagining, you are imagining yourself in that different experience in the near or distant future which *is* a conceptualised future space.

1:57:02 Dana Koellner: Mmm. That's what I think.

X: So maybe the outcome could be an agreement, we agreed on these things it wouldn't be

actually all of that

Karen Mulcahey: Yea even if it's just one agreement.

1:57:12 X: 'cause we didn't actually agree on everything, we agreed on this one thing and you take that one thing away with you that everybody, cause even if you had a group that had more argumentative [argument] in it should, you'd hope that's one thing, that's ONE thing that you'd come away with.

Dana Koellner: Because that's my idea, is that if you can take, if we can just work on one things [thing] that we agree on, all the other problems are going to be there always we know that and we will get to that. But right now... [...]

The conversation then digresses into a conversation about a recent Heineken commercial and the use of theatrical methods to find mutual understanding between two individuals with opposing viewpoints.²⁵⁵ At this point, I began to think about Eleanor Saitta's 'toolkit' for LARP (discussed in Section Two of this thesis), which was useful for effecting change. One of the elements she presented was the concept of 'ritual'. She defined ritual for LARP as 'socio-technical systems [which] have performances and ceremonies associated with them (usually unknown until seen in real time).'²⁵⁶ The group did reach agreement on multiple ideas they would like to see in the future and there were some topics that remained open. It might be beneficial in future endeavours to incorporate a type of physical and/or verbal ritual concerning the areas of agreement found within the discussion to further solidify the concepts agreed upon.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ Aliiigator, *The New Heineken Ad is Brill[i]ant #OpenYourWorld*, online video recording, YouTube, 26 April 2017, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etIqln7vT4w>> [accessed 21 September, 2017].

²⁵⁶ Saitta, *LARP and...*

²⁵⁷ Regarding types of rituals for performance, see Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual Writings on Culture and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 613-645 and Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974).

Reflection and Analysis

Several key points about the elements of the performance workshop were raised during the session: the agreeability of the group and like-mindedness; how different counter arguments might be made by a different set of individuals; the potential of role playing initiated through the language that encouraged some participants to play opposing points; and whether the immersive quality of either playing a role or being engaged was more potent. The participants agreed that this workshop was completely different from previous sessions. One participant said that they particularly liked being invited to participate in a group discussion altogether, as well as having the opportunity to voice their own ideas and to learn about their own opinions in new ways that counter depressing thoughts about certain topics. They felt they were being listened to and that their ideas were not 'shot down,' which would not necessarily be the case with a different group holding opposing views; a mixed representative group might challenge the open atmosphere and the sharing nature of the discussions, which must be managed by the facilitator through reminders of role play and respectful dialogue. Nevertheless, finding agreement amongst those with opposing views would open dialogues in politically diverse atmospheres. Overall, there was an 'openness' within the session that made this session different from the rest. There were no debates about hierarchy, linguistic construction or character portrayal.

Some questions and suggestions were made, for example, asking whether there would be some sort of theatrical performance or a discussion that develops into some sort of role play scenario centring around being 'active or doing something,' both in the physical sense of the workshop and activism in the world. The work within this session was already performance oriented, as defined in Section One. It consisted of a space marked out and

delineated as ‘other’, which provided an opportunity for these individuals to come together to hold a dialogue through the sharing of thoughts and mutual creation of experiences. Stories were thereby created and told which were specific to the time and place of the witness participants and made in conscious awareness of the action taking place.²⁵⁸ With regard to physicality, I think that doing something physically active within the workshop is another mode of learning and might inform, through physical embodiment, another layer of knowledge. However, I believe that manoeuvring through such large topics and finding some form of agreement is enough at this stage. In addition, while that type of physical work might be beneficial to some, I do not believe it is necessary in order to achieve the aims of experiencing a conceptualised future space. The act of agreement is a political act; it explores the politics of identity and the politics of wants and needs. I do think it is enough to explore these realms and have this discussion of imagining future worlds as a performance experience. Considering, debating, and viewing different stances on ‘what we want’ opens up new opportunities for contemplation, expression and action. It also unites the group in solidarity, at least in the moment.

Looking back at the footage of the performance workshop recorded on video, the coloured stage lights illuminated the circle and the individuals, which gave the impression of a scene from a play where individuals were engaged in imagining what a new world could be. The participants and myself were engrossed and immersed in the experience of imagining and considering future potentials of what we would like to see or be created through discussion. We imagined scenarios of the future and were transported in time through those imaginings and discussions. One of the participants pointed out the disparity between the typical political conversations within their own personal groups. They felt that the knowledge gained within

²⁵⁸ As defined previously and derived from Schechner’s restored behaviour which is ‘symbolic and reflexive [...] the self can act in/as another; the social or transindividual self is a role or set of roles.’ *Between Theater and Anthropology*, p. 37. See also Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 4-5.

the session concerning scientific advancement highlighted a lack of collective understanding of the potential positive impact of coming technology.²⁵⁹ This was an excellent comment, highlighting the achievement of political and technological awareness acquired through the session by using the science as a stimulus for imagining alternate scenarios not yet considered and using the ‘or’ as a method to present alternatives. The form of this session had the potential to counter some of the feelings of fear and hopelessness arising out of the original sessions. In addition, there was some thought given to how we were now actively pursuing these alternate visions, such as cultural attitude changes that consider limiting child birth as a way to fight climate change.

It is important to note that within the conversations we had (even in the post-immersion discussions of previous workshops) there was a type of group-imagining formed by improvisation and speculation, more precisely improvised speculation. Individuals were proposing topics about possible futures to solve modern and current issues, and were thinking about and discussing the possibilities of those ideas and improvising possible solutions. Solutions or areas of improvement were specific to their needs and desires. One of several examples of this improvised speculation occurred as a result of the topic on education introduced by one of the participants (see Appendix 8.6 video from 1:01:58-1:06:09). Here, we explored together our desires and wants hypothetically, including the advantage of A.I. which might make some of those ideas possible. Even without the formality of a frame such as ‘in the future’ used by Forced Entertainment in *Tomorrow’s Parties*, this type of imagining that was occurring within the group felt more profound than experiencing the previous ‘future’ events I had developed. I believe that this was due to the generation and sharing of ideas equally and together as a group, where concerns and ideas could be aired and expressed in the moment. Thus, the improvised speculation facilitated different imagined scenarios that

²⁵⁹ See Appendix 8.5 transcript of Case Study Eight.

might play out if the group could change an element in the present. It also imagined what the world might be like in the future, based on these scenarios. These possibilities of different futures were drawn out of present concerns and fears, and after some counter proposals, often became more positive in viewpoint. In some ways, this session resembled *Tomorrow's Parties* and LARP in that 'the provocation, the invitation and the contestation were democratic,'²⁶⁰ and were consistently changing and plausible in one moment to the next of imagined futures. They were democratic in that the provocation was open for debate and flexible, guided by the participants. The invitation provided room for non-participation, role play and honest reflection as the participants chose. There was room for contestation (exhibited within the conversations evidenced from the video in Appendix 8.6) and there was equal opportunity for anyone to share their thoughts within a respectful environment. The new narratives were created through the different speculations by the participants and myself. The techniques used to achieve these results consisted of several components. Firstly, through the creation of a carefully crafted slide presentation where the language reflected the open and invitational language to be used by the facilitator. This ensured that all data presented within the slides indicated possibilities and provocations rather than probabilities or destined outcomes. The slide presentation also set the context and final provocation to initiate and guide the improvised speculative material to be generated. Secondly, the space was designated as a performance space both atmospherically and verbally to the participants at the start of the session. Thirdly, facilitator language was open and invitational throughout, avoiding assumptive language. Fourthly, there was a statement at the beginning that the performance workshop provided the opportunity for participant role play when and if desired. Finally, the facilitator offered counter arguments where necessary, especially in terms of technological advancement to encourage further imagining and counter feelings of

²⁶⁰ Etchells and O'Connor, 'At a Later Date'.

hopelessness. In essence, this provided a simplified LARP experience, where individuals had the opportunity to participate in, and witness the creation of, new narratives and the telling of individual stories based on improvised speculation. They also had the chance to role play and to consider alternate realities where more positive outcomes and desires about the future were explored.

The imagined futures from the session have certainly affected my vision of the present and informed my future imagining. Once imagined, then spoken, those imaginings exist in a physical sense of memory and a tangible experience of feelings, marked by the gathering of people in a space under the coloured lights. In Section Five, I draw together the results of the practice and I discuss and analyse the achievements of the work. Within this section, I also provide a practical 'toolkit' for working within Future Theatre and suggest further areas for specific research, as well as some additional considerations for the future.

Section Five

Toward a Future Theatre:

Conclusion

Imagine a future, any future different than now. What do you see and what do you want? Are these two different things? How does one's current view reveal fears and hopes, and how do those fears prevent one from imagining a better future? Amid present concerns over technological advancement, climate change and post-truth demagoguery, the research contained herein provides a necessary dialogue about those types of unconscious 'refusals to imagine' which the experiments revealed. Through the case studies, combating both dystopian visions and the perception of greed became an obstacle when asking people to imagine the future. The process of contending with such fears challenged both my own and the participants' ideas about the future in unexpected ways. Many of the participants identified personal beliefs that were limiting their perspectives of the future and preventing them from looking at alternative arguments and possibilities. The process was not an easy one.

Negotiating new territory was sometimes a determined series of countermeasures where the facilitator/performer must cling to 'what if' scenarios and the 'or' as a method of disruption to combat restrictive views.²⁶¹ It became essential within the work to look at the various ways that theatrical performance could introduce and further these discussions about the future.

These conversations became the imagined future spaces through *imagined speculation*. I am introducing the term *imagined speculation* as a technique in the practice of imagining futures within performance. It is the process by which participants jointly discuss a topic which concerns them. They discuss how they would like to change the future and imagine or

²⁶¹ I am aware of other applications of the magic 'what if' such as Tassos Stevens' application in the work of Coney. Stevens uses the 'what if' as a tool for the audience to reflect between what could be and what is, which he states 'that's where the meaning lies, questioning how much those (the what if and the what is) connect and reflect each other' in Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 20. However, here, the 'what if' was applied quite literally and specifically as a verbal countermeasure to ask the participant to speculate on alternative possibilities.

speculate not only what these changes might be but how they may come about. It is not necessary that the solutions be entirely feasible (thus the term *speculation*); what matters is that their fears and anxieties are expressed and the desires of what those individuals and/or communities want are implied through the topics, stated outright and/or discussed. Within this process, agreement, or, at the least, solidarity, might be found amongst the individuals, as well as their desires identified. This process therefore provides potential for future action (e.g., a group may form based on the identified desire of raising awareness on the decimation of the taxi industry with the use of autonomous vehicles).

Within the practice, the collective imaginings transported participants both in time and in thought to new imagined places. These new territories were much more powerful, intellectually and emotionally, than what could have been created alone, or physically, even with abundant resources, as we were able to change the imagined spaces radically, moment to moment. Discussing in detail these conceptualised spaces from varying viewpoints and changing them as the dialogue developed, while revealing our fears and hopes within the conscious performance state, encouraged a range of thought and expression that otherwise would not have occurred. Presenting a singular vision of the future, either conceptually or as a physical manifestation, would have been far less impactful. This type of participant co-created imagining stands in some contrast to the work of The Yes Men, *Tomorrow's Parties*, Candy's experiential futures and other more traditional representations of science fiction within theatre, because the imaginings were not an imposition of one person's or one group's designed narrative but were individual personal visions expressed, and modified, collectively. The steps toward uncovering the process of collective imagining were significant and a direct result of the methods employed through each development stage.

Discoveries and Challenges

Initially, I thought that creating a physical immersive space representing the future would be the most important and most difficult practical aspect within the research. However, this was not the case, as detailed in Case Studies Three, Four, Six and Seven. Ultimately, very few resources were needed to connect the concept of the performance or workshop to imagining different futures. Of course, the majority of the participants were theatre makers, and it is therefore likely that their willingness to suspend their disbelief may be pre-dispositioned due to their own practice or theatre experience. However, non-academics within each group were also able to successfully suspend their disbelief within the minimised immersive environments. Further research utilising these approaches with different groups would therefore be beneficial as a basis for a comparison with these results. There were, however, a great number of benefits derived from working predominately with academics and practitioners from a background of theatre. They thoroughly challenged me as facilitator-performer and the work, both in form and concept, through the lens of their theatre knowledge and practice. Incorporating immersive environments and design fiction elements within the work was successful in all instances with the exception of Case Study Five, where the participants felt the environment did not simulate or stimulate the imagining. It is important to note that the immersive environment and design fiction elements, where successful, produced a different type of experience — one that was more individualistic than co-operative. For example, within the immersive environments of *The Free Shop* and *The Care Chip* performance, it was clear that participants were individually experiencing a trifold process: learning about the concepts of the work, associating the situation with their own knowledge and experience, and judging the material based on their own moral proclivities and anxieties. Working with immersive environments and design fiction elements can lead to more personal

introspective imagining. Therefore, to integrate the concept and the experience for the participants, a post-discussion would be helpful.

In all of the case studies, with the exception of Case Study Eight, the post-immersion discussion was beneficial to deepen the experience for the participants, both conceptually and as a forum to express individual thoughts and feelings about the experience. The feedback sessions were designed to elicit discussion on form rather than content. However, often, participants wished to discuss the themes brought about by each workshop. The experience of a debrief concerning the form may have reduced the post-discussion experience for participants as they seemed quite eager to debate the topics after each session and deliberation about form may have overshadowed further dialogue about the topics. For future research purposes, the balance between testing a theory, analysing form and providing space for the full participant experience in the post-immersion discussion needs to be considered within research endeavours. More time than anticipated, or longer divisions of time, should be given to both the topic as well as form. The post-immersion conversations provide space for further integration and synthesis, as well as releasing some impressions of the experience in a type of ‘post-mortem’ to consolidate the experience. Social anthropologist Ben Walmsley confirms the importance of the crucial co-creative elements resulting from such post-session discussions through his participant-based study examining the practice of deep hanging out.²⁶² Additionally, anthropologist Matthew Reason supports Walmsley’s findings, and those reached within this study, stating:

The post-performance conversation [...] is more than just a memory process but also an integral part of the experience for many people. In some sense it seems that we do not just

²⁶² Walmsley, ‘Deep hanging out in the arts’, p. 283.

want the experience but also want peers with whom we can explore and extend that experience.²⁶³

‘Exploring’ and ‘extending’ the experience definitely occurred in the post-immersion discussion for participants, as evidenced by the transcripts in the feedback sessions. Additionally, this discussion out of role serves not only for exploring and extending immersion, but also for deepening each concept after the experience has ended and most probably creating further lasting impressions as well. As stated, I believe that post-performance discussions are integral to the process of creating futures in that they provide an outlet for all the conversation *not* had during the performance or process. However, in Case Study Eight, this was not the case. The experience within this session was reminiscent of a ‘deep hanging out’ session, where thoughts about the content were discussed openly *during* the session. For the purpose of this study, the post-discussion was helpful but, generally, it would not be necessary because the conversation which would normally occur in the post-discussion can take place within the session. Thus, the form of Case Study Eight is significantly different from the preceding case studies.

Together through the dialogue on the topics in Case Study Eight, we co-created various alternative futures through both imagining and extensive open discussion. For me, and I imagine for a few others, this experience will have a long-lasting effect on our perspectives on the topics from the session. This opportunity for affecting perception is very important considering the overall socio-political nature of this work. The explorations and imagining within Case Study Eight were also contained within a minimal state. By minimal, I mean a minimal performance setting and environment design, through lighting, positioning of chairs

²⁶³ Matthew Reason, ‘Asking the audience: audience research and the experience of theatre,’ *About Performance Journal*, 10 (2010), p. 27.

and instructions for interaction, in order to achieve a subtle while heightened state which served to elicit more potent imagining among the audience participants. There was minimal instruction too, in both role playing guidance and within the session generally, which lent the experience a more conversational feel. This discursive approach, within such a minimal performance environment, may promote the inclusion of different types of participatory audiences. Participants might find this form less daunting and more open in its relatively free form and minimized performance appearance, thereby engaging individuals in a different, more relaxed way within participatory performance genres. Ultimately, Case Study Eight culminated in a new form which was different from those of previous sessions. It consisted of a collective discussion of improvised speculative imagining with the aim of finding agreement about the future through a shared co-created experience in a minimized performance atmosphere. Importantly, I felt throughout that to be a spectator or to witness a performance about the future was less engaging for all than creating a performance together. Being involved in/making/co-creating communal imagining is a personal preference; others may prefer a more observational relationship.

Despite the predominant ease and naturalness within this session, there were some tensions expressed within the group from time to time, especially concerning technology and the form as an expression of either theatre or performance. However, these tensions unraveled in a more discursive and less combative way than previous sessions due to the frame of invitational language (discussed further below) used throughout and the freedom that the element of role play permitted. The unfamiliarity of the ‘deep hanging out’ feeling in combination with the performance environment and interactive dialogue sets Case Study Eight apart from the other sessions and challenged the participants in terms of their feelings and their definitions of contemporary performance forms.

Negotiating different perceptions of theatre was very challenging throughout the practice. Exploring various forms in the process and attempting to create future spaces with the academic participants was often a negotiation between their individual definitions of theatre. Those definitions came with expectations and seldom allowed room for more experimental attempts to play out or for the experiment to unfold in unfamiliar ways. In some cases, those participants resisted, in other cases they did not, and the reasons for this varied and also conflicted and reversed often. There was a constant questioning, both by myself and the academic participants, about putting this work into a form that was more recognizable or familiar, such as that of Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre or as a typical role playing game. For these participants, the lack of familiarity with the methods was often a challenge during the workshops and performances. It seemed they were looking for ways in which the process could be encoded in a different and better-known technique. I often had to argue my case in order to persuade them to see what might come out of each experiment that was new or different and I had to explain my reasons for the choices made within unfamiliar territory. This justification, explanation and continued persistence unexpectedly challenged the outcome of each session and tested each concept and form by deepening the inquiry at every stage, which ultimately enriched the study and provided some unexpected benefits of rigorous group inquiry to each experiment. As stated, the groups were always mixed between academic practitioners and non-practitioners. The non-academic participants, based on their recorded responses throughout, seemingly focused predominately on the content and experience of each event more than the form. They, and often the academics as well, wished to discuss their individual experience and the content further at length, stimulated by the imaginings and group scenarios put before them. Thus, the study benefited from rigorous inquiry concerning both form and content, whilst both types of participants expressed their individual desires and interests in the subjects presented within each session.

In the last session, where the workshop was challenged as a form of theatre and I asked what the difference was between theatre and performance and their experience, naturally there were conflicting and varied answers. I resist a finite un-mutable definition of theatre or performance but, nevertheless, to me, the essential ingredient of theatre and performance is formed by a type of dialogue, a conversation that tells a story in that moment.²⁶⁴ In this sense, designating an event as theatre or performance only requires a dialogue (visually, spoken or through movement) and a witness participant, with both parties holding in conscious awareness that the space and time is relegated to theatre/performance and role play (in its potentially various forms) is present. A conversation therefore, can be a performance, not just from the roles we might play, but through the sharing of thoughts and mutual creation of experiences and thereby new stories which are specific to time, place and participants.²⁶⁵

The linguistic construction used within each workshop or performance had a significant impact within each activity, not just in terms of the language that referenced a future time, but also an open-ended invitational type of language, and this was a difficult challenge throughout the process. It became very important to the participants for me to either state directly or qualify my political position up front in relation to the material, or for me to parody my own position through performance. Presenting the material as a stimulus, where I attempted to adopt a medial position, proved too politically charged for many within the group. The language of invitation must be used in this context to avoid issues of power and authority, avoiding the participants' perceptions of being either deceived or dictated to. The type of language used within each workshop provides the essential frame to manage

²⁶⁴ Though I am aware of prominent theatre and performance definitions from theorists, I draw my own wider definition from Schechner, Wilkerson and others, as outlined previously and within the introduction.

²⁶⁵ Similarly, see also the work developed by Improbable, entitled 'Devoted and Disgruntled' using Open Space Technology as a conversation/discussion format which expose present situations and imagine possible futures in the arts and other areas, <<https://www.devotedanddisgruntled.com/about-devoted-disgruntled>> [accessed 18 January 2019].

participant expectations and, in most cases, certain dystopian fears. Invitational open-ended language, usually in the form of inclusive statements [Case Studies Seven and Eight], was essential in providing a type of permission for more controversial or sensitive viewpoints. The participants, particularly in the last session, felt that stating the possibility that other participants might be role playing was effective in providing a space where all participants could share their feelings and thoughts with a degree of anonymity while imagining futures. There were invitations and possibilities for those who wished to role play covertly during certain sessions, which served in breaking up tensions of self-expression within the group. The guise of role play permitted experimentation with varying viewpoints, and the clear indication of the potential to role play within the group became an essential element to the experience and of significant importance as the experiment developed. It is important to note that no one would know if someone was playing a role or not, and this provided permission to create a role if desired and to speak as freely as the participants chose within the session. Indicating the possibility for role play also facilitated the LARP elements of ‘what you see is what you get’ and bleed to manifest appropriately and respectfully within the group. This was an important addition, as it encouraged the freedom of expression and managed potentially derogatory statements and comments which could be perceived as intentionally causing conflict. The permission of role play provided an inherent feeling of ‘yes and’ rather than an aggressive, combative feeling. The nature of imagining the future collectively tends toward airing potential fears of both the present and the future, as well as finding solidarity by links drawn, alternatives presented and similarities found within the group. Though conflicting ideas can, of course, inspire different perspectives and possible outcomes, care should be taken by the facilitator to promote respect for varying opinions and expressions amongst the group. The permission of role play lends toward a more theoretical or metaphorical position for participants and serves to keep the concept of ‘play’ within the dialogue rather than promoting aggressive conflict directly. As stated previously, a statement about the possibility

of individuals role playing is an essential parameter and should be considered and applied when using methods where audience participation and speculative imagining are required.

Regarding the LARP elements of bleed, heroism, role play, storytelling and democratic co-creation I used within the practice, each had its own merits. These elements were largely successful as applied throughout the sessions, based on the participant responses. Bleed was informally and consistently at work through the emotion expressed via the various roles (performer/individual/academic/adversary) played within the setting of the workshop. Ultimately, a uniform example or prescription of bleed is not essential. Bleed is specific to each individual and their own personal connection to the material; uniformity can never be achieved because of individual difference. Heroism, or contemplation of heroic acts, was exhibited within The Care Chip performance [Case Study Seven] and the Mastery and Reputation performance [Case Study Six] as a result of the instructed actions and ensuing dialogues. In The Care Chip session, heroism was considered by participants through selecting superpowers and contemplating roles within their own communities with regard to compassion and empathy. This portion of the exercise could have been, and should have been, more thoroughly discussed within the post-immersion discussion to solicit additional dialogues concerning empowerment and action within real-world scenarios. More time should be added to the post-immersion discussion if this approach is recreated and specific verbal prompts may be used to explore the elements of compassion and empathy in the post-discussion. Within the Mastery and Reputation workshop, participants became 'heroes' to themselves by writing letters to themselves from the future, considering their own advice on life, and issues that were personally and collectively relevant. Here, participants role played the future scenario, imagining themselves in the future based on the information provided within the performance lecture, and on their own concerns. The participants acknowledged that this letter writing exercise and the following performance of the letters and their acts of

solidarity (raising of hands) regarding their shared concerns was powerful, moving and thought provoking. In Case Study Eight on Writing New Fictions, the session was co-created through a suggested provocation. Together, we figured out both how to discuss that proposed question and imagined those future spaces simultaneously. We told stories about our anxieties and the different possibilities of what we wished for. Furthermore, cooperative imagining that is inclusive was important both to me and to the participants as we discussed the possibility of dissenting voices within the workshops.

While conceptualising the future with participants, there can be a predisposition toward dystopias, and this understanding was an impactful discovery resulting from the work. It should be noted that a facilitator of work in future imagining must be astute and well versed in the subject of new technologies to counter the dystopian visions which can easily overrun the possibility of imagining, especially concerning technological advancement.²⁶⁶ One aspect became very clear during the research: basic familiarity with at least some advanced technologies was crucial to counter arguments. It was essential that the facilitator was prepared to offer alternatives to dystopian fears and concerns so that there was space enough for alternative futures to be imagined. In this type of work, the facilitator must also, as Cocker states, ‘actively maintain [...] the conditions that will keep the unfolding of action dynamic’ and, perhaps more precisely, actively maintain the conditions and counter-arguments that keep the unfolding action of imagining through various stimuli dynamic.²⁶⁷

Additional insights resulting from the work include incorporating different levels of learning (i.e. kinaesthetic or visual) when providing the basic factual data (especially in the performance lecture forms), as noted from participant feedback in Case Studies Two and

²⁶⁶ This does not mean that technology is the only area in which a performer must be astute for this practice. However, general up to date knowledge about emerging technology is a requirement in order to counter present fears concerning technological impact.

²⁶⁷ Cocker, ‘Live Notation’, p. 73.

Seven. Artefacts or design fiction elements may help to stimulate learning and dialogue, as Candy suggests. Setting, time cues and character choices are also influential factors in that they delineate certain parameters, such as time and political position. At the beginning of these experiments, I did not know whether the resulting material would lead to a type of 'finished' product or 'work-in-progress,' nor did I wish to define it from the start.

Experimenting in the unknown required a type of resilience in letting the process be unknown, which felt uncomfortable and uncertain most of the time. Despite this difficulty, I recommend that, if using or adapting these methods, the process should always be open to an ever-changing process based on the needs and positions of everyone involved. The imagining and conceptualising of different worlds and the process of doing so creates different narratives. The development of these narratives which are specific to the individual(s) is integral to the design of this work and requires flexibility. Different audiences may accept or reject the process at various stages. This should always be allowed and discussed in the initial stage through various qualifying statements, asserting permissions and within the debriefing post-immersion stage, where included.

The Issue of Reproducibility

The achievements of this study come in the form of an examination of the theoretical and practical approaches to imagining a better future through performance. The thesis builds upon the work of other artists and lays out a field of performance research that conceptualises the future, beginning a legacy of contemporary theatre practice that can be read about, listened to, watched and examined. However, the research results cannot be reproduced precisely as the nature of the groups and the imaginings will always vary. Any results from this type of work will continually change through variations based on the individuals participating and the nature of the imaginings, coupled with their needs and views at the time. All of the practice elements

contained herein, found in the case studies and plans within the Appendix, can be used as either a stimulus which can be adapted to suit, or as specific methods to create performances that explore imagined future worlds.²⁶⁸ I have taken elements from LARP, examined and practiced the work of other artists, and then created a minimalist practice which has the values, principles, ethics and processes that can be utilised toward performances of the future. These methods do not require massive resources to create future performances, which is also significant.

There are limitations to the work, as discussed in Section One, but further endeavours will hopefully develop from this study as it does include some but not all of the methods possible for imagining the future within performance. I believe that, ultimately, it is the nature of this kind of work to combine different elements and principles, and different ways of achieving performances that imagine the future which are suitable to different interests and positions. Therefore, the work serves as an inspiration for such efforts and closing down investigation with the claim of one method's superiority over the rest or using a totally prescriptive method for imagining futures in performance would prohibit the myriad of potentialities and creative possibilities relevant to individual interests, needs and concerns. Thus, the insights are not a prescription; in fact, I would resist the idea of being prescriptive altogether. Though artists might adopt the methods set out here, they should also continue to challenge and push the boundaries of the observations herein and select topics that are relevant and significant from individual vantage points, as well as their own relationships to time and space. It is my hope that this work will continue to be developed and serve as the start of a 'Future Theatre' where other methods and techniques can be used in conjunction with the results of this study and the information contained herein. It is important that each of

²⁶⁸ There may be broader potential applications of this work, such as an adaptation of the methods which can be applied to Drama Therapy, for example, in dealing with personal anxieties of power structures and societal pressures of the present. However, my focus remains on the potential of imagining alternate positive futures which may enable social action and/or individual and community developments that have the potential to change the future by identifying what those individuals/communities want their future(s) to resemble which is different from the present.

us who desire to contribute to this emerging field find different, innovative and complex approaches within performance practice that facilitate ways in which we can help each other to think about the future and, therefore, to work towards it. Below, I will outline the philosophical approaches I found helpful and a 'Tool Kit' for using the methods herein and as a basis for future practice and study.

Philosophical Starting Points and Practical Ways into Future Theatre

Here, I will offer both practical measures and philosophical approaches to performances of Future Theatre. This discourse offers one way, *my way*, of practice and outlines possible ways of doing, mixing and matching approaches which may suit needs. These elements are derived from the specific forms of LARP, The Yes Men, Candy, and Forced Entertainment. The discourse also includes original elements, modified to create and provide a starting point for practicing Future Theatre.

In terms of philosophical starting points, it is my view that co-created democratically-shared experiences are the way to move forward in creating Future Theatre performances. Though different experiences have different values, and some may resonate more than others with the earlier approaches I used during the experimentation, ultimately I felt that more imagining, and more relevant specific imagining occurring over a range of topics introduced by the participants, was more desirable, as exhibited through Case Study Eight. In the earlier Case Study performances, I dictated the content and context to a large degree, exploring issues that I found to be particularly interesting, prescient and of concern. This style of performance and content exploration may be more appealing to some. I might suggest that some of the elements be combined in future iterations, such as turning the Greed Workshop from Case Study Two into a performance, using the letter writing from the future on the topic

of ‘how I/we overcame greed’ as the performance element, for example. I would also consider using minimised atmospheric performance elements to encourage accessibility in reproduction or future iterations. Part of the ethos of this work is that it is accessible and adaptable so that more individuals will take up the practice and work toward finding agreement about what is desired in the future. In turn, these individuals might imagine possible solutions to create better future outcomes.

In reference to performance stance or performer/character portrayal, I would advocate for as neutral a stance as possible – that is, no overt or heightened performance characteristics added to the facilitator/performer portrayal – for two reasons. Firstly, the closer the facilitator/performer remains to the ‘real’, the more room the participants have to explore their own thoughts rather than trying to figure out what the performer is saying or how they feel about it through such a heightened portrayal. This may be an unusual and unfamiliar approach for some within a solo performance environment; however, I think the focus should be more on the material and the opportunity for the participants to think about the material, as discussed in Case Study Seven about becoming more of a Dr Strangelove character. Second, the more ‘realistic’ portrayal provides a strangeness of its own dimension within the context, highlighting Candy’s ‘The Art of the Double-take’ principle, where something about the performance seems strange or different which makes the participants want to question the concept more. Where the performer role is portrayed as seemingly realistic or ‘normal’, it appears slightly unusual in the context of performance. This helps to displace the audience in terms of ‘real versus unreal’ within the possibilities of the scenario, and provides an even stranger element within the scenario than a type of Dr Strangelove character; the portrayal seems a bit ‘too’ normal and is somehow expected to be accepted within the context of the performance. This leads to more participant engagement with the concept. In certain ways, it negates or subverts the political satire, commentary, or opinion often expected within solo

performance, leaving it ambiguous (to a certain degree) and up for audience consideration. This ambiguity is my preference, and is derived from the principles of Candy.

It is important to consider the language and time indicators you wish to use. A straightforward approach would mean that you tell the audience that they are located for the performance in a future time (say 2075) and you say nothing (including in any text) that does not adhere to that time parameter. I chose a different method, stating both the time indicator and also contextualising how the concept was important today – as discussed in Case Study Three in the Free Shop Workshop concerning the time cue on the flyer and the title of the piece. I do not think that there needs to be a hard and fast rule here concerning this, as both methods still encourage imagining the future. However, the approach should be well thought through prior to the event and consistent through all materials present.

Lastly, the imagining and conceptualising of different worlds and the process of doing so creates different narratives. As previously stated, the development of narratives is specific to the individual(s) and is integral to the design of this work and requires flexibility. Different audiences may accept or reject the process at various stages. This expression should always be permitted and discussed at the start or during the session through various qualifying statements, asserting permissions and within the debriefing post-immersion stage, where included.

Toolkit for Creating Future Theatre

The typical elements to consider when practicing a Future Theatre are how to implement improvised speculation, role play, storytelling, heroism, the disruptive ‘or’, performer stance/position and democratic co-creation within the practice. Certainly, these will not be all

of the elements discovered in other iterations of Future Theatre, but they are a beginning. You can repeat or modify any of the attempts contained herein, drawing from the notes and experiences recorded as a means of beginning your own practice of Future Theatre. For example, you can repeat the Care Chip immersive performance about implant technology. Or you may turn the Greed games from Case Study Two into an interactive performance by playing the games and then using the future letter writing from Case Study Six to implement the element of ‘heroism’ from LARP, for example. Perhaps you choose to use the performance lecture, changing the subject matter to suit, using the element of role play and the disruptive ‘or’ to imagine different futures collectively. For Case Studies One through Seven, if you wish to alter the theme, you will need to pick a suitable and relevant topic. As discussed, I found that the performance lecture was a useful way to introduce a topic which needed some technical information or background (like UBI or statistics on the impact of autonomous cars) before beginning participation. I provided the minimum amount of information necessary for the group to begin engaging with the subject. I would advise keeping it short as too much detail will overwhelm the audience. I would also recommend using different stimuli within the lecture, such as images or sound, to facilitate different approaches to learning about the topic.

It is crucial to use open invitational and qualifying language, such as ‘currently projected’ or ‘might occur’, instead of blanket statements that will presume authority and may cause your audience to rebel if they do not agree (even if the data is factual and based on evidence). Invite the audience ‘to consider’ or ‘elaborate’ on the statements, rather than assuming that the audience will take these facts as evidence. Authoritatively expressed statements about the future can alienate the audience and the type of participation you can expect will be a debate about the facts. While this is not necessarily a bad approach (as participant thoughts and anxieties are revealed within the context of the conversation), the

dialogue becomes more defensive and less imaginative about future possibilities. Post-discussion sessions for these forms is greatly beneficial as it helps to integrate and solidify the experience for the participants. Design artefacts may be integrated into any of the performances or workshops as needed to stimulate thoughts on each subject. They are useful tools of information about the subject and add an element of curiosity to the experience, thus sparking debate.

For my own preference, I found that the structure of Case Study Eight was the most provocative and meaningful as described within the practice. This used the performance lecture as a base and coupled an open ended question to begin the dialogue process. It was the most co-created in terms of the imagined material, and was democratic in content and form by the participants who guided the session through their own suggestions, discussion and stories. Most importantly, the type of performance discovered through Case Study Eight can be used to find agreement and solidarity concerning what individuals and certain groups may want for the future. This information can potentially be utilised to influence and shape better long term outcomes. In this approach, you will need to be adept at offering different perspectives on current technology to counter arguments and stimulate further imagining. Utilise the 'or' as a method of disrupting more dystopian concerns and providing alternate scenarios to extend the positive imagining process.

When using the form of Case Study Eight, the participants will come up with the theme or topics they wish to discuss. Use an open-ended sentence or fill in the blank sentence about the future as a stimulus to begin speculative imagining. When practicing Future Theatre, I think it is helpful to incorporate minimal atmospheric states (such as those created by lighting in Case Study Five or Eight) to foster imagining, as well as to reinforce and remind all involved that we are continually designating this experience as theatre/performance

throughout, transparently separating it from everyday experiences. It is therefore necessary to demarcate the space as separate from the everyday. I used lights and chair arrangements that facilitated intimacy while indicating a performance environment. Marking the space as being in some way unusual, even in a subtle way, provided an awareness that we were now doing something different – that we had entered a heightened performance scenario. This elicited more potent and focused imagining outside of everyday environs.

Most crucially, open the session with an orientation that states the opportunity to assume a different position that may not be their own true position through role play and to preserve a sense of anonymity. Throughout, highlight areas of agreement along the way that create solidarity amongst the group. This will provide a sense of achievement, where doubt about finding agreement over such a vast variety of unknowns may have existed. Do not identify or draw attention to suspected role players during the session, as this will serve to call out the person's real position during the debate or discussion and may eliminate the feeling of creating an environment in which they can freely express their thoughts. Use the 'what if' and 'or' as method of opening alternate possibilities when resistance to imagining alternative ideas is expressed by the participants.

When designing performances and workshops in Future Theatre:

- 1.) Encourage minimised performance environments, which can be used by all in future endeavours.
- 2.) Consider how you will use invitational and open language throughout.
- 3.) Think through the language you will use to indicate time and your overall intentions.
- 4.) Design your themes or scenarios in ways that incorporate democratically co-created performances. This fosters imaginings that are not an imposition of one person's or one

group's narrative, and encourages imaginings which can be expressed and modified collectively through improvised speculation. It is not necessary that the solutions be entirely feasible; what matters is that the participants' fears and anxieties are expressed and the desires of what those individuals and/or communities want are discussed through the topics that unfold. Within this process, agreement and solidarity might be found amongst the individuals, as well as possibilities for future action.

- 5.) At the beginning, openly state the opportunity for role play as a means of expression.
- 6.) Combat cataclysmic visions through facilitator knowledge of new and emerging possibilities of technology and use the 'or' to disrupt such dystopian anxieties and provide space for alternate imagining of more positive futures.
- 7.) Hold post discussions where needed.
- 8.) Use the performance lecture form to provide context for themes that need delivery of technical information and definition of potentially unfamiliar terms.
- 9.) Consider the use of open-ended questions about the future to begin the improvised speculation.
- 10.) Character stance and design fiction elements may be useful to draw out Candy's principle of 'The Art of the Double-take' in your concept. Consider how your role and supplemental devices might contribute to imagining new possibilities for your participants.

As stated, these methods are not intended to be entirely prescriptive; they are provided in the spirit of practice as suggestions on how to begin working on Future Theatre performances and workshops.

For the Future

In Sarah Bowman's fifteen-year study of LARP, she argues the potentiality of LARP as an instrument of change from one state of being to another: 'Groups of individuals set aside their

individuality in momentary expressions of solidarity, performing roles necessitated by the ritual in order to usher one another from one stage of life to the next.²⁶⁹ The players of LARP create and use these fictional worlds to move forward from one thought process to another in their investigations and expressions of self. The experiential futures of Candy and The Yes Men, as well as Forced Entertainment's *Tomorrow's Parties*, explore the future in order to better understand the present which can potentially shape tomorrow. This practice and the different techniques examined within ultimately explore the same realms, examining our future relationships to various subjects, such as income inequality, climate change, AI, and Post-Human fears, to name a few. The results of this work might guide some of the complex conversations and decisions that are upon us in approaching our future.

One of the most significant elements within this research concerns the act of creating solidarity or some form of agreement in an ever-growing truth-denying world. Expressing solidarity within the envisioning of the future is important, as it reveals not only individual desires but elicits dialogues which consider our similarities and differences to reach an end goal. These efforts to investigate, to question, to comprehend, to experience the imagined potentialities of the future are ritualised by solidarity and can, as Bowman says, be an instrument to usher us from not just this one stage of life, but to the future. Finding agreement was also very important to counter dystopian fears. Co-creating narratives by imagining futures collaboratively and finding solidarity within imagined futures helped to open a space for new thoughts. In finding agreement, we were able to discuss both our fears and our desires, and where those two met there was further discussion about actions that might be taken. An area for future research might implement a more formal ritual to solidify the consensus and formulate opportunities for public activism, consolidating plans for future actions.

²⁶⁹ Bowman, *The Functions of Role-Playing Games*, p. 15.

At the last, I find myself considering such world events that have occurred since the start of this study, and how these efforts to conceptualise a future space within performance might lead to a more positive future. I cannot provide an all-encompassing way of imagining, nor an entirely all-inclusive vision of how to imagine the future, but I have found a few methods, obstacles and some caveats prescribed within this research that point to several precautions and provide some solutions. The uncovering of individual fears and preconceived definitions about what technology is and, indeed, that the future might be based on notions of greed, was an important realisation in this study. Identification of fears and blocks in imagining was crucial to even begin discussing imagined future spaces. I would suggest that utilising the selected techniques described herein remain focused on directly countering the fears that form and shape us socially and politically. Societies have often used the mechanism of fear as a device for control, and the power of imagining may help us not only to identify the roots of these fears collectively and individually but may inspire ways to circumvent the devices of control that shape our future so directly. I have addressed here some methods of practice toward conceptualised futures, not only about what 'we' want for the future but what 'I' want for the future, which is also at the heart of this imagining. It is imperative that we begin imagining together again, no matter how difficult, as it is crucial to believe that we can become and create something 'different'. What 'we' want together seems to be the most pressing question of the future. We must start by finding some elements of agreement, something that we can hold onto and begin to restructure and rebuild within our communities and nations, especially amongst diverse groups. The immediacy, the togetherness and the collaboration of performance poses a promising testing ground for what might be, and what we can envision together in the practice of a 'Future Theatre'.

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Appendix 1.1

Case Study One: *Star Trek* Discussion Group Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Set Up: Table, Chairs, Tea and Biscuits, *Star Trek* video playing silently in background
- 2) Introductions
- 3) Read through consent form and ask for questions
- 4) Discuss aims of the session
- 5) Ask key questions and use quotations if needed to inspire dialogue

Rationale

In this first session, I set out to collect thoughts on what other people believe about the future as a stimulus for the topics or themes for the experiments. I did not feel that this should come entirely from me; it was important to explore what others were thinking. I believe that my own thoughts about the future cannot be entirely separated from the influence of science fiction absorbed since my childhood, so I turned to *Star Trek* as a first attempt at stimulating this dialogue through a shared lexicon based on the television series. It was my hope to begin to identify some of the common themes to be addressed within the practice concerning what a certain group might desire in creating a better future. I planned to find volunteers who might be familiar with *Star Trek* as they may share a similar kind of language about the future as a starting point. I anticipated that we might be able to use examples from *Star Trek* as an impetus for discussing what a collective future might look like or whether we had any wants or desires in common. I intended to hold a roundtable discussion group centred on the following three questions: (1) Has *Star Trek* influenced your thinking about the future? (2) If

so, in what ways? (3) What kind of common goals has *Star Trek* set?

The aim of this initial session was to be able to answer the following questions:

What does this group imagine about the future?

Do we have anything in common collectively in our imagining?

Has *Star Trek* influenced your thinking about the future?

In what ways?

What kind of common goals has *Star Trek* set?

Indeed, it is difficult to attempt to create a futuristic experience without knowing what shared ideas might encompass or, as Candy states, to overcome a lack of objective reference points.²⁷⁰

I used the following *Star Trek* quotations²⁷¹ for further discussion prompts as needed:

EDITH: And you don't want to talk about it? Why? Did you do something wrong? Are you afraid of something? Whatever it is, let me help.

KIRK: Let me help. A hundred years or so from now, I believe, a famous novelist will write a classic using that theme. He'll recommend those three words even over I love you.

EDITH: Why? What is so funny about man reaching for the moon?

KIRK: How do you know?

EDITH: I just know, that's all. I feel it. And more, I think that one day they'll take all the money they spend now on war and death.

KIRK: And make them spend it on life?

EDITH: Yes. You see the same things that I do. We speak the same language.

KIRK: The very same.

— “City on the Edge of Forever,” *Star Trek*

²⁷⁰ Candy, *Playing the Future*.

²⁷¹ *Star Trek*, created by Gene Roddenberry (CBS Television, 1966-1969).

I've noticed that about your people, Doctor. You find it easier to understand the death of one than the death of a million. You speak about the objective hardness of the Vulcan heart, yet how little room there seems to be in yours.

— Spock, “The Immunity Syndrome,” *Star Trek*

It is important to the typical *Star Trek* fan that there is a tomorrow. They pretty much share the *Star Trek* philosophies about life: the fact that it is wrong to interfere in the evolvement of other peoples, that to be different is not necessarily to be wrong or ugly.

— Gene Roddenberry on *Star Trek* from GoodReads.com²⁷²

Curious how often you humans manage to obtain that which you do not want.

— Spock, “Errand of Mercy,” *Star Trek*

A man either lives life as it happens to him, meets it head-on and licks it, or he turns his back on it and starts to wither away.

— Dr. Boyce, “The Menagerie,” *Star Trek*

After a time, you may find that ‘having’ is not so pleasing a thing, after all, as ‘wanting’. It is not logical, but it is often true.

— Spock, “Amok Time,” *Star Trek*

All your people must learn before you can reach for the stars.

— Kirk, “The Gamesters of Triskelion,” *Star Trek*

Evil does seek to maintain power by suppressing the truth, or by misleading the innocent.

— Spock and McCoy, “And the Children Shall Lead,” *Star Trek*

I am pleased to see that we have differences. May we together become greater than the sum of both of us.

— Surak of Vulcan, “The Savage Curtain,” *Star Trek*

In the strict scientific sense, we all feed on death — even vegetarians.

— Spock, “Wolf in the Fold,” *Star Trek*

²⁷² Goodreads.com, ‘Gene Roddenberry, Author of Star Trek 1’, <https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/43942.Gene_Roddenberry>, [accessed 1 February 2015].

Intuition, however illogical, is recognized as a command prerogative.

— Kirk, “Obsession,” *Star Trek*

It would seem that evil retreats when forcibly confronted.

— Yarnek of Excalbia, “The Savage Curtain,” *Star Trek*

Life and death are seldom logical. But attaining a desired goal always is.

— McCoy and Spock, “The Galileo Seven,” *Star Trek*

Men don’t talk peace unless they’re ready to back it up with war.

— Col. Green, “The Savage Curtain,” *Star Trek*

BONES: The release of emotion is what keeps us healthy. Emotionally healthy.

SPOCK: That may be, Doctor. However, I have noted that the healthy release of emotion is frequently unhealthy for those closest to you.

— McCoy and Spock, “Plato’s Stepchildren,” *Star Trek*

Too much of anything, even love, isn’t necessarily a good thing.

— Kirk, “The Trouble with Tribbles,” *Star Trek*

When a child is taught, it’s programmed with simple instructions, and at some point, if its mind develops properly, it exceeds the sum of what it was taught, thinks independently.

— Dr. Richard Daystrom, “The Ultimate Computer,” *Star Trek*

CORBY: Can you imagine how life could be improved? If we could do away with jealousy, greed, hate.

KIRK: It can also be improved by eliminating love, tenderness, sentiment — the other side of the coin.

— Dr. Roger Corby and Kirk, “What are Little Girls Made of?” *Star Trek*

Change is the essential process of all existence.

— Spock, “Let That Be Your Last Battlefield,” *Star Trek*

Conquest is easy. Control is not.

— Kirk, “Mirror, Mirror,” *Star Trek*

Death. Destruction. Disease. Horror. That’s what war is all about. That’s what makes it a thing to be avoided.

— Kirk, “A Taste of Armageddon,” *Star Trek*

In order to experiment with a methodology that could potentially create representations of the future, I feel that I must find at least some key ideas, expectations or anticipations of what other individuals think the future might resemble. Looking at these *Star Trek* visions of the future would perhaps provide some ideas with which to experiment. A common interest in *Star Trek* might conceivably provide the concepts and a shared frame of reference for discussion, though it may also limit the ideas expressed by a preconception of how the future ‘might’ be. Identification of common themes is the purpose, regardless of whether the ideas are original. What is important, here, is to identify some desired ideas in order to consider how to attempt to construct a future space.

Post-Discussion Notes

I held a *Star Trek* roundtable discussion on the 17th of February 2015. The session was publicised through Facebook and flyers posted around the University of Sheffield. Ten participants attended. I required an email from participants who self-identified as *Star Trek* fans and who responded to the flyers and social media for registration to the event. I replied to all with full disclosure concerning the research-driven purpose of the meeting, as well as sending consent forms. Only three of the participants out of the ten who turned up knew each other and there was one participant via Skype from Los Angeles. I took notes and the session was audio recorded, though the first part of the session recording failed. The session lasted approximately two hours. The meeting was held at the Hawley Building in Cutting Edge Studio 2. I arrived early, set out tea and coffee, set up my recording device, started a DVD

playing of *Star Trek*²⁷³ silently in the background and arranged the chairs which were formed in a hexagonal shape. I posted a note on the door to knock for those attending.

My main goal of the discussion was to identify some common themes or key ideas related to the future with which to begin physical experimentation. As the participants arrived, I greeted them warmly, introduced myself, thanked them for coming, invited them to coffee or tea and provided them with consent forms to review while we waited for others to arrive. The atmosphere was friendly and some chatted before the session began. After a brief introduction, the session opened with a review of the consent forms and I asked whether there were any questions about the form. I then began by briefly discussing the aims of the session and introduced the ice-breaker questions I had planned: Has *Star Trek* influenced your thinking about the future? If so, in what ways? These two questions were followed by the primary questions: What kind of common goals has *Star Trek* set? Do you agree or not with these representations of the future?

There was a lively debate within the session. The visions of the future discussed were of an egalitarian society — one in which life was not based on economic stratification but on economic independence and social freedom that allowed the pursuit of one's own interests and often those of the wider community toward a common good. This, however, was overshadowed by a basic consensus concerning the element of human greed. The participants reflected that, more than likely, there would always be an element of human greed that would prevent humanity from becoming a more egalitarian society. From this discussion, several topics clearly emerged as a starting point: human greed, intellectual and moral growth through education and technology, and the ability of society to function in a post-capitalist world concerning jobs which were unwanted by the general populace. Education was one of the

²⁷³ *Star Trek: The City on the Edge of Forever*, dir. by. Joseph Pevney (CBS Studios, 1967).

main counter points to human greed, as well as the use of new technologies. New technologies would circumvent some of the basic needs that inspired greed; however, the concept of greed would always be present in some form. The conversation relayed some of the issues or problems that humanity faced in its attempts to achieve these shared goals as well as problematic representations of gender, identity and militarization within the television series.

The purpose of this event was to provide a frame in order to begin to identify what desires this particular group had for the future. Indeed, there was resistance from some members of the group to imagining a more positive future. In the beginning, there seemed to be an assumption that talking about the future always meant a utopian picture for some of the group, which was not always the case; there is room for imagining something positive without calling it a total utopia. The point was raised that in a utopia, some people could be left out, marginalized by any type of shared vision. Such responses thwarted some of the initial conversation as it seemed people became sensitive to imagining or discussing the future in case they were accidentally marginalizing another group.

The topic of greed and a feeling of hopelessness emerged from the discussion throughout. In addition, questions were raised concerning how a more positive future society can function if there is not some form of trade or remuneration for doing the least desirable functions or jobs within our society, with this discussion culminating in the question, 'Who is going to clean the toilets?'. It seemed that the problems must be discussed before any vision could be expressed and these problems were indicative of underlying wants. There was much talk about gender roles, the military portrayed through *Star Trek* and likes and dislikes within the show and where certain ideas conflicted. It felt as if there was a type of camaraderie amongst the group after a time and a desire to debate *Star Trek* despite the underlying tone of

futility for actually achieving different futures due to the nature of mankind.

Revised Goals

- Challenging disparity and hopelessness within conceptualising futures
- Investigate some preferences or ways of imagining both individually and in groups
- Consider the 'greed' theme to explore a methodological approach concerning the effect(s) of participating in imagining futures through individual reflection or through group engagement
- Size of group
- Form/type of experiments

Appendix 1.2

Case Study One: *Star Trek* Discussion Group Audio Transcript

‘X’ indicates participants who wish to be anonymous

* Partial Transcript: Audio recording starts at about 40 minutes after the session begins

0:00

James Smith: As we were discussing before one of the other things it comes to is even in the original series is Kirk usually has the biggest gun going so you know it's kind of you know be peaceable or else I'll blast you with my star ship a lot of the time which err is interesting and err I think as time went on the series kind of evolved a bit and the next generation were a bit (inaudible) a bit more kind of oh lets work together as it was kind of made in the 80's and they had a councillor on board and all that but for me my favourite series and ironically for all that the *Star Trek* universe is about working together and the federation is *Deep Space 9* where they're all fighting each other

(Laughter)

Simon Hosie: That's actually the reason why I love *Deep Space 9* is erm coz to me the way star trek was made I was actually really into Star Wars when I was younger (inaudible) I got into it when I got older and so I think that the big thing is *Star Trek* is a very utopian view of the future whereas nowadays Sci-fi the fashion is dystopia like the future is bad or you know or it's not good or it requires whereas actually Gene Roddenberry was like no it can get better and I love *Deep Space 9* because *Deep Space 9* suddenly you have all of these integrating you have all these horrific a like warrior empires and actually it seems you know utopian democracy is the one that goes actually no we're the ones who are capable of beating you know we can beat everyone hands down erm which I I thought I find it's very heart-warming saying yeah they're all fighting so but actually it's the good guys who win

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: It's something that I like also for me is that *Deep Space 9* it that erm for the first time you can see the Federation is not as good and as perfect because we have we have seen that there is some kind of secret organisation working there and

doing things in the dark so for me it is (inaudible) the most realistic from a human point of view

Dana Koellner: Yeah that's true I agree

James Smith: I think if you go back to the original kind of premise of *Star Trek* Gene Rodenberry always said he saw it as waggon train to the stars so I think if you look at it in that context and the context when it was made Kirk's kind of a sheriff who has got to who is out there by himself with no back up who's got to kinda sort it all out I think as the series progressed you got more of a sense that there was this massive organisation behind the captain who is piloting the ship who he call on another few star ships and one of the things I quite like about the original series is that there was this idea that there almost out on their own and it's a bit more isolated which they tried to get back to in *Voyager* but I don't think it quite worked I don't think they

Simon Hosie: Yea [inaudible] species [inaudible] just to help tie it back a bit cause otherwise he was alone in the world

James Smith: Yea

Dana Koellner: And I think they also did that in *Enterprise* like there really was this kind of maverick out in space alone trying it out and yeah the consciousness level I mean I am definitely interested in the shift between Kirk and Piccard coz you can really feel the difference in what that means in that time frame which I don't think any of the other episodes really did as much for me like I was a little bit disappointed sometimes in *Voyager* because sometimes I felt like that they were falling back on the woman and the emotional thing

X: Yea it was far too emotional yea but actually if you were in charge of erm how many hundred er people on board alone and completely cut off from erm your superiors I don't think you could have a softy softy approach I think you would have to have quite a firm approach because you're all on your own

Simon Hosie: Yea that was the problem with *Janeway* I had someone show me this as a parody its basically actually what they thought would happen which was *Janeway* when she got

back large portions of her crew would have petitioned her with basically her military tribunal

(laughter)

Simon Hosie: And basically say [inaudible] do what you think but actually your responsibility at this point happens to your crew and you repeatedly endanger your crew for your own per... That's why I never really liked Janeway it was always her morals it was her... Where at least with Kirk you know he's like the guy driving it but you can you get the feeling Kirk trying to bring people along with him like you said he's the sheriff so he's the rule of law

Simon Clough: Most of the time he always had somebody else stood up on his side

Simon Hosie: Yea

Simon Clough: Even if nobody agreed with him at least they all had the same point of view somewhere but Janeway for a lot of the time it was her way or the highway so to speak

Kevin Bertazzon: One thing I thought they always got rid of in ahh in Voyager I don't know how familiar everyone is with that series was in the first episode what had happened was it was a mixture of this rebel group called the Maquis who completely disagreed with the Federation and so they were rebelling against the Federation so basically it was allegorical for the Israeli Palestine situation so my thoughts for as a show you kinda threw that away that would have been fascinating that basically Israelis and Palestinians have to get along to survive in space because they're lost and I always felt they kinda had to chuck that out of the window straight away just to make it tow the *Star Trek* line

5:05

Simon Hosie: But there was that one really good episode actually of Voyager where its actually its Tuvoks like been running and everyone thinks it's some kind of like novel political thriller novel but actually its Tuvok has been running these simulations of what does how does the Maquis work and that's very true and that episode is very noticeable cause

it's the one episode where they go oh by the way half the crew and half the people on the ship are terrorists

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Simon Hosie: The other half are people who are hunting the terrorists you know

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Dana Koellner: Hmm

James Smith: There's a great line when Chakotay says where he finds out Seska has been working for the Maquis and Tuvok's been working for Janeway while they've been in the Maquis together and it says he was working for them you were working for her was anyone working for me on that ship you know and it's kinda like so they had this (laughter) they had this like you said this original idea of everyone kinda all of these different agendas and competing ideologies and then it suddenly just kinda got smoothed away until everyone was just Starfleet and it was all like

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Simon Hosie: One big happy family

James Smith: Yeah

Dana Koellner: Yeah

Kevin Bertazzon: Especially cause they originally thought up the Bajorans and ensign Ro

James Smith: Yeah

Kevin Bertazzon: To specifically be about Palestine

James Smith: Yeah

Dana Koellner: What were you going to say

Furaha Florence Asani: Am I the only one who likes Janeway

Dana Koellner: I like

(laughter)

Furaha Florence Asani: Because I just want to say something I think that it's it would be it would be very easy to say you know she should be this throughout emotions but at the end of the day I felt as a child I was connected to it because I could grow up to be like her

Dana Koellner: Mmhmm

Furaha Florence Asani: Um because at the same time she she's she's real perhaps she's not the woman you want her to be but she's real and she has all these conflicting emotions and I don't know I just connected with her but I think that so I grew up in the 90's and um Voyager was my best out of all the *Star Trek* series and I also watched um *Deep Space 9* and I just want to say that what stuck out for me and I feel would be um would help us to become like in the future take us in that direction is the message of tolerance particularly in the Federation in terms of race I just feel nowadays whether we like it or not there's a lot of racial tension all over the world and if we can get to that point where

(audio breaks)

Furaha Florence Asani: That was I'm guessing that's what Gene Roddenberry was trying to you know slip in there

Dana Koellner: Mmhmm

Furaha Florence Asani: Can somehow but

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah for sure

Furaha Florence Asani: Yeah it's like the Federation has that even though they're fighting you know other um colonies and whatever they have that that no one is looking what alien you are or your sex everyone is really equal and I think for me that is one of the most powerful messages of *Star Trek*

Dana Koellner: I agree there's a line that Spock says I forgot which episode um but I'm sure James is gonna know um but he says er I think it was Spock, but he said you know we got to a point in history where our differences were a celebration and I just thought about that for a second like how often do I think that daily we're so I know that I'm so busy trying to reach out and find other people who like what I like because I'm I want them I want to be able to have a conversation and that's fine but at the same time I never step back and actually think about how wide of the the different interests are to celebrate that because I'm so busy trying to find people of like mind to identify with and I think that's a major point that I'm trying to figure out like

Kevin Bertazzon: Are we allowed to ask questions too

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: Sure

Kevin Bertazzon: That was such a trapping passive aggressive way I think but um I want to ask the woman who mentioned Voyager as favourite yeah cause Voyager is my wife and my favourite of the *Star Trek's* as well how did you feel when as a woman when they brought on Seven of Nine

Furaha Florence Asani: I kind of felt that ok the first time that I saw those episodes I was I think 11 or 12 so I was kind of like oh wow this is this is really different sexy you know like giggling as a child

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah right

Furaha Florence Asani: But now I you know I watched it from beginning to end again last year I don't know I felt that that was a very commercial decision

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah right

Furaha Florence Asani: Um Geri Ryan I like that that actress I enjoyed her character I just feel like um they could have done it in a more I don't know if they wanted to introduce that character apparently they did that because they took away the first what was her name the one that was with um

Several: Kess

Furaha Florence Asani: They took her away apparently so they needed to introduce another powerful woman and um so yeah that was really a commercial decision I think

10:00

Furaha Florence Asani: That they could've they could've toned down the what's the word now sexualisation of that character

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah right

Furaha Florence Asani: But um yeah I don't know

X: I thought Seven of Nine was actually a good character because um you could take it as she was just the sexy character but actually she was the cleverest

Furaha Florence Asani: She was actually

X: Able crew member and she wasn't even an original crew member she's been through the wreckage of the Borg um and I think she was highly competent they really relied on her and I think that was a fantastic role model she was just so able

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: (Audio cuts out) They they with their topic that the if a woman is guilty

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: For (inaudible) or something like that she cannot be competent or something like that

Simon Hosie: That's almost a trope in and of itself is to say you don't see that I think they always missed a trick to actually have Seven of Nine like um (audio breaks) scarring like cause they you know take

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah

Simon Hosie: Have really scarring as I was saying the trope that's a joke in itself like if there's women that aren't it's sort of yeah for me it was kinda like oh she's beautiful and competent yeah that's great but there are a dozen you know it's like you know all the you read all the marvel superheroes and you read all the female were all these incredibly beautiful and incredibly intelligent competent well actually whilst that's great it's always good to have ideals to aspire to its actually most people you know who go through life and not sort of you know statuesque

Christina Stimson: They don't have it all yeah

X: She is though she's got these unremovable

Simon Hosie: Yeah but it's very much the kind of it's that classic I always felt it was that classic this is its that kind of make them exotic it's the other

Christina Stimson: It's the ice cream thing

Simon Hosie: (Overlapping) The other and the alien what's it like you know genuinely like when she was a Borg you know when it was like her skin was kind of like sort of that sort of horrible like pale you know like there isn't any actual colour in her skin something that's just been draped on I mean you might say that actually to have that would have been a massive plot hole what with the fact that you know they have basically instamedicare

Group: Hmmm

Simon Hosie: Right

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah right yeah right

Simon Hosie: But (inaudible) it did feel like they missed a trick to have someone who wasn't like you said you know cause I can't think of a single female character in the show I can still think of guys who are obviously the aliens they're aliens all quite obviously but I can't think of a single female character in the show who is a humanoid alien who isn't statuesque physically

Several: Yeah

Simon Hosie: And that might just be business that might just be how you sell the show

Furaha Florence Asani: That's that's what I think that um I'm not saying I really enjoyed the character as well um and I thought yeah as you guys said obviously she was very clever I just think that the decision to take that particular actress and to style her as they did was you know a calculated one

Dana Koellner: Yes

Christina Stimson: I don't know

(Simultaneously)

Kevin Bertazzon: It's fascinating to because for modern kids

Dana Koellner: Oh hang on Kev uh go ahead

Kevin Bertazzon: Sorry

Dana Koellner: Go ahead Mina oh I mean Christy

Kevin Bertazzon: Like like much younger than us oh were you saying go ahead to me

Dana Koellner: Nope

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: Sorry Kev hang on one second it's a little bit of a delay so you know go ahead
Christy

Christina Stimson: I don't know I think in terms of the representation of women I'm I'm I'm
by no means like a massive fan of *Star Trek* so I don't have an encyclopaedic knowledge
but I was watching it on TV recently the original series and there was one of the episodes
that really rather pissed me off and it was basically it was this man who was kinda like
this gypsyish character

Dana Koellner: Harry Mudd

James Smith: Mudd's women

Christina Stimson: Yeah and all this like gorgeous women who are like oh I just want a husband
and I was just going what's going on

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: Yeah I don't think we should really should talk about sexism in the overt *Star
Trek* we're gonna get on this for the whole night

(laughter)

Christina Stimson: Well yeah it's sort of like cause it's also tied into the like the cause I think
its representative of like say at least western society at the time

Dana Koellner: Mmm very much so

Christina Stimson: And I think also the point I wanted to make like people say oh it's this
wonderful thing about tolerance and everybody's equal but I did get this overriding
feeling that the Federation or at least Kirk and like his crew they were like the western

or the slash American like people going into like foreign cultures and basically seeing them as exotic and things to be examined and poked and prodded at rather than being like yes it was nice and they did like form bonds but I did feel it felt a bit colonial to me at the time

Several: Hmm

Christina Stimson: But I don't maybe that's just because I'm not particularly well versed in *Star Trek*

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Christina Stimson: So I don't know but that's just for the original series Voy I mean Voyager was my first one as well and I did really enjoy that but I do remember watching that I think it was only like a few weeks ago I'm going what so um

Dana Koellner: Hmm

X: I think there is a colonial nature to it the first series and in fact I think they say it is that the nature of humans to explore and to expand in one of the

Christina Stimson: No but in terms it was kinda ethnocentric where it was kind of like oh here's like the Federation or like the Starfleet and there's like everybody else

X: Mmhmm

Dana Koellner: Do you think you can have an organisation like that without some kind of command structure

Simon Hosie: And also do you not feel like if you are the Federation is objectively a fairly wonderful society of 99% of its citizens

15:00

Simon Hosie: You know you've got the ability to run your life more or less how you as long as you don't harm others

Christina Stimson: But but it is still conforming to quite uh uh western structure in terms of like

Simon Clough: Idealistic yeah idealistic structure

James Smith: It's yeah sorry I was just gonna say there are quite a few episodes actually spread across the series where the Enterprise or whatever will encounter a society and they'll offer them entrance to the Federation the United Federation of Planets as long as they change their ways to suit what the Federation wants so they might do something that's a bit in their opinion a bit distasteful so oh yeah welcome to the big family of the Federation however you can't do that anymore because we don't allow that in our club so you either change or you know so there's that kind of er

Dana Koellner: Disparity

James Smith: Yeah disparity between what they say and what they do in some some instances

Christina Stimson: I mean to say things like western and American and so on is very problematic and I'm not suggesting that that's like a straight er er relation er direct relationship but I think even if you remove any kind of national or cultural like tacts you could say that one culture is basically saying to another yes you can be part of us if you change your ways

James Smith: Yeah yeah

Christina Stimson: Or even like people inside that structure are ready it's like oh yeah you're from a different race but you are like us you aspire to be like us

Simon Hosie: In a way it's like holding a mirror up to society

Christina Stimson: mmm

James Smith: Yeah

Hayley Alessi: I don't even think that's the first series I've just been watching

James Smith: Yeah yeah

Hayley Alessi: You leant me the fan book set of the Borg

James Smith: Yes

Hayley Alessi: And I'm on the second disk today and I just saw a voyager episode and I'm sorry but to give Chakotay a kind of facial tattoos and that and just like well there you go because you're American Indian

Dana Koellner: Mmhmm

(overlapping three voices at the same time)

Dana Koellner: (Inaudible)

Simon Hosie: That was that was that was stuff was very like

Hayley Alessi: Native American stroke kind of

Dana Koellner: But this is a great idea I mean like this is something I've been thinking about too I was watching um have you seen the viral YouTube video today about the astronaut the thing called um erm overview effect

X: No

James Smith: I think I've heard about it yeah

Dana Koellner: So there's a new thing out have you seen this so a lot of astronauts have come back saying that once they've seen the earth from that perspective it's effected them enormously more than they could figure out how and so they've met with a bunch of

academics and um different religions and different kind of things trying to figure it out and um at the end of the day they said that you know we are all connected from that point of view of looking back at the earth we are they see more than ever how we are all interconnected and I'm thinking about er how do we change the consciousness level and who's deciding what's right and what's wrong and this and that's what my question is well do you think it can work without a structure that's not sarcastic I mean I'm actually really asking because I'd rather it be you know kind of everybody agree but nobody's gonna be on a same level I don't think it's impossible and we see even in *Star Trek* they're not even on the same kind of consciousness level often

Mina Nielson: I think I think this is an issue with a lot of science fiction um I mean it's a big issue in the sort of Marvel universe stuff as well I think there's a massive assumption that um somebody was saying earlier that the good guy has to have superior firepower

Dana Koellner and James Smith: Mmm

Mina Nielson: The whole system only works if you got a moral person or a moral organisation in charge that can if they want to kick everybody else in line

Dana Koellner: Mmm

Mina Nielson: I think that makes sense cause that's America's world view that was our world view when we were the British Empire

James Smith: Might is right

(inaudible overlapping)

Mina Nielsen: (Inaudible) Sci-fi franchise that's escaped that I don't think that maybe we as people have gone past that how do we have a whole system that works when somebody who's right and has a moral high ground is actually weaker than everybody else

Dana Koellner: Mmm

Simon Hosie: But that's

Mina Nielsen: How do you make things right without blowing each other up

(several inaudible)

Simon Hosie: I mean like (inaudible) has a really good address it with culture is it the whole point about the culture that you have total equality because it's what's called post scarcity which is absolutely every need can be met so you can have it think it's sort of about he talks a lot about the singularity so it's a certain point which beyond which need becomes meaningless and then you can have this equality but sort of it is kind of the basis of law it has to have some kind of you know you generally have to have yeah we even have agreed on rules like we talk about you know even this room and that effectively we have a chair who's moderating that and that will happen no matter what but unfortunately at some point you've got to have someone who's got to go actually these are the rules and you can't just take my stuff you know cause we don't have post scarcity you know if I've if this is my one phone if you take my phone that's a you know so that would be a serious imposition on me but it could benefit you um and I think you know sort of I don't see maybe it's just me maybe because obviously

20:00

Simon Hosie: I'm just white middle class male so I benefit from this uh you know what someone would call the military industrial complex but I don't see the sort of issue of um I see it in almost the opposite direction of the Federation the Federation isn't morally right because it's got superior fire power it's you know it's right and then it has it's sort of it's a case of we morally you know we morally we win because we're morally right and you know I think when you look at all the over the empires and there all quite corrupt and crooked and they've got in theory they should be able to develop vastly superior firepower but they don't yeah and it's also it's a matter of rationale and I think the Federation has it's rational ego structure which means it goes well actually yes we've got that technology but we very pointedly don't use it it's general order one we don't interfere with planets we don't you know there are rules in warfare that we very strict and ok and um yeah so that's (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: Kevin I cut you off I'm sorry did you want to add something

Kevin Bertazzon: No no no no

Dana Koellner: Ok

Kevin Bertazzon: Thank you for the consideration though

Dana Koellner: No problem

James Smith: Just going back a step Dana you mentioned how we get from one state to another

Dana Koellner: Yeah

James Smith: Er I was racking me brains trying to remember where the reference is but I think it's from First Contact where Zephram Cochran is building the rocket thing

Dana Koellner: Mmm

James Smith: and I think er somebody says in that film that it's at this stage when we discover other alien life that we realise that we're part of a wider community and it kinda wakes the world up so you think back to First Contact they're still bombing each other and there's like the Russian bloke and the American bloke and all that so perhaps I'm not suggesting discovering aliens but perhaps it will take something like that to wake the world up to er to er

Dana Koellner: An outside force bigger than we are

James Smith: To well or just some natural disaster or something or some cataclysm that will make everybody have to come to term together so so

Christina Stimson: It could be just another way to basically like all the divisions we have now culturally racially whatever it's just like oh we're we're the humans you're the aliens its basically like the same but on a much larger scale

James Smith: Yeah

Christina Stimson: Like so its small things like black white whatever religion it's gonna be like oh no we're all humans and then everybody else

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: It's one thing that I I I wanted to point out before it I don't know if in English there's a difference in the meaning for example tolerance at least in Spanish it's not the same because er when you say you're tolerance with a culture with another person something you just put yourself in a step over their

Simon Hosie: It's a power dynamic

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yes

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh

Dana Koellner: Mmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So you put yourself in a dominant position or in a authoritarian person or culture so I think this better to just change that a that word use for example respect so that way you are the same level

James Smith: Ah

Christina Stimson: Accept

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yes and is it will happen within *Star Trek* or within the culture that we can find within *Star Trek* are they in a authoritarian position or are they in a respect position with other culture because I think they're thing change

Hayley Alessi: I think it changes throughout doesn't it and actually somebody was talking about lack of scarcity they don't share all the technology with other cultures isn't that one of their rules not to do that so actually they're still dominant over some other people because one of their prime directives is not to give their technology away but they will happily take everyone else's that is better than theirs

Simon Clough: I think the flip side to that is on Voyager some of the episodes they do sort of go against that but they try and get sort of get more for themselves

Hayley Alessi: On on the episode I was watching today Scorpion is the name of it the first Scorpion episode where Janeway encounters the Borg but there's also this alien creatures that can literally take over the bodies and the only thing the Borg can't assimilate so actually she joins forces with the Borg to try and fight

Simon Clough: Yes

Hayley Alessi: These horrible creatures because in the long run that will get her through space to get her troops home and it doesn't matter

Simon Clough: Even though it's against (inaudible)

James Smith: Yeah

Hayley Alessi: It doesn't matter if she kind of lets the Borg then carry on living so there not actually standing back and letting things happen because she directly kind of steps in to that

X: Self-preservation comes through in several of the series where this this um conflict between um the prime directive and the defence of the ship or the defence of the crew um comes into play and sometimes it's the defence of the ship which takes priority

Hayley Alessi: Yeah

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Furaha Florence Asani: I don't think humans will ever evolve out of that self-preservation which is again just showing you that that

Simon Hosie: A shared interest

Furaha Florence Asani: Exactly that human nature is going to come through for most people so yeah I think

James Smith: Mmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: I think that it's not a matter of humans it's a matter of um

(overlapping inaudible)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: We know and we know so every living organism has this ego self-preservation so no one is going to

Simon Hosie: It's interesting that you say that because you say that (inaudible) and we're talking about human (inaudible) but it made me think about there's a bit I think it's *Deep Space 9* where someone's lecturing Quark about the Ferenghi and he goes hang on a second let's look back at our history til we get to the start and you say we do all this horrible stuff but where in our history is slavery and genocide and all this really

25:00

Simon Hosie: Nasty stuff that you had to get through we don't have to do that you know and I think you know maybe then it's probably something that it didn't address cause it's a horrendously complex issue but I think it is very interesting

James Smith: Hmmm

Simon Hosie: I think it's very its very that whole issue of like well its actually like we are limited and you were saying the federation transposes um its values but it also made me think of I just recently (inaudible) where the person makes the point of people actually generally can't we don't you know where one of the aliens goes yea we actually don't tell the reason why there is all this ufo cover is cause human beings we've told you that the aliens exist and that (inaudible) we think most of you would have a psychotic break

James Smith: Hmmm

Simon Hosie: That you couldn't and I'd be interested to see a show or I felt it was interesting that *Star Trek* never quite it sort of seemed to skip past that point of where they met the aliens

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yea yea

Simon Hosie: I was thinking did nobody where there kind of

Christina Stimson: Yea

Simon Hosie: Did nobody like go whoa actually

Dana Koellner: In Enterprise

Simon Clough: Yea they touched on that a little bit there

Dana Koellner: Yea

Simon Clough: But not in the same sort of breath cause they already had some contact with aliens in that

Dana Koellner: Yea I mean I just remember the hostility of uh the humans toward the Vulcans after 100 years they wouldn't give them space technology as much and

Simon Clough: And like the first encounter with the Suliban as well

Dana Koellner: Yea exactly

James Smith: Yea

Kevin Bertazzon: Did anybody here ever read the comic or graphic novel *The Watchmen*

Several: Yea

Kevin Bertazzon: Ah how Osmandius to bring world peace he creates a fake alien and then uh and then massacres all of New York and that brings about world peace because now all humans believe it's us against the aliens

James Smith: Yea

Dana Koellner: That's kinda what you were saying James

James Smith: Yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: That's an old story in in humans and in Greece they have this problem where they usually just fight in between them and when someone a foreign enemy just came they just unite together they just fight so it's something that

James Smith: Yea

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: And it's a it's a traditional tactic that government use in order to (inaudible) control the population they just find an enemy outside and they just keep themselves together

Dana Koellner: Yea

(Overlapping)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Just we have different enemy to fit together so it's

Hayley Alessi: It's called (inaudible)

Christina Stimson: Yea

Simon Hosie: The word barbarian comes from it literally just means not us in the context of the Greek

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh wow

Simon Hosie: That's that's that's what it means barbarian its connotation comes specifically from the Greeks referring to the Persians and the yea the tribes that lived in north Greece and going you're not us yea and it was very much that connotation of we're better than you.

Simon Clough: Its cause they didn't understand their language they just sounded like ba ba b aba but

(laughter)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: There is in *Star Trek* there is a point probably because it is a a probe from the occidental culture and it reflect the occidental cultural already probably not in the first series sometimes it's happening in the first series but in the next one I've seen that ummm the Federation or sometime the people that belong to the Federation they just question their own values sometimes (inaudible) so something at some point gives you the ability to or the capability just to deal with other cultures

Simon Hosie: But that's I think is the real strength of the Federation the fact that it has this internal and it has this if I think about it in Enterprise not in Enterprise sorry the Next Generation the number of times where x Starfleet admiral or Starfleet representative turns out to be evil or possessed or just something its always yea

(laughter)

Simon Hosie: And its always someone points out that it yea how does it function when the entire high brass is but actually it I think it ties into the sort of Utopian that shows actually at any point anyone in the Federation can put their hand up and go ohhh this is you know and I think that's probably maybe that's where perhaps Shatner's character is going a bit overboard is that he's deliberately pushing the boundaries of what's acceptable but it's a good in many ways it's a good sign of a very vibrant culture that he's allowed to and that Kirk or are allowed to go well actually you know we have tremendous flexibility and it goes to Janeway as well yea I don't necessarily agree with any or any of Janeway's decisions but actually she has the flex its clearly flexible

enough that she's allowed to go well its acceptable for me to do this dodgy dealing you know I clearly feel that's ok

Dana Koellner: So do you think a self-reflective process and a self-moderation process is kinda what you are saying

Simon Hosie & James Smith: Yea yea

Hayley Alessi: I think Janeway has more freedom though because she's cast adrift

X: Yea certainly yea

Hayley Alessi: kind of council or whatever actually so that's probably why she does it more

X: Yea I think so yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Picard on the other hand will do how he's the more straight captain of all of them yea

James Smith: Yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Cause (inaudible)

James Smith: Yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: And and Sisko has a conflict of interest there because one side he's well he has three things on one side he's the captain of the station he also has his son and the family that he want to keep and also

30:00

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: He has to keep and also he has like a spiritual is through there with all there there so it's only

James Smith: Emissary

Hayley Alessi: That's quite interesting then because it seems like every different version of *Star Trek* is exploring parts of people's personalities or putting them in different situations the Captains to see how they react or having a different character

Simon Hosie: Yea

Hayley Alessi: Cause he's pulled in several ways isn't he so they're exploring different things

Simon Clough: I think certainly in Enterprise they're pushing that quite heavily in terms of that loneliness that first time

Hayley Alessi: Very much don't they

Simon Clough: Yea that first time they've been out there on their own away from home in the big bad world

X: There's a naivety in Enterprise which is I think less so in the others

Simon Clough: Hmm

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

X: They really are the first ever to go there and there's no rule book to what they should do

Simon Clough: They are making the rulebook

Dana Koellner: I think Enterprise would have been my favourite *Star Trek* episode if it had of been better

(laughter)

Simon Hosie: Yea

Dana Koellner: Because the concept of it is the most exciting to me cause I think it's the closest to us you know this moment of time

X: Yea

Dana Koellner: And transition I almost though oh my god what a great opportunity it would have been to see how did you make these steps and what could you have talked about that in that series instead we talk about space travel and Sulibans for an eternity

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Dana Koellner: I'm so mad

Simon Clough: And sort of see that in sort of 50 years from now easily

X: & Dana Koellner: Yea yea

Simon Clough: Whereas the other ones its sort of a yea we could almost do that but could we it's that sort of

Hayley Alessi: I'm going to throw a curveball a curveball I think the reason that you don't like it is because you can imagine it at being 50 years from now we like the others because they are so fantastical and they are escapism from our everyday life

Kevin Bertazzon: Hmmm

Christina Stimson: I don't know about that

Simon Hosie: I was just wondering what you guys were all thinking about it cause I was reading there's a coupla series I read where there is very clearly Federation analogues and they don't come off well in the depiction they tend to be either institutionally corrupt or beauracratc or even weak or naïve

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Simon Hosie: I was just thinking about how everyone what everyone thought through on this thing of *Star Trek* being this like we we it might represent *Star Trek* whereas now *Star Trek* you know throughout literature and culture it's this absolutely acceptable target of mockery

Kevin Bertazzon: Hmmm

Simon Hosie: You know it's you know its absolu even when like you can say yea calling someone a Trekkie is perfectly um but you know saying cause think about its very easy to go oh this the Federation and then its mocked or you know its Trekkies well I was wondering what other people's thoughts were on you know have they have other people encountered this or is it just me

Dana Koellner: Have we encountered sorry I missed the question

Simon Hosie: So yah I was saying like sort of seeing how like other it seems that the Federation is like mocked a lot now the whole concept of this Utopian

James Smith: Yea

X: Is the Federation mocked or is the characters mocked

Christina Stimson: Other beings from *Star Trek*

Simon Hosie: Everything its everything sort of *Star Trekie* and sort of particular but its particularly the Federation and it's the Federation and Picard and the

Kevin Bertazzon: Right right

James Smith: There's a line in *Deep Space 9* where Quark is having a root beer and he says you know the thing about root beer it's a lot like the Federation sickly its horrible but if you don't have it often enough you kind of miss it

(laughter)

James Smith: I think it's when the Federation have been driven off the station and the Dominion's in charge of the Kardasians or somebody

Dana Koellner: Yea

James Smith: And that kind of sums up so even Quark who is a diehard kind of you know capitalist whatever uh kinda misses the Federation because its comfortable and cosy and I think that's what you're kinda driving at maybe as its seen as the kind of ahh the Peter Parker of the *Star Trek* universe you know kinda the wallflower whereas the Klingons are all rough and tough and the Romulans are all sneaky

Dana Koellner: Hmmm

James Smith: And ah the Kardasians are all kind of sneaky and rough and tough so

Kevin Bertazzon: I think that oh sorry

James Smith: No go on

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh I did it again fuck I interrupted I'm so sorry

(laughter)

Kevin Bertazzon: Um actually a little bit why I was asking earlier about the 7 of 9 thing because for kids watching a lot of the *Star Trek* shows 7 of 9 and Topol I think the the Klin the Vulcan on Enterprise

Dana Koellner: Hmmhmmm

Kevin Bertazzon: Are the most popular characters with little girls um and with the new cause *Star Trek* I agree with the person who was saying *Star Trek* was kind of the thing to make fun of until the JJ Abrams

Christina Stimson: & Simon Clough: (inaudible)

Kevin Bertazzon: Movies came out and then it became cool again and I'm sort of piggy backing on the other question that he asked with another question do you think a lot of the thing does anyone in the room a lot of the questions we are asking now which we thought was the whole point of *Star Trek* was allegory do we think these same questions can be asked with the direction *Star Trek* is going now

Dana Koellner: No

Simon Clough: No I mean that's saying that *Star Trek's* cool but it's much that first film is is this kind of action movie macho man and like it's the

Kevin Bertazzon: Right its Star Warsizing *Star Trek*

Dana Koellner: Yea

Simon Clough: Yea and I I like I'm a huge I'll be the first to admit I prefer *Star Wars* to *Star Trek* in many ways but equally I would like to live in the *Star Trek* I would not like to live the *Star Wars* universe

Several: Yea

X: Me too

35:00

Simon Clough: And and but fundamentally you know for me it was actually on that that got me rewatching it I was thinking well actually I went I've never been a huge fan of this and that was when I started to kind of previously I had been a very die hard fan of Star Wars fan and I thought you know I thought the Federation was naïve and I watched this and I noticed this disconnect that it had become this kind of hyper macho action thing I was like this this this isn't *Star Trek* you know I don't know a lot about this and even I'm like yea this seems you know wrong

James Smith: If you compare the original *Star Trek* film from the 70's *Star Trek* The Motion Picture

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

(laughter)

James Smith: It's very cerebral and it's about consciousness and love and death and sentience and the new *Star Trek* is about blowing stuff up and looking cool and you know

Furaha Florence Asani: Because Hollywood will do that to everything

James Smith: You know yea

Furaha Florence Asani: To be fair they will do that to everything so

Dana Koellner: But it's so weird like thinking about what you're are saying like

They want to appeal to the I mean this is the standard trope you know you gotta get the guy off the tractor in Iowa

James Smith: Hmm

Dana Koellner: You know that's what you're that's the commercialist mentality and the appeal of *Star Trek* is the opposite of that to me and it proved it right through the where are we right here in 2015 talking about that in 1967 you know and it's just crazy to me like this constantly appealing to the lowest kind of common denominator that grabs everybody and we're a huge population right now if you're 45 right now there's double the amount of people on earth than in any other time in your life span do you know that

X: No

Dana Koellner: Like 45 years ago there were 35 million people million or billion 3.5 billion on the planet and now if you are 45 its now 7 something so that like that's never happened before in history to keep appealing to these little like trying to hit the widespread market is no longer going to be possible cause there's just too many people

James Smith: Hmmm

Dana Koellner: So this is kind of nichified I know this is a conversation we've had many times
Kevin sorry

(laughter)

Kevin Bertazzon: Well that's what I'm here for

Hayley Alessi: Can I ask you a question though surely that only works with movies because in series I wonder if you can get those human emotions across in a film and get someone's attention enough

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Hayley Alessi: So it does have to be more action whereas a series is kind of longer running and you can explore more deep things I'm not saying that I particularly love action movies or deep and meaningful movies I really like a mix but I'm wondering if they won't actually bring that into the series it just being all action

Simon Hosie: I think you can I think it's one of those things I'd be very interested to hear people's thoughts and it's like how our opinions of the series are informed by the quality of the actors I mean.

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea sure

Simon Hosie: I think Lord of the Rings does their films for me at least does deal with a lot of these issues you know friendship and morality and courage so I mean they're at least capable I think it just requires tremendously talented people which requires very talented people to do

Dana Koellner: Hmm

James Smith: You know cause it kinda ties into this when Enterprise was being in its death throws in its death rattle they banged around a lot of ideas about what would follow it

in a *Star Trek* uh series and one of the lead runners was a series called Red Squad which was about you know in Star Fleet Academy they have those elite cadets

Dana Koellner: Ohhh yea yea

James Smith: Called Red Squad and that was one of the lead runners was this kind of series about hot shot young pilots kinda

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh wow

Simon Hosie: Anything that will [inaudible] more

(laughter)

James Smith: Um now can you think of anything less *Star Trek* than a load of teenagers flying around kind of very sort of kind of Twilighy or Buffy as it was back then you know that type of thing

Dana Koellner: Ummhmmm

James Smith: But so that was the demographic they were aiming for and I think if they brought it back now it'd either be something like CSI Federation where it's hard bitten all flash cuts and torches or it'd be Twilight Federation where it would be a load of teenagers running around you know and you'd have kindof a Spock junior or something you know with a kindof wise cracking kid and you know it just depresses me that it has to be that why can't it be something similar to the original series

Dana Koellner: Ummhmm

Simon Hosie: That's what I was saying about the analogue the Federation analogy

James Smith: Yea

Simon Hosie: It's that whole cause even the new Federation gotta be like this really machoey uh and I think Into Darkness tried to deal with it and fell flat on its face it did the whole

oh how do we deal with this whole moral quandary of becoming strong strengthened but I do feel like its you're saying this whole Federation is seen as you know when I remember watching these guys having this discussion when I think the last of the Star Wars films came out and they had a discussion comparing them and they pretty much talked about the weakness of the Federation and its sort of like saying now its seen its weakness like you know or any parallel I always think about is how everyone looks down on Superman now even though he's a nice guy you just everyone's like yea Batman Tony Stark who are actually

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

James Smith: Yeah

Simon Hosie: Objectively pretty horrible blokes they're pretty nasty blokes but we like valorise yeah like

40:00

Simon Hosie: We're like rather than why don't we valorise you know the Federation which is ok we've got problems but we'll adapt or we'll deal but we want to try and do the good thing and always take the hard choice you know that seems bad and so now we're valorising now this um oh yeah no we've gotta do the hard choice and the hard choice means like yeah you know we'll blow up a planet then it's this save the world sorta things

James Smith: Hmm

Simon Hosie: And it's like well can't you do what they did in *Star Trek* you know where like what's wrong with that whole aspiring to be better than let's just accept human nature

James Smith: Yeah

Dana Koellner: Or that's even a control mechanism in some way right because they keep it they're saying that the more violence the less intelligent I mean look at what's happening with *Star Trek* who's directing the third one Kevin

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh the Fast and Furious director

Several: Uuugh

Dana Koellner: Is directing the third *Star Trek* movie so that says it all right there

Kevin Bertazzon: It's supposed to be one of the writers but they told off too many of the *Star Trek* fans so they got rid of him uh originally they were talking to Brian Singer about it because he's a huge *Star Trek* fan but supposedly he's done some controversial things recently I don't know what they are um so they're going with the Fast and Furious guy

Simon Hosie: I don't know necessarily know if it's like fans of the new *Star Trek* movies I mean would disagree with me but actually having a fan would be doing a good idea like obviously there's a lot to be said for having a fan (inaudible) but I actually think if you were gonna do a new one you would want someone like now I'm thinking of all my favourite Marvel movies is Thor right and I think it's one of the best ones because it has this great Shakespearian kind of cause it's directed by Kenneth Brannagh who freely admits that he doesn't do comic book movies and a lot of people in it haven't read comic books

Kevin Bertazzon: Hmm

Simon Hosie: And so he was able to bring this very fresh perspective and he may he had people like writers who knew it but it meant he was able to bring this very fresh technical perspective and I'm always a bit weary now like when JJ Abrams goes oh I'm a huge Star Wars fan and like so that means we're gonna get your fan perspective which is not my fan perspective

Kevin Bertazzon: Hmm hmm

Christina Stimson: I don't know I think the problem underlying this for me really and this might sound really whiny (inaudible) but basically it seems to be this phase happening now where it's cool to be a geek

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Christina Stimson: And and it's basically like that you were saying on about dumbing down things well basically the nature of having this fanatical interest or even a mild interest in like this slightly well by these standards inaccessible work or works you know er that is what makes you a geek as soon as you make that more like oh let's make so that everyone can understand or everyone will like it it kinda robs it of that sophistication and therefore makes it more I don't wanna say mainstream cause that sounds really (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: But that's what it is

Christina Stimson: Yeah yeah

Kevin Bertazzon: But

Christina Stimson: And I was just it to to get to say it's you say the whole Kenneth Brannagh thing like getting a fresh perspective that's great but I think if you have that mix of like people who are actually involved in the film between people who actually are proper into *Star Trek* or whatever it is and then people who aren't you can find that balance rather than being like overly commercialist or overly like fan service

Dana Koellner: But why do you want to find the balance in this particular thing because this thing made me dream

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: But I think that they got some point from the movies and the original series and from the new next generation because what happened during the series on the seasons is each every show is completely different it was and some of them they have battles or they have just fight or something like that or they don't fight any (inaudible) or something and they solve it either thinking or most of the episode uh uh they make you think about something

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: A problem, a specific thing, or something like that

Dana Koellner: Mmmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: In the movie when you have super link powers or or the power to tell a story and you have a very different colleague um if you want to follow the spirit of the series you have to put everything together

Christina Stimson: Yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: You are running out of time so you so you can't make a movie that is completely dedicated to us like an episode uh uh (inaudible) with no action but you can't also make a movie where everything is action and you don't have the space for thinking

James Smith: Yes

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So I think that with the movie with the various movies with a with a all the series and and the next generation they did pretty well most of the because they have uh about the different things

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: But with the new ones its just action

Dana Koellner: Action

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: And fighting so it's just where is the thinking way when I went out from the cinema

Christina Stimson: (Inaudible)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Well what is the message here

Several: Hmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: I was completely lost I got nothing just

Simon Hosie: Messages like very you break all the rules

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Very cool very cool special effects but that's about it

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: And the ship doesn't look anything like it was supposed to from before I like it too but it still wasn't

(Overlapping inaudible)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yeah so I felt empty after what seeing the film

Kevin Bertazzon: Well there's there's there's a thing there's a theme here in actually *Star Trek* the franchise as well cause when the original pilot was made the focus group hated it

James Smith: Hmm

Kevin Bertazzon: Women hated it in particular because of the female first officer

James Smith: Hmm

Kevin Bertazzon: Who ends up playing nurse Chapel now again it was a different time period so in inst but they thought there was something it was Lucy Lucille Ball's um Lucy Arnaz's company they thought there was something to it so they wanted to reshoot it so they brought they they brought in William Shatner and they made him kick some ass um and then everybody liked it and they wanted to make it sexier as well because again the first one was too heady now cut to when they do the movies the first movie that was mentioned by somebody earlier in the 70's audiences hated it you know a Simon Hosie:0 minute of showing Enterprise they thought it was too heady the actors hated it so they

brought in a non-fan er Nichols to um direct the Wrath of Khan and that saved the franchise

James Smith: Hmm

Kevin Bertazzon: Even the aesthetic you know move forward as well so now after Enterprise *Star Trek* was known as kinda dead so they've kinda done the same thing again they actioned it and sexied it up again and it once again has not only saved the franchise but brought a new audience to it so I mean I think like you were saying um I don't know names the person with the Hispanic accent uh

Dana Koellner: Alex

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Alex

(Laughter)

Kevin Bertazzon: Alex, sorry like you were saying it seems to be *Star Trek* itself has always had to kinda walk that balance of being action and intellectual cause also what you're saying about a movie and I'll stop talking soon I promise um the uh the uh like to write a movie you could spend 2 years on the script to get it right in TV you have to write 26 of these and sometimes they only get 2 weeks of them as well so that's gotta be in terms of for the writers as well and for the actors that's gotta be pretty difficult as well like the bar you've gotta keep so so I agree I think my basic point is I think even though we think *Star Trek* is really heady it is still tits ass explosions and ass kicking as well as well it always has been it's not completely heady it's not 2001 cause I know a lot of people who love *Star Trek* cannot stand 2001

Dana Koellner: Or Solaris

Kevin Bertazzon: Or Solaris right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: The new movie does focus on the characters and you don't feel that there is (inaudible) you learn nothing about the Federation

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So the new generation that are going to the cinema to see the films they know nothing of the Federation only just about James the Kirk Spock the relationship with Uhura

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: All these things but they don't know about the background that's what we are really learning from the the series and from the movies from all movies because we learnt about the the hope will be the future and they try to translate that to to just give to just just give uh message about that not with the new movies

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: That's a different the the point with that

Dana Koellner: Hmm

Simon Hosie: I think it's really interesting that you say that I wonder though I do like wonder though how is it actually actually just *Star Trek* is a part of cultural heritage in the you know it's just it's in pop culture now is the only way to describe it and how much of it is that I would wonder be interested to know the how much is that actually they don't do that stuff a lot of the new stuff because they go well actually everyone knows if you've got a red shirt you're probably gonna die if you know that's that's red shirt is now short hand for this character you know you know and so on and so forth you know

(laughter)

Simon Hosie: Shatnering up you know is one of these things it's all become part of the culture so maybe perhaps do you not need to do that because everybody knows what the Federation is and what it stands for

Kevin Bertazzon: Oh interesting

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Not not not always because probably in UK or in USA probably it's easier for the people but for example in Spain where I came from you are geek you are really talk about *Star Trek* so it's not very common only a few people know all these things or if you talk with someone you say ok you are wearing a red shirt so you're going to die soon they don't know the joke

Several: Yeah yeah

(Inaudible)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So it's it's it's only in specific places so for that reason of specific countries so probably for that reason the movies are probably

Hayley Alessi: But I don't think it matters because most of the theatre going people want to be immersed in that (audio breaks) gonna go to the back story

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Hayley Alessi: They're not going to look at the back catalogue they not interested it's kinda instant access and that's what they want

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Hayley Alessi: And the people who are interested to go will go look

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yeah

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yeah but I think that's a problem because er people really just becoming interested in *Star Trek* just starting from the new movies

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Probably they will just be disappointed when they just start to see the original series or *The Next Generation*

Christina Stimson: Well if they are then they're not *Star Trek* fans

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: I just want to mention guys if you want to go off and get more tea or coffee or whatever please do but

Hayley Alessi: I thought of another point as well actually I don't massively know too much about comic books but obviously James Smith: does as well as *Star Trek* and other stuff and I didn't realise that they reboot the characters all the time in comic books because they need to sex up the story etcetera

50:00

Hayley Alessi: So I guess they're just doing it for the TV programs or films and then they don't care about the um linear kind of history and stuff because they have to appeal to new audiences and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't but they create all these alternative universe to do that so I guess it's just

Kevin Bertazzon: Right right

Simon Hosie: Well I was thinking actually it actually made me think of what I saw the other day there's actually quite a big series like issue series where it's a *Doctor Who Star Trek* crossover

James Smith: It is isn't it

Kevin Bertazzon: Yeah that's right

Kevin Bertazzon: What

Simon Hosie: Yeah it's actually it's really actually really awesome basically the Cybermen get into I think it can't remember it evolves like dimension hopping basically the general plotline is the Cybermen join forces with the Borg

Kevin Bertazzon: The Borg that's right

Simon Hosie: And because actually

Christina Stimson: Where is this in my life

(Laughter)

Simon Hosie: And actually what happens is it ends up creating a large crisis cause it turns out because the Cybermen can take over anything so the Cybermen basically go we're going to assimilate the Borg and they basically start munching up most of the known universe but yeah it's the it's really

James Smith: The Borg would wipe the floor with the Cybermen surely

(Laughter)

Dana Koellner: I know we can go on about TV and debating this one because it's gonna be good but I just wanna kinda steer us sorry Kevin just to kinda steer us a little bit towards the common goals that *Star Trek* has kinda imprinted on you possibly um and I just kinda wanted to identify some of that cause I know what I think in my head but they maybe not the same like when you think about the future do you think about post-scarcity or do you think about uh the kind of medical technology that will what is you think about in terms of the future when you think about *Star Trek*

James Smith: What just because the titles up on the thingy there it's been bugging me

Dana Koellner: Sorry

James Smith: That episode the Devil in the Dark they go to a mining colony

Dana Koellner: Yeah it's one of my favourites

James Smith: Two when there's a thing like where oh it's just of trying to protect its young and all very nice but what interests me is in the utopia of the Federation if anyone can be anything why would you choose to be a miner and work in that horrible conditions for no reward

Hayley Alessi: Somebody has to do it

X: (inaudible)

James Smith: (Overlapping) Because someone has to do it but what's the the the

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: A quota

James Smith: So they have prisons the Federation alright they're quite kind of not

Dana Koellner: Posh

James Smith: But who would choose who would think my life's work is to be a prison guard or go work on some grotty colony and so

(laughter)

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: That brings to a point we aren't used to seeing the point of view from everything from the *Star Trek* from the point of view of the of the army or the commander or from uh uh from an army structure and not from a normal citizen

James Smith: Citizen yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So I need I just think that a good point that we just follow a series or a film just based on a citizen normal citizen or someone that's just for example I remember it was in in *Enterprise* the series where they uh on of the uh in one of the episodes they just meet with un some of the family of uh uh of of one of the guys from

the Enterprise and this um were they were this family where just uh traveling with freighters all around the galaxy ok what happened with that kind of people

James Smith: Yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: What was there life

Dana Koellner: Yeah

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: What was there life how did they interact I have seen that it can give you more dreams about how the future will be because they the view that we have is from a military point of view

Dana Koellner: There's one in *Deep Space 9* where its Sisko's dad owns the café and you get a couple of episodes

James Smith: Oh home front

Dana Koellner: Home front yeah you get a couple of glimpses

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: But only just uh

Dana Koellner: Yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Just glimpses from uh other uh point of view and not *Deep Space 9* probably has more

James Smith: Yeah

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Episodes that that just give you a view from other cultures for example for the Ferenghi or from other point of view but not most of the view that we have for for the future is from the (inaudible)

Simon Hosie: I think that's the limitation like he was saying of making something exciting I remember having to read from my English degree here Middlemarch I don't know if anyone's read here and I apologise if it's anyone's favourite book but quite frankly it's (makes a gesture)

James Smith: (laughter)

Simon Hosie: It's one of those books do you know why cause it's about and it's one of those things (inaudible) oh it's an authentic depiction of life in an English country town in the 18th Century and that's fine it's true it's a very authentic position but um

James Smith: (inaudible)

(Laughter)

James Smith: Like in um

Hayley Alessi: I'm (inaudible) probably the English teacher stood around a table so I'll just bite my tongue

(Laughter)

Simon Hosie: But it's like the fact of the matter is life in an English country town whereas life on a space station is quite

Dana Koellner: Exciting

Simon Hosie: But fair point

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yeah but I I don't think you need to to make that boring you can I mean that you can get find a kind of character that can just give you appeal it's not the military view of the war

Simon Hosie: I think that's the first that's been for me the thing about *Star Trek* is it's not the military it's not Star Fleet an organisation of people but it's no different for me like I

associated I've always associated Star Fleet not with the navy or with the you know the army but actually with more like the NHS or the fire department or or it's you know they're doing they're civil servants until they don't and actually that's the reason why um um you know that the reason why *Deep Space 9* is so different

55:00

Simon Hosie: Cause actually *Deep Space 9* is the point which you actually go oh how do we deal with our proper full blown

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Mmm yeah but for example you take the er er for um for example you could use the point of view from the Maquis

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: You know from the Maquis

Dana Koellner: Hmmhmm

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: They they that's plenty of adventure (inaudible)

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea right

Simon Hosie: And they're not ordinary people they're not ordinary people

X: Yea the rebels

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Well they're not ordinary people there people that don't belong don't belong to the to the (inaudible)

(inaudible overlapping)

Hayley Alessi: Outside the establishment is what

(inaudible overlapping)

Simon Hosie: Fair enough that's ok I thought you meant yea no ok

James Smith: There's actually an episode sorry I'll I'll there's an episode of *Deep Space 9* I can't remember its name ah where one of Sisko's officers betrays and he's a Maquis

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yes

James Smith: And Sisko gets obsessed and it's it's they refer to a book

Simon Hosie: It's Les Miserable it refers to the

James Smith: Yea

Simon Clough: It's something like a loaf of bread

James Smith: Yea

Dana Koellner: Oh yea

James Smith: Jevent

Dana Koellner: Yea Jevent yea

James Smith: And anyway Sisko cannot deal with the fact that this person has got different values to him and he basically hunts him down and he continues to hunt him down at the risk of his own crew just to capture this eh this person

Dana Koellner: Yeah

James Smith: And I think that's interesting it's kind of you know going back to what I said before yea you can join our club provided you do what we do and so what we say

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: But we see most of the time we see only the beautiful things of the Federation

Christina Stimson: Yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So it's only in *Deep Space 9* is where I see the dark side and and whole the future is not as nice as they just try to to show

James Smith: Yea

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: So for that reason I would like see more (inaudible) from the *Star Trek* universe

Hayley Alessi: And other people trying to exist in

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Other people yes

Hayley Alessi: In in that society kind of thing isn't it

Simon Hosie: I mean for me that that's (inaudible)

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Simon Hosie: For me I wouldn't want to see it cause because if I wanted that I would personally go to watch something like *Firefly* where you have that aspect and that's fantastic

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea that's great

(laughter)

Simon Hosie: But for me I wouldn't want to see this kind of gritty like we are talking someone mentioned the *CSI*

James Smith: *Star Trek*

Simon Hosie: And I wouldn't wanna see that *Star Trek* because the more you get into the nitty gritty the more you go actually life is difficult and hard the harder I think the further away and you get away from this Utopian actually life I don't think it says something

about humanity that we can't accept that actually maybe for 99% of people in the Federation life is perfect that actually they are I feel for me that it says something about us that we can't accept that we have to see what's we have to see what's wrong with the Federation to enjoy it that we can't I mean not to say that not umm (inaudible) I wouldn't for me I would never want to see a *Star Trek* with CSI cause I'm like no like this is happy you know um if I wanted to see the corrupt Federation I'll watch *Serenity*

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: No like I didn't mean to say that they are corrupt (inaudible) just say something that for me will look more real because ah the view that I've seen from the *Star Trek* at least from the beginning and for the first two series is um too good is ahh ahh I don't think that realist topic in science fiction serial but this series in which everything is too good so it at that point I feel sometimes that it's not maybe you feel like this could not be real because

Dana Koellner: It can't be real because it's too good is that what I heard

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yes too good for some things I I find sometimes this too good it looks real

X: The organisation is too good or the whole group of all the planets in the Federation is too good

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Ahh probably (inaudible)

Hayley Alessi: You mean the depiction of life because Utopianism isn't real and we are realistic so we kind of wanna see the gritty side because Utopia don't necessarily work

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue: Yes yes

X: I don't think that's the case

Simon Clough: I think that was what was good about *Voyager* but it actually explored um how the *Raven* ended up being scuttled by the Borg in terms of traveling through space all alone even more alone than what *Voyager* was

James Smith: Hmmm

Simon Clough: And that sort of that back story to that where you've got a small family just on their own in the middle of nowhere

Simon Hosie: I think I have to say that was horrendously irresponsible parents

(laughter)

Furaha Florence Asani: Can I just say something quickly cause I um have to run off is that I find it very interesting that umm the point that I was bringing to the table was the whole thing about tolerance

Kevin Bertazzon: Right

Furaha Florence Asani: Umm looking at it you having started watching as a child you know that's the picture that I always got and now I do agree that that it may be better to change that word and something else is that honestly I had never thought about the point that you brought up about poking and prodding other civilisations and I want to bring a term from the current urban dictionary which is 'Columbusing'

Hayley Alessi: Yea

(laughter)

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea

Furaha Florence Asani: You know now I'm thinking about yea actually I thought would be really cool to be a part of the Federation and lets go and explore and discover but not everybody wants to be discovered

Hayley Alessi: Discovered that's the point

Christina Stimson: Dea

Furaha Florence Asani: Not everybody wants to be so so it is so true that on the one hand where like yea our lives are perfect and we're going space but at the same time there has to be (audio breaks) but um people out there as you said

Christina Stimson: Yea

Furaha Florence Asani: So it's really interesting to me because honestly I had not really said it as (audio breaks) joined the Federation why not you know we're so great so there's that limitation cause yea so that's a very interesting point

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea

Furaha Florence Asani: Yea

James Smith: Just

Dana Koellner: Thank you for joining us would you be interested in hearing about another if we did have it

Furaha Florence Asani: Yes please

Dana Koellner: Oh that would be great that would be great

Dana Koellner: Columbasi

Furaha Florence Asani: Columbusing

Dana Koellner: Columbusing

Hayley Alessi: That's what it's called

James Smith: I've never heard that term

Furaha Florence Asani: You will find out that it's come up a lot especially in the US within the past 3 years

Dana Koellner: I'd imagine so

Hayley Alessi: It's like something doesn't exist (inaudible)

James Smith: Ok I like that

Simon Hosie: (inaudible) Sorry I really need to get some food

Dana Koellner: No worries no worries thanks for coming and thank you for contributing

Simon Hosie: But I feel that's a trope in and of itself

Christina Stimson: You know for the next one if you could give me like a theme so I can make sure like I watch a particular series or something

Dana Koellner: I can do I can do I think I just wanted to see what our initial thoughts were and then kind of maybe tailor it down from there but thank you for coming very much so

Simon Hosie: It's fine

Kevin Bertazzon: Yea thanks really thanks

Dana Koellner: I really appreciate it Columbusing that's my new word

Hayley Alessi: It's like America didn't exist till he found it

Furaha Florence Asani: Yea

Dana Koellner: Right right

Hayley Alessi: Nobody exists till they're discovered the fact that those people living there for centuries before doesn't matter

Dana Koellner: Can we not go to this place

(laughter)

James Smith: Just touching onto what we were talking about before uh there's a couple episodes of Babylon 5 that do just that they take the viewpoint from I think one of them well one of the entire episodes is about a workers dispute about dock workers so there's no kind of explosions or aliens or anything it's just about these people striking for better wages the other one I think is called a view from the gallery and its two maintenance workers who are just look at the action and we follow them around and you see the kind of main characters running past and I agree you probably wouldn't want to watch and entire season of maintenance workers

Simon Hosie: It works it works really well though to have the episode where you go

James Smith: Yea

Simon Hosie: This is the guy

James Smith: Who cleans the toilets on Babylon 5 or whatever

Simon Hosie: Yea no I remember

James Smith: (laughs)

Simon Hosie: But I also like but I always feel like talking Utiopian futures I like how they solve that labour dispute which is the guys telling you you must solve this labour dispute by (inaudible) and he goes alright you can have your basic wage conditions and pay you know that's how he solves the whole dispute

James Smith: (laughs) That's when (audio stops)

Appendix 1.3**Audio CD of *Star Trek* Discussion Group Case Study One****Readable on PC, MAC and CD Player****AIFF File**

Appendix 1.4

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to the *Star Trek* Discussion Group. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Hayley Alessi

Furaha Florence Asani

Kevin Bertazzon

Simon Clough

Simon Hosie

Mina Nielsen

Alejandro Perez-de-Lugue

James Smith

Christina Stimson

Appendix 2.1

Case Study 2: Methodology Workshop Considering Greed Practice Plan, Script and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Set up slide presentation, tables and chairs
- 2) Introductions
- 3) Read through consent form and ask for questions
- 4) Ask participants to leave the room and put on Slide #1 *The Free World Charter* excerpt
- 5) Put out pens and questionnaires in front of chairs, stand in tableau position and ask for participants to re-enter
- 6) Completion of tableau questionnaire (10 minutes), and collect back in (take a photograph of tableau)
- 7) Discuss aims of the session. Go through slides using the following script and instructions for Games 1-3
- 8) Feedback discussion (30 minutes)

Timetable

Initial tableau writing: 10 minutes

Explaining part of my PhD: 10 minutes

Explaining the rules and any questions: 5 minutes

Game 1: 10 minutes

Game 2: 20 minutes

Game 3: 20 minutes

Feedback Session: 30 minutes

Supplies Needed

Tableau questions

Game questions

Pens

Coins

PowerPoint with collected slides

Bell

Rationale

The concept of greed as a block to imagining more positive futures was the theme which provoked the most conversation in the *Star Trek* discussion group. I decided to concentrate on the greed theme for further exploration, in addition to a methodological approach. I wanted to explore whether private contemplation through an image or text inspired more thought or feelings about the future through introspective reflection or whether engagement within group activity was more thought provoking about the future or stimulating for imagining. This concerned a methodological process about the power of imagining singularly or within groups. I then devised two experiments: the first was a tableau set against a piece of text and the second was comprised of three short games exploring the ramifications of greed as viewed by the individual within a group setting. The tableau was staged by myself under a projected excerpt from *The Free World Charter*.²⁷⁴ The text was chosen for its focus on the concept of greed and individual rights in a post-scarcity society.²⁷⁵ The games used the theme of greed to examine the process of imagining in groups collectively.

²⁷⁴ Turner, *The Free World Charter*.

²⁷⁵ I acknowledge that presenting a piece of material that discusses positive alternate future outcomes is complex and inherently complicated. However, I wanted to present a piece of material that was 'relatively' positive and

Session Script

INTRODUCTION:

Slide 2: Future Imagining: The Rise of Imagination and Application to Political Theatre

Slide 3: Can performance evoke/anticipate the future? How might it do so? By what means can theatre speculate, predict, conceptualise or otherwise open up a future space?

– From Symposium on Imagination by Terry O’Connor/Tim Etchells/Francis Babbage

‘So, my research interest started during my MA when I gave an oral presentation entitled:

“Fragment of the Future: A Possible New Form for Positive Political Theatre.” The presentation was in response to what I perceived as a continual dispiriting re-presentation of current politics in theatre. It briefly examined the concept of “invitation” to evoke imagination through future-tense or positive/open-ended word fragments. The purpose of this was to begin examining performance strategies that initiated a forum for considering individual desires of collective future potential. This theoretical model used the concepts of inspiration and imagination as tools for constructive creative innovation toward new political expression.

This initial work was derived from an examination of two contemporary pieces, Chris Burden’s *Send Me Your Money* and A. Smith’s *All that is Solid Melts into Air*. And then there was this symposium (did anyone attend this? If so I would love to have a conversation about it). So, I decided to carry on with my original interest in how theatre can possibly influence the future. The first step of this is to discover what, as a group, are some of our collective

distinctly *not* dystopian in its ideas, tone and language to address some of the greed concepts from the previous session.

ideas about the future. So, to begin this, I held a Star Trek discussion group three weeks ago.’

Slide 4:

*The best way to predict the future is to invent it. — Alan Kay*²⁷⁶

‘The purpose of this was to provide a frame in order to begin to identify what desires this certain group had of the future. Three broad topics emerged from the discussion: Greed, education, and a broader question implying how our society will function if there is not some form of trade or remuneration for doing the least desirable functions or jobs within our society... the end question was “Who is going to clean the toilets?”’.

Some of you know that I am also studying LARP. I will be eventually using some of the techniques of LARP in a later process. However, at this point, I think it is prudent to think about the larger function of my methodology. My methodology question has to do with the effectiveness of altering consciousness through either participating in the process to problem solve or to see/enact/inhabit the possible result of change. In other words, to explore what a particular concept means with an audience, the influence it has verses what the possible result of change which can be through positive modelling to open up a tangible experience of an alternate future outcome.

What you are going to experience today is not necessarily the forms of practise I will be using but this is to set up feedback on the possible methodology that I may pick...

I have devised some rather simple games... So, in order to achieve this, today I would like to explore the topic of greed in a series of very small gaming exercises aimed at exploring ways

²⁷⁶ Wikiquotes, ‘Alan Kay’, <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Alan_Kay> [accessed 12 August 2017].

of determining a methodology toward performance.’

Slide 5: **Game #1** Slides 6-38 (images can be used from a source such as Creative Commons, any images chosen are appropriate and can be changed to suit)

‘This is a Game. The rules of the game are: You will be shown a series of images. Go to the right side of the room if you want this item. Go to the left side if you Don’t Want this item.’

Images of:	NHS logo	a vacation to ____
	Private Health Care logo	a vacation to ____
a home	A suit	an electric bill
a mansion	A dress	a dog
a terraced property	money in bank account	a cat
a communal property	a fur coat	a piece of land
a car	a cake	a credit card
an electric car	an iPhone	a degree
a lawn mower	an iPad	a plane
a Gucci bag	a new computer	a boat
a pair of sunglasses	a printer	a bank account balance
a dinner out	a washing machine/dryer	a bigger account balance

Slide 39: **Game #2** The following slides (images can be used from a source such as creative commons, any images chosen are appropriate and can be changed to suit)

‘This is a Game. The rules of the game are: you can only answer yes or no to the question.’

Show Slides and ask for each slide: Is it greedy to want this?

Slides 40-56

a washing machine

a group of friends

NHS spending

a vacation

a computer

a dress

an electric bill

a farm

a credit card

a luxury jet

a printer

a diploma

a yacht

a houseboat

a handbag

a savings statement

After all slides have been presented, ask for a discussion on the following questions:

What is greed based on what we have delineated from the slides? What do the images address in terms of how we currently perceive greed? How much is enough?

Slide 57 Game #3 Show next Slides 58-68 (images can be used from a source such as Creative Commons, any images chosen are appropriate and can be changed to suit)

‘This is a Game. The rules of the game are:

I need one person to act as Facilitator. They may only ask a question or summarise the answer, they may not add their opinions to any commentary.

I need one more person (or use the Facilitator if not enough participants):

(Tell the person privately) The Dispenser: dispense the coin to the person if you think the answer represents an influence of greed on society.

The rest of the participants are to play the audience, the audience can answer the questions put forward or ask additional questions. All responses may only last for up to 3 minutes. There will be a bell that sounds, signalling when the 3 minutes are up and we will move on to the next slide. You will receive a coin for certain answers to the questions. The coins will be collected at the end of the game.’

~~(CUT THIS) Observer group: records what they feel and understand about the game.~~

~~Which was more enjoyable? Which was more informative? Which did you prefer; the experience of the tableau or the experience of the game?~~

Slide 58 (Privatization of the NHS)

Do you think the future of healthcare should be a global healthcare system, a nationwide based healthcare system or privatised healthcare?

Slide 59 (Austerity conflict)

‘In economics, **austerity** is the policy of reducing government budget deficits during times of economic recession. **Austerity** policies may include spending cuts, tax increases, or a mixture of both.²⁷⁷ In the future who could possibly decide what type of cuts could be made to welfare programs other than the government?’

Slide 60 (Artist Copyright Infringement)

Is it greedy for artists to want to deny their art or ideas to others?

Slide 61 (Greed)

What is a luxurious life? Is luxury greed?

Slide 62 (Positives of Capitalism?)

Mankind will always want something else, something more. Is it human nature to want what others have?

Slide 63 (Law-making)

Is it possible to separate money and law making?

Slide 64 (Property)

Can you own property and not fear it being taken by the government for the benefit of all?

²⁷⁷ Wikipedia, ‘Austerity’, <<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Austerity&oldid=651135329>> [accessed on 1 March 2015].

Slide 65 (Fear)

How do you change the perception of people from fear to compassion?

Slide 66 (Healthcare as a Right)

Is health care a human right?

Slide 67 (Environmentalism)

There is definitely enough money to solve this issue, why don't we?

Slide 68 (Evolution)

Does capitalism stop evolution?

GROUP DISCUSSION PROMPTS:

How did you feel when you received a coin? Did it make you feel that you answered the question right or wrong? Did you want more coins? For what reason?

So, based on this game, what were the outcomes?

~~Cut this: ADDITIONAL:~~

~~Stage two of the outcomes, using a tableau. What solutions can you think of in reference to some of these issues would be? Discuss with the group. What did you feel when you entered the room & saw the tableaux? What do you think about the tableaux?~~

~~Record what you think about the tableaux, what do they mean?~~

Slide 69 - Bibliography

Post-Discussion Notes

I asked the following questions in the feedback session:

What worked well?

What didn't?

Which was more impactful?

There was a lively discussion in the feedback session around the topics, and the participants were able to respond to the questions throughout. The games section, testing whether future imagining was easier in groups via personal experiences in the present, was preferred. The whole group said that the game was more effective than the tableau. They said that they had more active mental engagement with the games, more so than with the personal reflection in the tableau. Some of the participants expressed that the engagement in the tableau portion was inspiring and might be effective in circumventing certain feelings of hopelessness in imagining. However, there was still a preference for imagining within groups. Finding agreement felt proactive to the participants, stimulating awareness and mindfulness around the topic which also helped to counter the feeling of hopelessness which greed inspired. Solidarity seemed to alleviate some of the anxieties expressed concerning the hopelessness of advancing beyond the need for greed.

Revised Goals

- Initial points of agreement through self-expression and dialogue seemed to serve as a counter-balance to some of the hopelessness or futility issues concerning greed
- Explore some of Candy's principles in creating a future immersive space and respond to some of the issues of greed
- Tackle the physical immersive environment
- Keep costs low
- Base test on elements of Candy's principles and design fiction

Appendix 2.2

Case Study Two: Text Excerpt from *The Free World Charter* by Colin R. Turner and Tableau Photo

1. The highest concern of humanity is the combined common good of all living species and biosphere.
2. Life is precious in all its forms, and free to flourish in the combined common good.
3. Earth's natural resources are the birthright of all its inhabitants, and free to share in the combined common good.
4. Every human being is an equal part of a worldwide community of humans, and a free citizen of Earth.
5. Our community is founded on the spirit of cooperation and an understanding of nature, provided through basic education.
6. Our community provides for all its members the necessities of a healthy, fulfilling and sustainable life, freely and without obligation.
7. Our community respects the limits of nature and its resources, ensuring minimal consumption and waste.
8. Our community derives its solutions and advances progress primarily through the application of logic and best available knowledge.
9. Our community acknowledges its duty of care and compassion for members who are unable to contribute.
10. Our community acknowledges its responsibility to maintain a diverse and sustainable biosphere for all future life to enjoy.²⁷⁸

Figure 5 Tableau with *The Free World Charter* excerpt of text on the rear projection screen (Photo Permission Dana Koellner)



²⁷⁸ Colin Turner, *The Free World Charter*, < <http://www.freeworldcharter.org/en> > [accessed 15 August 2017].

Appendix 2.3
Slide Presentation: Tableau and Games 1, 2 and 3

Appendix 2.3

Slide Presentation: Tableau and Games 1, 2 and 3

1. The highest concern of humanity is the combined common good of all living species and biosphere.
2. Life is precious in all its forms, and free to flourish in the combined common good.
3. Earth's natural resources are the birthright of all its inhabitants, and free to share in the combined common good.
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8. Our community derives its solutions and advances progress primarily through the application of logic and best available knowledge.
9. Our community acknowledges its duty of care and compassion for members who are unable to contribute.
10. Our community acknowledges its responsibility to maintain a diverse and sustainable biosphere for all future life to enjoy.

• Taken from *The Free World Charter*¹
• <http://www.freeworldcharter.org/en/charter>

**Future Imagining:
The Rise of Imagination and Application
to Political Theatre**

Can performance evoke/anticipate the future? How might it do so? By what means can theatre speculate, predict, conceptualize or otherwise open up a future space?

– From Symposium on Imagination by Francis Babbage, Terry O'Connor and Tim Etchells²

The best way to predict the future is to invent it. - Alan Kay³

Game 1

Insert Images of:	NHS logo	a vacation
a home	Private Health Care logo	an electric bill
a mansion	A suit	a dog
a terraced property	A dress	a cat
a communal property	money in bank account	a piece of land
a car	a fur coat	a credit card
an electric car	a cake	a degree
a lawn mower	an iphone	a plane
a gucci bag	an ipad	a boat
a pair of sunglasses	a new computer	a bank account balance
a dinner out	a printer	a bigger bank account balance
	a washing machine/dryer	

Game 2

Insert Images of:

a printer	a washing machine
a diploma	a group of friends
a yacht	NHS spending
a houseboat	a vacation
a handbag	a computer
a savings statement	a dress
	an electric bill
	a farm
	a credit card
	a luxury jet

Game 3

Insert Images of: Environmentalism

Privatisation of the NHS Evolution

Austerity conflict

NHS spending

Artists copyright infringement

Greed

Positives of Capitalism?

Lawmakers

Property

Fear

Healthcare as a Right

Bibliography

- 1 Turner, Colin R., *The Free World Charter*, < <http://www.freeworldcharter.org/en>> [access ed 15 August 2017]
- 2 Frances Babbage, Tim Etchells and Terry O'Connor, 'The Imagination Symposium', at The University of Sheffield October 4, 2013
- 3 Alan Kay, *Alan Kay (1971) at a 1971 meeting of PARC*, *wikiquotes*, <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Alan_Kay> [accessed 12 August 2017]

Appendix 2.4

Tableau Questionnaire Participant Responses

Appendix 2.4 Tableau Questionnaire Participant 1 Response

Terra Incognita
Dana's Workshop
March 19, 2015

Questionnaire 1

1. What do you think these tableaus physically represent?

- ① Danger threat
- ② Positivity
- ③ Openness
- ④ supplication

2. What meaning might be associated with these images?

A need to think and to question -
and to change.

2. What feeling (if any) do you receive from them?

Questioning.
Fear.
Wonder.
Possibility.

Appendix 2.4 Tableau Questionnaire Participant 2 Response

Terra Incognita
Dana's Workshop
March 19, 2015

Questionnaire 1

1. What do you think these tableaus physically represent?

openness and receptiveness / readiness and firmness of purpose

2. What meaning might be associated with these images?

as above - that the person/community is ready, open
and has a firmness of purpose or a clear goal
The tableau + the text work together.

2. What feeling (if any) do you receive from them?

I am welcomed but also challenged by them.

Appendix 2.4 Tableau Questionnaire Participant 3 Response

Terra Incognita
Dana's Workshop
March 19, 2015

Questionnaire 1

1. What do you think these tableaus physically represent?

Religious/spiritual practice
test wing political core values
Community

2. What meaning might be associated with these images?

Love, community + shared ~~mean~~ values.

Support of the individual + community

Family values in macro-civilisation

2. What feeling (if any) do you receive from them?

Hope

Appendix 2.4 Tableau Questionnaire Participant 4 Response

Terra Incognita
Dana's Workshop
March 19, 2015

Questionnaire 1

1. What do you think these tableaus physically represent?

The idea of a self-sustaining and fair society.
The image seems to either show welcoming
with open arms or embracing our equality.

2. What meaning might be associated with these images?

2. What feeling (if any) do you receive from them?

An agreement and acknowledging that we should
be united as a progressive species on our Earth to sustain
life in a fair way.

Appendix 2.5

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to the Methodology Workshop *Considering Greed*. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Participant 1 X

Participant 2 Bridie Moore

Participant 3 Joseph Thompson

Participant 4 Oliver Harnett

Appendix 3.1

Case Study Three: The Free Shop Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Research post-scarcity and decide the role to take on during the workshop (e.g. shop keeper, 'shopper,' facilitator)
- 2) Acquire space
- 3) Acquire goods for shop
- 4) Make and distribute flyers or info pamphlets (how to frame the content and amount of information needed)
- 5) Plan audience waiting room and entering shop
- 6) Consent forms and questions
- 7) Feedback session with questionnaires

Rationale

In a continuation of the greed theme and in order to begin exploring some of Candy's principles, I desired to make a show that might provide the experience of a post-scarcity future. This workshop would test the concept behind an immersive physical experience of a post-scarcity or post-capitalist future space and the mechanics of the concept including time and language cues in preparation and as a shakedown for the performance to follow. My task was to create a plausible, realistic representation of a post-scarcity experience within a space in a believable fashion. I intended to draw on the work of Candy, specifically by testing his principles within the concept. I also intended some similarity to Tim Etchell's work concerning the use of language to trigger future imagining. I needed to know what kind of

time cue, or how much of a time cue might be needed to trigger an imagined future space as a result of the workshop. My aim, here, was to transpose time in a physical sense by setting up a physical location and providing an indicative time cue from the information provided on the flyers to see how the participants would interpret the experience. I wanted to ask the participants to imagine this new world through a scenario triggered by physical representation and language. The workshop was set up to test the mechanics of the physical experience of post-scarcity in preparation for the upcoming public performance and also to obtain feedback that I will not receive during the actual performance to the public. I wanted to remove any type of 'theatrical representation' and create a realistic future atmosphere that would be plausible from the present time for the upcoming performance. I anticipated that the challenges to creating a 'real' environment would be difficult and I wanted this method to be used without significant financial resources which could be easily constructed by any performer at any time. I needed a space that would serve the idea without extensive modification. The items within the shop needed to cost very little. Additionally, the items within needed to be familiar to an audience to a certain extent, as pointed out by Candy.

Session Notes

I solicited my department for donations for the experiment three weeks prior to the event. I donated my own property as well. I was very familiar with the room and building that I was to use for the workshop. I removed all unnecessary items from the space and began to set up the room to resemble what might look like a contemporary charity shop. I placed the donations around the room on tables, shelves and on a clothing rack, attempting to replicate a charity shop as best I could. I set out the flyers and the consent forms to be read in the kitchen prior to the event. Everything was ready by 5pm.

There was a large sign that I placed in the shop at the last minute that read: ‘Welcome to the Free Shop! Everything you want is free, take whatever you want. If you have any questions, see the lady behind the counter.’ I then went back to the kitchen and the participants began to ask me about post-scarcity from the flyer. I was caught off guard and tried to explain the idea of post-scarcity without giving too much away. This was difficult and unexpected. Once they all arrived, I explained the consent form and asked whether there were any questions. I then said that I would take two participants at a time as there were four in total. I brought two groups of attendees consisting of two people per group into the room each time.

Immediately, Participants 1 and 2 started to look around the shop. I sat behind one of the tables. They began inspecting the items like a regular shopping experience. Participant 1 began asking me questions about a post-scarcity world. Participant 1 viewed the experience as a future theatrical representation of the space. She thought that the shop represented a shop ‘of the future’ rather than an experience in the present time. I was quite amazed by her interpretation and responded to her questions without affirming or denying that we were supposed to be in the ‘now’ or the ‘future’. I gave her facts from the research literature that have been stated about the future world, such as ‘There is free energy for all people, for anything that you need.’

After they had selected a few items, it was apparent that they did not know how to exit the shop. I asked if they would be willing to fill out a questionnaire but this felt as if it was breaking my rule of ‘no exchange’ which was counter to the concept of a post-scarcity environment. I then led them to another room where the questionnaires were laid out on the tables and they began filling them out.

I led Group 2 into The Free Shop with the same instructions. Participants 3 and 4 did not ask any questions about post-scarcity, only about the purpose of certain items. As before, when the participants looked as though they had finished browsing, I asked them if they would fill out a questionnaire and escorted them into another room. I gave them approximately 10 minutes to fill out the form and then came back in for a discussion.

Post-Discussion Notes

The conversation began with me asking the participants generally about their experience of The Free Shop. Responses were: ‘thought provoking,’ ‘made me think,’ ‘I felt guilty about taking things that others might need more than me,’ ‘I really wanted to take more of the glasses, but felt guilty,’ ‘I wanted to take the large pot, but didn’t know if someone else might have wanted it,’ ‘It made me think if I really needed the item.’ Additionally, there were comments concerning the value of items: ‘It made me think about the money value, if I was in a charity shop and I saw an item for 50p, I would think it was a good deal and would buy it, here I asked myself if I really wanted the item and I didn’t value it as much as it wasn’t a bargain.’

I recounted my surprise at Participant 1’s interpretation of the space as representative of future time rather than the present. This was followed by comments of the label of ‘theatre,’ which leant itself to suspend her disbelief and a type of representative experience rather than a literal event in the present time. The participant called this ‘Theatre Mode’. The label of ‘theatre workshop or theatre mode’ acted as a space for imagining rather than as a space of reality. I wanted to see if this experience would have had an effect in ‘the real’ to gauge how much the role of imagination in a theatrical sense influenced the experience and whether the results would be the same or similar in a more realistically immersive space. This

will be tested in the actual performance of The Free Shop on the 12th. The context of a workshop implied the 'theatre mode'. As a result of this session, I wondered whether the event being held at Bank Street Arts Centre will also imply a label of 'theatre'. This is a significant consideration as I continue with practice and methodology, as this label seems to provide a space for imagination more than a reality-based event.

Revised Actions to create The Free Shop

- Research post-scarcity and decide what role you wish to take on during the workshop (e.g. shop keeper, 'shopper,' facilitator). Consider how much you want the audience to know beforehand and during (i.e. how will you answer their questions during the session?)
- Be clear about the time parameter/language you wish to use
- Acquire space
- Acquire goods for shop
- Make and distribute flyers or info pamphlets (how to frame the content and amount of information needed, decide on present or future representation)
- Plan audience waiting room and strategies for entering and exiting the shop
- Discussion session

Revised Goals

- To test the environment fully in relation to the performance concept
- Does the public performance achieve the same results?

Appendix 3.2 The Free Shop Flyer

FRONT

BACK

The Free Shop

Come experience a
Post-Scarcity World!

**EVERYTHING IS FREE!
TAKE WHAT YOU
WANT!**

**No Money, No
Donations.... Simply
experience for a brief
moment, what it would
be like to live in a world
without money.**

Bank Street Arts

32-40 Bank Street, Sheffield, South
Yorkshire S1 2DS

Saturday December 12

12:30pm-4:30pm

A Post-Scarcity World

***The Free Shop is a space to
experience a Post-Scarcity
world.***

***We have enough money,
enough time, enough
resources, enough
technology, enough free
energy to feed, clad, house,
educate and maintain the
health of everyone on the
planet.***

Our collective focus as a
capitalist society is outmoded
and dysfunctional. It is time to
realise that we have the ability,
will and the desire to transform
our world into a clean, green and
healthy environment, undoing
the damage of the past for all to
live in a better future.

Appendix 3.3 The Free Shop Sign

**WELCOME TO
THE FREE SHOP**

EVERYTHING IS FREE!

TAKE WHAT YOU WANT!

No Money, No Donations....

**Simply experience for a brief moment, what it would
be like to live in a world without money.**

Any questions, ask the lady

behind the table 😊

Appendix 3.4 The Free Shop Feedback Questionnaires

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 1

The Free Shop

Workshop feedback – 26/11/15

Thank you for taking part in the workshop today. I would really appreciate any feedback that you have in order to help me to develop future workshops. Your responses may be quoted anonymously in research papers, publications and public presentations given by the researcher, Dana Koellner. By leaving responses on this questionnaire you are agreeing to let your comments be used in the ways outlined above. Many thanks for your participation and contributions.

1. Describe your experience of the Free Shop.

I looked at the various objects, but ultimately choose not to take anything. It was interesting to see the range of objects – fun to browse.

2. How did you feel during your experience?

I wasn't too sure what I was supposed to be doing. The instruction was clear, but I wasn't sure if I had to take something and I didn't want to take anything just for the sake of it.

3. On a scale from 1-10, how comfortable were you at the shop in relation to having any object you wanted?

(1 being extremely uncomfortable and 10 comfortable)

8. I felt comfortable that I could take anything, but unsure whether I had to take something.

4. If you were uncomfortable in any way, can you describe why?

I wasn't sure if when I picked something (or didn't) this would trigger something else to happen.

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 1

5. Were there any ideas or issues that struck you particularly during the experience?

It was an unusual situation to be in.

I picked up an item near the start - the very first thing I picked up and I liked it, but put it back ~~then~~ as it was the first thing. When this item was chosen by another 'shopper' - then I really wanted it. ~~And~~ regretted not taking it. So although I could take anything the items here still limited.

6. Did you feel that you needed more information about Post-Scarcity or that the project should have more context concerning Post-Scarcity? Or did you enjoy the experience without context?

We had some discussion prior to starting about post-capitalism, which put this experience into that context. I think I would like more context, but maybe after the experience, rather than prior. Maybe some sort of second stage which asks participants to respond to Ben's question.

7. Did you ponder at any point during or after, what a world would be like if everything was free?

Not at the time. At the time, I was thinking about my role (choosing/not choosing) an item. Now that I am being asked the question it is making me think about this. My mind is hitting a barrier with this concept, ~~which seems hard to think~~ as though it just seems impossible.

8. Did this make you think about the future in any way? If so how?

It made me think about the past and the ~~context~~ experiences that I have had in charity shops, at bric-a-brac stalls and junk shops - where you find surprising things. This gave a stepping

9. Anything other comments or feedback?

Stone to look to the future.

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 2

The Free Shop

Workshop feedback – 26/11/15

Thank you for taking part in the workshop today. I would really appreciate any feedback that you have in order to help me to develop future workshops. Your responses may be quoted anonymously in research papers, publications and public presentations given by the researcher, Dana Koellner. By leaving responses on this questionnaire you are agreeing to let your comments be used in the ways outlined above. Many thanks for your participation and contributions.

1. Describe your experience of the Free Shop.

Pleasant. I enjoy junk-shop browsing, so it felt familiar.

2. How did you feel during your experience?

I liked looking at the objects, and considering if I would want them. Interesting to find that without prices it was harder to gauge exactly how much I wanted any particular item. I probably normally measure my interest against the price, and see if the ratio seems worth it. This way the notion of a bargain →

3. On a scale from 1-10, how comfortable were you at the shop in relation to having any object you wanted?

(1 being extremely uncomfortable and 10 comfortable)

6/7

↳ sort-of evaporates.

4. If you were uncomfortable in any way, can you describe why?

Afraid of seeming greedy^{0.5}. I could use some more wineglasses, but how would it look if I took them all?

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 2

5. Were there any ideas or issues that struck you particularly during the experience?

See 2 and 4.

6. Did you feel that you needed more information about Post-Scarcity or that the project should have more context concerning Post-Scarcity? Or did you enjoy the experience without context?

Not sure. I think it would be quite different if there were 'post-scarcity' slogans on the walls... it would become more of an exhibit and perhaps less of an experience.

7. Did you ponder at any point during or after, what a world would be like if everything was free?

Yes. It would certainly alter my relationship to things.

8. Did this make you think about the future in any way? If so how?

Perhaps there really is enough to go around...

9. Any ~~thing~~ other comments or feedback?

The Free Shop
Workshop feedback – 26/11/15

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 3

Thank you for taking part in the workshop today. I would really appreciate any feedback that you have in order to help me to develop future workshops. Your responses may be quoted anonymously in research papers, publications and public presentations given by the researcher, Dana Koellner. By leaving responses on this questionnaire you are agreeing to let your comments be used in the ways outlined above. Many thanks for your participation and contributions.

1. Describe your experience of the Free Shop.

At first I didn't appreciate that we were able to keep items from the free shop that it wasn't just a theatrical performance. But also in another way it made me aware of how different this sharing world would be.

2. How did you feel during your experience?

At first hesitant to take anything for free — as in contemporary world that would be shop-lifting. Also ^{paradoxically} instinctively thought ^{in the} post-scarcity world things would be scarce when in fact Dana pointed out things would be abundant.

3. On a scale from 1-10, how comfortable were you at the shop in relation to having any object you wanted?

(1 being extremely uncomfortable and 10 comfortable)

scale 3

At 3 Even @ the end I still feel uncomfortable about being given something for free. I suppose because in the present capitalist world everything is so hard won.

4. If you were uncomfortable in any way, can you describe why?

Being polite — thinking someone else may need things more — (when in fact in an abundant world no-one would need things more). Also still thinking in a 'theatrical' mode — that this was play — because in the present there are people who need things more. If I had accepted the 'conceit' maybe I would have taken the luxury big stainless steel pasta pan — because presumably everyone had one but I hadn't.

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 3

5. Were there any ideas or issues that struck you particularly during the experience?

I suppose the fact they were ^{simple / cheap} utility items affected the experience. Had there been more valuable luxury items I may not have been so hesitant. I was aware it was a theatrical experience & was having to think it two models.

6. Did you feel that you needed more information about Post-Scarcity or that the project should have more context concerning Post-Scarcity? Or did you enjoy the experience without context?

Yes. I did have to ask the assistant questions. The Real
The Unreal
Fantasy

7. Did you ponder at any point during or after, what a world would be like if everything was free?

Yes - I feel an essay coming ~~on~~ on, & will probably go home thinking about it. Very thought provoking.

8. Did this make you think about the future in any way? If so how?

Of course. We are so used to having to work so hard for things it seems inconceivable that in future goods would flow freely.

9. Anything other comments or feedback?

It is interesting how this would affect desire, ideas about desire & possession. So much about wanting commodities is the fantasy of desire - & the richest or most rewarding part of wanting things is the excitement of exchange. Because our 'own' things desire is banished - The fantasy has gone. How would this affect culture - The arts - ^{particularly} poetry - The desire to be creative & creating desire?

The Free Shop

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 4

Workshop feedback – 26/11/15

Thank you for taking part in the workshop today. I would really appreciate any feedback that you have in order to help me to develop future workshops. Your responses may be quoted anonymously in research papers, publications and public presentations given by the researcher, Dana Koellner. By leaving responses on this questionnaire you are agreeing to let your comments be used in the ways outlined above. Many thanks for your participation and contributions.

1. Describe your experience of the Free Shop.

It was a little embarrassing as I took 3 items but was very aware that I hadn't donated anything and so wondered about my entitlement. I thought the ^{non-clothing} items were very interesting and mostly appealing however the clothing was for the most part quite worn looking and not my size so I didn't want to take any of those items.

2. How did you feel during your experience?
As you see from the above, I was quite embarrassed at the acquisition of items without being able to be a contributor as I'd forgotten to bring things from home to donate.

3. On a scale from 1-10, how comfortable were you at the shop in relation to having any object you wanted?

(1 being extremely uncomfortable and 10 comfortable)

about a 3.

4. If you were uncomfortable in any way, can you describe why?

I've explained this above but I think it's about entitlement, feeling a sense that you don't deserve what you're taking. I had to justify out loud my reasons behind why I'd allowed myself to take each item. The wineglass because I'd recently broken one just like it; the book because my son might like it and I'm trying to encourage him to keep reading. pro

- ~~was~~ the small box of matches because its always useful to have an emergency ~~source~~ source of fire....

5. Were there any ideas or issues that struck you particularly during the experience?

there
The shop had a slightly surreal feel - in that ~~there~~ were ~~was~~ a random selection of items that were quite incongruous together

Appendix 3.4 Feedback Questionnaire Participant 4

6. Did you feel that you needed more information about Post-Scarcity or that the project should have more context concerning Post-Scarcity? Or did you enjoy the experience without context?

It was nice to hear about post-Scarcity after the experience of the shop. It's interesting to come at the experience with a purely capitalistic head on

7. Did you ponder at any point during or after, what a world would be like if everything was free?

Yes - the idea of work comes into play then doesn't it - my questions were immediately then what would work be - would people need to work. I think we could do without everyone having structured ways of working apart from people who work

8. Did this make you think about the future in any way? If so how?

Yes - with respect to work → in hospitals the law
but also about the leisure time if war wasn't then a thing of the past)
that people might gain and the
Conventional structures that might ~~exist~~ then grow up

9. Anything other comments or feedback?

→ But I suspect that human nature (as we've been taught to think of it as quite negative and predatory) might come into play to find new ways to exploit the weak and to establish different hierarchies based on these new ways of thinking/acting.
around this new way of being - I don't know what then would be

Appendix 3.5

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to The Free Shop Workshop.

All participants are anonymised.

Appendix 4.1

Case Study Four: The Free Shop Performance Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Acquire location
- 2) Acquire items to be given away
- 3) Distribute flyer already created
- 4) Set up location
- 5) Make notes during session where possible and after session
- 6) Wrap up: collect remaining items and deliver to charity shop

Rationale

The Free Shop performance will follow the previous workshop in the same form but it will be open to the public and set in the venue of Bank Street Arts. From both the exterior and the interior, the location looks very much like a possible high street shop with a front window. I feel that I would be able to create a realistic appearance of a shop without major rental costs or aesthetic alteration. This event is an immersive performance concerning post-scarcity and I am looking for the results of the immersive performance environment and will compare them to the previous workshop experience.

Session Notes

I advertised The Free Shop performance for two weeks prior to the event via *Terra Incognita* emails, interdepartmental emails, social networks and flyers posted in several buildings on

campus. The performance was held at Bank Street Arts on the 12th of December 2015 (a Saturday), between 12–3pm. This time was changed from the original 12:30–4:30pm due to problems with another exhibit and space at Bank Street Arts, which I was only notified of the day before. Bank Street Arts is a community art house. The location of the event was a difficult building to find. The weather was terrible, with rain and cold temperatures across the entire day. I felt this must have contributed to a poor turn out. A volunteer from Bank Street Arts met me at the door and showed me the space I would be using. I had a volunteer from my department — a Masters student — who passed out the post-scarcity flyers before and during the event. The volunteer canvassed approximately one square mile and in the terrible weather. There was a total of 5 participants, consisting of a couple, a man, and two young people who worked at Bank Street Arts.

The man took a bracelet, a cafetiere and three items of clothing. The couple took a CD. The Bank Street workers took quite a bit of clothing, a new, large coffee maker, a large pot, some glasses, mugs and jewellery. The man was very grateful, asked no questions and politely thanked me for the items. The couple asked what the shop was; I explained that it was a performance installation piece related to the experience of a post-scarcity world, and that they could have any items they would like. They could not believe that the items were free and asked me twice, just to be sure. They appeared very tentative, inspecting only a few items. They were not speaking English, so I couldn't understand what they were commenting on between them as they walked through. The Bank Street workers were very curious about the shop and came through several times. They asked if they could participate and I assured them that they were welcome. One of the workers stated that the concept was a difficult one 'because usually other people donate things to you, you are not able to take items away.' I ended the performance at 3pm, thanked the volunteers and began packing up the remaining items, which I then donated to a local charity shop.

Post-Performance Notes

This performance scenario did not work for me. It was my impression that there was very little consideration of a future world in this performance from the brief interactions, though what the individuals ultimately thought, I will never know. It seemed that people were more concerned with obtaining something for free rather than reflecting on issues of resources and scarcity. There was one couple who I thought may have considered the concept of post-scarcity or might discuss it afterwards, but in this case, it would be impossible to tell what they might have thought or felt about the experience. The participants desired the interaction of conversation. I strongly felt that the concept of the performance was more appealing than the experience, and the dialogue created around the concept was perhaps more desirable than the experience in itself.

Revised Goals

- Imagining in groups
- Test how a LARP-like role play scenario might work in the context of imagining
- Test investment in imagining to compensate for providing a less physically immersive future environment within a performance concept

Appendix 4.2 The Free Shop Flyer

FRONT

The Free Shop

Come experience a
Post-Scarcity World!

**EVERYTHING IS FREE!
TAKE WHAT YOU
WANT!**

**No Money, No
Donations.... Simply
experience for a brief
moment, what it would
be like to live in a world
without money.**

Bank Street Arts

32-40 Bank Street, Sheffield, South
Yorkshire S1 2DS

Saturday December 12

12:30pm-4:30pm

BACK

A Post-Scarcity World

***The Free Shop is a space to
experience a Post-Scarcity
world.***

***We have enough money,
enough time, enough
resources, enough
technology, enough free
energy to feed, clad, house,
educate and maintain the
health of everyone on the
planet.***

Our collective focus as a
capitalist society is outmoded
and dysfunctional. It is time to
realise that we have the ability,
will and the desire to transform
our world into a clean, green and
healthy environment, undoing
the damage of the past for all to
live in a better future.

Appendix 5.1

Case Study Five: Greed and LARP Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Construct the role play character sheets
- 2) Construct the tableau slide and a futuristic art show slide presentation
- 3) Set up chairs, table, food, beverages
- 4) Set up PowerPoint presentation
- 5) Read through consent form and ask for questions
- 6) Put on Slide 1 and stage tableau
- 7) Hand out questionnaires and collect (5 mins)
- 8) Explain the role play exercise and have the participants fill out character sheets for role play game (5 mins)
- 9) Start future art show PowerPoint slides
- 10) Role play exercises
- 11) Hand out questionnaires and collect (5 mins)
- 12) Feedback discussion on session

Rationale

This workshop was created to attempt to measure the difference in effectiveness and engagement between individual imagination and active engagement through role play. My question involved whether one's imagination and the layers of thought or assigned meaning via an image or symbol or text was more or less powerful than engaging in a physical,

emotional and imagined exercise. I planned to use the same tableau with text exercise from Case Study Two and a modified LARP role play game.

Session Notes

I began the workshop by explaining the parameters, purpose, nature and scope of the workshop to the participants. I read through the consent form with the participants and asked if there were any questions, reminding them that at any point they could choose not to participate. There were 8 participants attending this workshop consisting of Performing Arts students of level 2 and 3 in Higher Education and one Performing Arts lecturer. The workshop consisted of two exercises or games, which were accompanied by a questionnaire form.

The first exercise consisted of the tableau pose with a statement projected behind, as in Case Study Two. The difference this time was that I added the line 'We are now in the year 2142' at the top of the slide, which indicated the future space. I added the line to stimulate the idea that we are 'in' or imagining a future space. I stood at the front of the group and made an open arm gesture, holding the gesture for five minutes with a projected piece of text behind me as they filled out the first questionnaire. Here, the power of creative assignment of meaning was being tested. This would be similar to the work of Tim Etchells and Terry O'Connor in the Imagination Symposium discussed in Section Three.

In the second exercise, the participants were given a 'character sheet'. This activity mimicked the start of role play in a LARP, where individuals create a character and form an association and identity in an imagined world. The questions on the form were designed to quickly engage the audience by creating an identity and to establish a meaning or attachment

to the world. The form was an attempt to see if their imagination engaged through an activity would provide a sense of being in the future more than the single act of imagining. This was followed by a role play activity. A slide show of futuristic art was presented and looped during the scenario accompanied by *hors d'oeuvres* and non-alcoholic drinks set up in the same room. The participants were told that they were at an art show set in 2142 and that the images used were representative and can be substituted for other images that reflect 'futuristic' art.

Participant 1 did not feel that the tableau/text was an experience of the future, as he/she felt that the text was too idealistic and this made it difficult or 'impossible' to experience. They felt they were 'transported' into the future in exercise 2 due to the 'interaction with different characters and hearing their backgrounds.'

Participant 2 wished for a more immersive environment for the first exercise and provided the example of vocal recording, possibly with sound effects. He/She also felt that the first exercise made them think 'about' the future, but that this was difficult as 'these things [the new laws presented in the text] aren't 'practiced/in place now'. This participant had an adverse reaction to the word 'laws,' preferring instead the word 'goals.' Participant 2 did not partake in the role play exercise.

Participant 3 felt the same as Participant 2 regarding the idealism of the text. He/She stated that 'having interaction with others helped to stimulate the creative half of the brain...and by designing our own characters, more interaction and personality helped bring forward a more utopian future.'

Participant 4 felt the text and tableau made her/him 'hopeful.' However, this participant found the role playing difficult because she/he 'didn't know what to do' but was interested in feeling 'part of something in the future.' However, she/he later stated that the role play did give her/him a feeling of being in the future through creating a character. They suggested a larger environment with more areas 'to explore independently and pose a unique viewpoint.' 'He/She said that they are much more naturally participation oriented. This participant wrote at length about how the text and tableau piece could influence the future, including possible reasons of how this type of future might have been brought about.

Participant 5 felt that the tableau/text had more of an effect of being 'in' the future than the second exercise. The role play made this individual feel like he/she was 'devising, rather than being immersed in a new time period.' This individual felt they were 'seeing an idea that represented the world, mostly because there was already a structure for it, and everything else could be built around it.' However, later, the participant was contradictory, saying that neither exercise made him/her feel as if they were in the future.

Participant 6 was not specific, only stating 'yes and no' in conclusion to whether the exercises had made them feel like they were in the future, but also added that the experience made them think about the 'years to come.'

Participant 7 felt that the art presented during the role play was not futuristic enough but made up the idea that it was a presentation of art from 'years gone by.' In all accounts, Participant 7 felt that both exercises made him/her feel as if they were in the future, with role play being the most successful of the two exercises because 'it always helps me to act things out.' He/she also felt that interacting with the other characters was very beneficial. The

experience of interacting with other characters helped this participant to fill in gaps of logic and also imagine scenarios and justifications for the scenario.

Participant 8 felt the tableau/text made them think *about* the future, whereas the role playing made them feel as if they were *in* the future. The element that they felt helped them to be in the future was the creation of their own character which in turn made them think about their ‘ideal life and how that would be much easier to achieve in the world described to us.’ ‘Socializing’ with other characters felt more immersive to this participant, stating that to ‘act as though I am in the future is more effective than seeing an image.’ The room setting was a detracting factor for believability for this participant. In the role playing game, the interaction with other characters made the experiment ‘more realistic’ for this participant and they found particularly interesting the discussion about what they contribute to society.

Overall Suggestions

- Perhaps have a recording for the text portion for those with reading difficulties
- In the tableau/text, ‘more visuals and proof’ would perhaps have made one participant feel more in the future
- Additional practical details in the text and explanation of what’s happened in the world
- Art spread around the room and a different space, not limited to one description such as ‘living on earth’ when more possibilities exist
- Better images that represented future
- Set and props though the slides and food helped the scenario
- No elements of the outside world visible

Post-Discussion Notes

The participants felt that an activity coupled with some physical activity was more engaging than solely using imagination to immerse in a future scenario. Role playing may have been more accessible to the participants as they were all performance students and often engaged with improvisation or acting in given scenarios. Despite this proclivity, there seemed a strained awkwardness during the exercise. The participants had stimulus objects (i.e. look at and discuss the art, eat and drink, network). However, the scenario didn't really work as the level of expectation could not be met in the setting and through the role play. Additionally, if this role play was awkward with drama students who are quite used to role playing, how would the general public fare within this scenario? I'd like to investigate another aspect of role play, as this seemed awkward and forced.

Revised Goals

- Explore a different type of role play that might work better than the previous LARP-like process and integrate other elements from my LARP study: storytelling, bleed and heroism
- The loss of jobs by the creation of new technologies as a counter-argument to the greed theme
- Find a method of presenting enough technological information and terminology to familiarize the audience with the issues. Test the performance lecture as a potential platform

Appendix 5.2

Slide Presentation for Game 1 Tableau

Appendix 5.2 Slide Presentation for Game 1 Tableau

We are now in the year 2142.

The population of the earth has decided to unite into one global government and has issued new laws governing the entire population of the world.

The highest of these laws are:

- 1. Our community is founded on the spirit of cooperation and an understanding of nature, provided through basic education.**
- 2. Every human being is an equal part of a worldwide community of humans, and a free citizen of Earth.**
- 3. Our community provides for all its members the necessities of a healthy, fulfilling and sustainable life, freely and without obligation.**
- 4. Our community respects the limits of nature and its resources, ensuring minimal consumption and waste.**
- 5. Our community derives its solutions and advances progress primarily through the application of logic and best available knowledge.**
- 6. Our community acknowledges its duty of care and compassion for members who are unable to contribute.**

Taken from The Free World Charter/<http://www.freeworldcharter.org/en/charter>

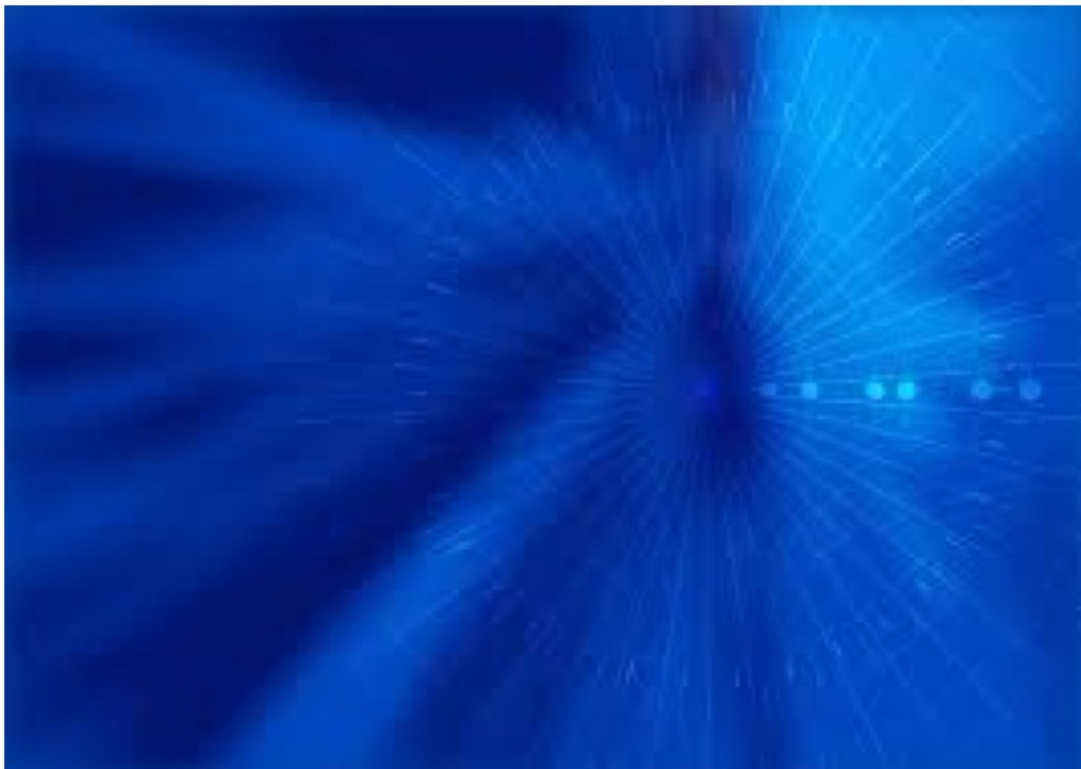
Appendix 5.3

Slide Presentation for Game 2 Art Show²⁷⁹



²⁷⁹ All images in Appendix 5.3 are from Creative Commons suitable for reuse and modification – though any suitable futuristic images may be substituted.

<<https://www.google.com/search?site=imghp&tbn=isch&q=future&tbs=sur:fmc>> [accessed 1 May 2016].





Appendix 5.4

Participant Character Sheets, Questionnaires and Feedback Forms

Participant 1 Character Sheet.

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Farmer Fred

Where do you live on the earth? I don't

What do you value most in life? My robot Sheep bots

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

Going to different planets in my ~~ship~~ spaceship

looking for other robot Sheep

What are your interests? robot Sheep farming

How do you contribute to the common good? the harvesting

making wool.

Participant 1 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

No

Please describe specifically when and why.

From the start it did feel very much futuristic ~~at~~
but only because I couldn't see it ever becoming lowe.
~~How~~

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

I feel like the world will never become that stable ~~or~~ even though it's hopeful to think that it will. I believe there will always be power hungry person stopping it.

Participant 1 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes

Please describe specifically when and why.

I felt like interacting with the different characters and hearing their back grounds and stories transported me into the future.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 1 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

Yes only the role playing game

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

The role playing game

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world? Why?

doing a task because you had to interact with different characters. I didn't feel like I was in the future from reading laws because that kind of world felt impossible.

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

Maybe make the first part recorded for those with reading difficulties but apart from that no ~~other~~

Participant 2 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

No

Please describe specifically when and why.

I think because it is written form - perhaps if it was a recording (voice) with or without sound effects it may be more immersive.

Perhaps a more immersive environment.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Yes - because the 'laws' made me think about how many of these things aren't practised / in place now.

Although 'laws' is an interesting choice of label as it immediately made me think I was being commanded by a ruling power. And I'm not sure how I feel about that... Even if points were good ones ^{had enriching qualities.}
Maybe 'goals' would have more positive connotations
'ideals'

Participant 3 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? James Jensen (J.J for short)

Where do you live on the earth? Montreal (Canada)

What do you value most in life? My humanity

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

When I'm not running security, I like to walk the streets, make sure my arms don't get too rusty.

What are your interests? No learning the history of humanity, I don't want us to go back to that.

How do you contribute to the common good? Security services, I use my augmentations to keep the people who want to harm others away from society, by any means.

Participant 3 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

No

Please describe specifically when and why.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

With how modern times are, it seems like a child-like fantasy / video game. With the year suggested by the description I felt as though that would be an eventuality IF corruption among the 1% were taken out of the equation. I feel as though the future would benefit from the stated laws but with today's society it ^{is} ~~is~~ only a dream.

Participant 3 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes, more so now

Please describe specifically when and why.

Having interaction with others helped to stimulate the creative half of the brain bridging the left half into believing this setting.

By designing our own characters, more interaction and personality helped bring forward a more utopian future.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 3 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

Role play - yes

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

Role play, ~~there was~~ ^{there} was more interaction and commitment involved.

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world? Why?

Role play helps people to not be themselves and live the life of another. This technique helps to bring the stimulus forward by stimulating other parts of the brain.

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

If role play could be used in today's politics maybe we can grab this future sooner.

I believe other stimulus such as props, environment or even VR can enhance the experience.

Participant 4 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Ethelita Walker,

Where do you live on the earth? England

What do you value most in life? Nature + Love

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

I make natural art from all natural elements.

What are your interests? my flock of

pygmy goats, Tree climbing.

How do you contribute to the common good? I protect

nature and life. I milk goats and make milk and cheese and distribute any good I make. I also travel and connect communities.

Participant 4 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Not from just reading and the tableau. more visuals and prop would make me feel this way. Tableau was inviting

Please describe specifically when and why.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

It definitely made me think about the future and how there may be a positive outcome for the world if we act now.

This piece encompassed an ideal that made me feel hopeful, relaxed and appreciative of these values. A beautiful idealization of Arcadia and the world in general. It almost feels like there may have been a terrible tragedy and the survivors have started a new Eutopia of values and respect for the earth of which we are currently draining natural resources and polluting. Absolutely beautiful

Participant 4 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes it made you think differently and become a different person.

Please describe specifically when and why.

By stepping away from reality and creating a new persona it was very easy to step into this new world. The art was interesting through its use of natural resources and was uplifting. In a larger environment with more areas to explore would definitely add to this experience of stepping into an alternate/future. A greater and immersive experience that allows an individual to explore independently and pose a unique viewpoint.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 4 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

The values of the tableau and reading did not make me think I was experiencing the future but did make me feel hopeful. The Role-playing was difficult as I didn't know quite what to do but was interesting to feel part of something in the future.

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

The Role-playing. I am much more of a participant that enjoys to be part of a physical action.

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world? Why?

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

Participant 5 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Bamboog.

Where do you live on the earth? Jamaica

What do you value most in life? Myself. I'm a narcissist

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

I'm very lazy. I daydream a lot.

What are your interests? Drinking Rainwater,

Summoning demons from hell. Every Friday. Night.

How do you contribute to the common good? By Smiling

at every body I pass. If someone
says something bad, I kill them with
kindness and hug them.

Participant 5 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes,

Please describe specifically when and why.

2142, a time where the impossible task of achieving world peace has been achieved. In a surprising turn of events, every nation seems to understand each other, and get along as one community: earth. It gives me hope, in a time where war is common, to dare to believe that peace can be met, and understood, without conflict, ^{no solution} ~~nothing~~ can grow from the problem.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 5 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

No.

Please describe specifically when and why.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Not really. It just made me think about a group of people who came together for art.

Participant 5 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

The tableau did and maybe it's because of the set of ~~tasks~~ ^{experiences} that were listed that seemed to add something to the

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

The tableau. While the role play was fun, it didn't make me feel like I was in the future at all. It made me feel like I was devising, rather than being immersed in a new time period.

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world? Why?

Seeing an idea that represented the world, mostly because there was already a structure for it, and everything else could be built around it.

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

Perhaps give more details on what's happening in the world around the practical aspects.

Participant 6 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Desmond A. Anderson

Where do you live on the earth? SKYRIM

What do you value most in life? Glory

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

I like to hunt and smash
weapons

What are your interests? _____

How do you contribute to the common good? I work
for a secret brother hood
that take down outlaws

Participant 6 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes to some extent

Please describe specifically when and why.

erm well not really sure just really by looking at what year it was my imagination started playing around with the idea

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

It did make me think about the future about the future as I always think of different ways it could play out

Participant 6 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes and No

Please describe specifically when and why.

When talking to Chris
and I see how real

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

It was more fun to do to create a character but not real in the future

Participant 6 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

! yes and no!

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

the Tableau more

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world? Why?

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

It was SUN made me think more about what will happen in years to come.

Participant 7 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Tits McGee

Where do you live on the earth? Pancake Town

What do you value most in life? Honesty

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

Depends on the day. Most of the time I
partake in random activities and meet new
people, however, there are days where I just
relax and eat pancakes

What are your interests? Anything and ~~everything~~ ^{everything}. There is
beauty ~~is~~ and enjoyment to be found in anything.

How do you contribute to the common good? participate in

charity events as well as create my
own charity events

Participant 7 Tableau Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future? Yes ~~at some point, I would~~ ~~don't feel like all these laws would~~ ~~actually happen~~

Please describe specifically when and why.

Some of the laws seem quite advanced in the sense that we are learning from past mistakes and trying, if not already succeeded, in making a better world. However, I do feel as though not all the laws would be passed. Primarily the one about all humans being equal. Even in this day and age, ~~not~~ everyone considers others equal and, personally, I don't think there will come a time when everyone does.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 7 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future? *yes*

Please describe specifically when and why.

I felt like I was meeting people from around the world at this art event ~~leading~~ leading me to think that transport is much faster if we have teleporters. Also farmer Fred mentioned he had a space ship and travelled ~~around~~ from planet to planet looking for Robot Sheep as he sold metal wool. It almost made me think that we in a universe where species across the galaxy co-existed and gathered at big events.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

The art was very modern for our present time, however, I got around that by thinking that these could be classic art from years gone by.

Participant 7 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future? *yes*

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

role-play, it always helps me to act things out

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world?

Why? meeting the people, feeling like transport ~~is~~ is more advanced. Plus Farmer Fred has a space ship and sells metal wool he gets from robot sheep.

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

a larger space and art works spread around the room as much.

also instead of asking where on earth are you from, just ask where you were from which expands ~~and~~ ^{to} the universe.

find more images that look a bit more futuristic as the images seemed far to modern.

Participant 8 Character Sheet

The year is 2142. We all now live in a Post-Scarcity/Post-Capitalist society. This means that money has been abolished and through the invention of new technologies we no longer need to work for a living. All of the basic needs for everyone on the planet are met; housing, food and water, healthcare and education.

What is your name? Eva Pemwinkle

Where do you live on the earth? Colorado, USA

What do you value most in life? Family & Friends

How do you like to spend your time/What do you do all day?

Socialising, Theatre, leisure (pool & food),

cooking, teaching & gardening

What are your interests? Theatre, cooking,

fashion & gardening

How do you contribute to the common good? Teaching,

providing theatre & providing goods through
agriculture (small allotment)

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

No

Please describe specifically when and why.

With the room we're in you can see outside which spoils the atmosphere. If we were in a room with no doors and windows that had props and set design I would have felt more like I was in the future. The new World laws and brief introduction felt a bit like being transported to the future and with the proper set & props would have been affective.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Yes. If this was to happen in the future the laws make the world sound like it would be a much better place than it is now. Futuristic Movies always show the world in a negative light but this seems much more positive. I would rather live in the world described than this one right now. It also made me think about how the world is becoming technologically advanced at the moment but the future world described focuses on people working together and the environment.

Participant 8 Role-Play Questionnaire

At any point, did you have an experience or feeling that you were actually in the future?

Yes

Please describe specifically when and why.

When the game started and we started socialising I felt like we were at an event in the future. The role playing of the other participants helped with this and made it feel realistic. It was really fun and good to talk to the other characters and learn what they contribute to the society.

If not, did this experiment make you think about the future? If so, please describe.

Participant 8 Feedback Questionnaire

Between the Tableau and the Role-Playing Game, did either make you feel as if you were experiencing the future?

The Tableau made me think of the future where the RPG made me feel as if I was in the future.

Which, between the two made you feel like you were in the future more?

RPG

Which made you feel like you were in the future more, to be doing a task within that imagined future world or to see an image/idea/act representing that world?

Why?

RPG. Creating my own character made me think about my ideal life and how that would be much easier to achieve in the world described to us. Socialising with other characters also made me feel more immersed and I felt as though I was in the future talking to mostly like minded people. To act as though I am in the future is much more affective to me than seeing an image.

Any other thoughts concerning the experience? Any suggestions that may enhance your experience?

Set and props would enhance the experience. The gallery slide of art & refreshments table also helped the feeling of being in the future.

Appendix 5.5

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to the Greed and LARP Workshop. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Participant 1 Antony Hopkinson

Participant 2 Hayley Alessi

Participant 3 Chris Maun

Participant 4 Kristy Conrad

Participant 5 Grant Wassell

Participant 6 Joseph Gilliver

Participant 7 Josh Foster

Participant 8 Amy Rydelewski

Appendix 6.1

Case Study Six: Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Set up introduction, release forms and questions
- 2) Performance lecture
- 3) List making by participants
- 4) 50 year letter from the future
- 5) Share/No Share (put papers in stack on chairs)
- 6) Performance statement and stories
- 7) Feedback discussion (audio record)

*There needs to be a clear division between a conversational area for the introduction and feedback part of the session and the performance space.

Rationale

This concept intended to test the LARP elements of heroism, bleed, role play and storytelling in the form of a performance lecture, where new information about technological advances might prompt new concepts or ideas about the future. I anticipated that the performance lecture might facilitate the consideration of technological information that might be new to the participants. I wanted to utilise the elements of heroism, bleed and storytelling to advance the theme. The theme was also derived from the *Star Trek* article from Manu Saadia about the

economics of *Star Trek*.²⁸⁰ I thought about what would happen if there was a sudden loss of jobs that would decimate entire industries. I thought it might be possible that LARP elements may aid in imagining but may also serve as an empowering response to combat the continued theme of greed and hopelessness. I used a PowerPoint presentation for the performance lecture and set two tasks that allowed us to co-create a performance. The space needed to be separate from the introduction and the final feedback discussion to designate the performance portion.

Session Notes and Performance Script

1) 'Hi everyone. Thanks for coming tonight. My name is Dana Koellner and I am in my third year of research here at the University of Sheffield. Tonight's workshop is part of my PhD research.' (Explain consent forms and ask for questions.)

'I am attempting to create a 'Future' Theatre of alternative future realities.

The format of tonight's session will begin with introductions, followed by a bit of information, a writing exercise and finally a feedback session. I would like to audio record the feedback session, and if you do not wish to participate in the feedback session or any part of the session, please feel free not to.

As time is a bit short tonight, I'd like for us to briefly introduce ourselves by stating our name, our favourite hobby and the charity in which we are particularly moved by. I'll start:

²⁸⁰ Saadia, 'The Economic Lessons of Star Trek's Money-Free Society'.

My name is Dana, I don't know what hobbies I have and I am moved by charities who support clean water for children.' (Group does same).

Once introductions are complete, move the group into the separate performance space.

2) Go through the slide presentation and stop at the futuristic city scape labelled 2066.

3) Pass out pens and paper and ask the participants to write a list of the things they would like to pursue in the next twenty-five years.

4) Once complete, ask the participants to role play by writing a letter to themselves from fifty years in the future giving themselves advice concerning the potential obstacles and pitfalls that they may face through the hypothetical coming years of the Universal Basic income (UBI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

5) When finished, ask them to place their letters on one of the two chairs set up behind the group: the left chair if they wished to share their letters anonymously, the right chair for those who did not want to participate.

6) Change the slide to the landscape image of Sheffield's city centre with the date 2016 written on it and collect the letters of those who wished to share.

7) Sit in front of the group in the stage lighting. Ask the participants to raise their hands during sections that they thought might be relevant to them individually.

8) Start with 'Dear Dana (name)...,' and then read randomly select portions from the letters.

9) Thank the participants and offer their letters back as they may want to keep them.

10) Feedback and recording session.

Post-Discussion Notes

I felt that the conversation in the feedback session pointed to a power structure problem in transposing time through language. Despite the fact that I was telling the story of what might happen, which was inherently fictional since there is no real way to truly predict the future, the scenario was presented in such a 'real' way that the participants rejected the lecture portion. I spoke of the facts first to define terms and then to formulate a possible scenario. I asked: What happens when capitalism is removed from life as we know it through UBI and AI? What becomes of us and what will your story be?

Tone and delivery were key when announcing the technical information. I wanted the participants to draw their own conclusions, thus enhancing the possibility of bleed by drawing on their own thoughts, imaginings and conclusions. I was also trying to transpose time democratically by imagining the future through each individual's own personal extrapolations and imaginings. The choice of material presented was not neutral; indeed, it was highly political. I felt that, despite this, if I presented the information from as neutral a position as possible, the audience would draw their own conclusion, though this proved troublesome. They really wanted frames of 'imagine this' or 'in the future.' I wanted to bring these imagined future scenarios into the present, transposing the future 'time' through language and imagining democratically and independently. This did not work as the participants really wanted to be invited into the scenario to participate rather than being offered the facts, which

felt to them like they were being told that this ‘was’ the future. I also realized that it was very important to be well-versed in the subject matter in order to deliver information necessary for the dialogue in a concise way and to provide counter arguments to combat some of the dystopian interpretations and underlying beliefs.

Several of the participants wanted a stronger performance stance on the material in order to suspend their disbelief. I felt that a stronger character stance would take away from the reality of the concept, taking us out of the present real-ness. Again, this was a problem with the transformation or representation of time in the performance. Open, invitational language and qualifiers are very important.

Revised Goals

- Refine both my linguistic construction and character portrayal
- Test some of Stuart Candy’s principles within experiential futures practice
- Extrapolate some of Candy’s principles and apply them in a future performance
focusing on possible future technology

Appendix 6.2

Slide Presentation Performance Lecture

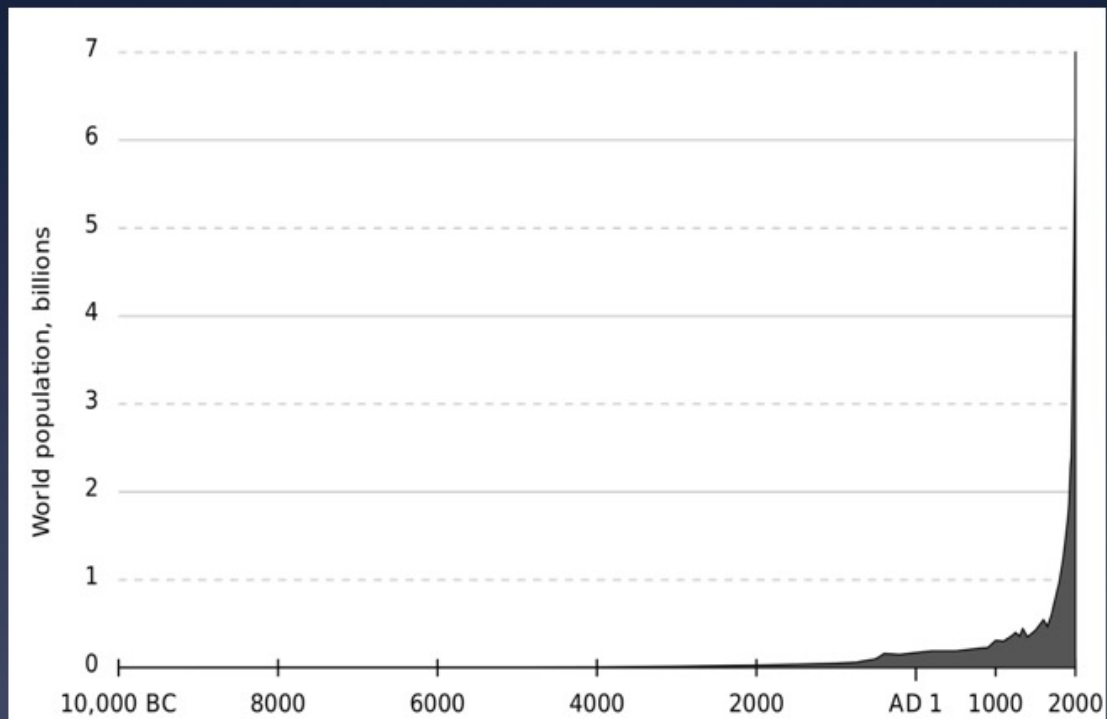
Appendix 6.2
Slide Presentation
Performance Lecture

Mastery and
Reputation:
Contending with the
Universal Wage



Major Factors Currently Influencing Future Trends

- 1) Population Growth
- 2) Technology replacing work force
- 3) Death of a Capitalist system by resource depletion for a growing population, unsustainable population to job ratio and environmental destruction
- 4) Governments seeking to maintain position and hierarchical control through monopolies, media fear mongering & refusal to acknowledge that Government must change (from a laissez-faire structure to a more agile governance - one that solves global crisis and whose primary duty is to improve the lives of it's citizens - including safeguarding identity and globally regulating AI)



Winning!

- Disease Decline
- Decline of Crime
- Food Production
- Transport
- Environment
- Poverty Reduction (overall)

Examples of Technology coming into the market within the next 5-7 years that will begin to drastically diminish work force from Artificial Intelligence Tech:

- Taxi Drivers (Driverless Cars)
- Transportation Industry (Driverless Lorries/Trucks for major product transport large and small)
- Doctors (reduction by probably half)
- Lawyers (reduction by probably half)
- Food Production (Farming & Restaurants)
- Personal Assistants
- Technical Support Roles
- Factory Workers
- Office and Administrative Roles

Universal Wage or Universal Basic Wage (UBI)

A basic income is a form of social security in which all citizens or residents of a country regularly receive an unconditional sum of money, either from a government or some other public institution, in addition to any income received from elsewhere.¹

Tested in Canada & Finland -other countries currently testing:
Netherlands, Kenya and India

The White House, in a report to Congress, has put the probability at 83% that a worker making less than \$20 an hour in 2010 will eventually lose their job to a machine. Even workers making as much as \$40 an hour face odds of 31 percent.²

¹ Wikipedia, Basic Income, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basic_income> [accessed 15 October 2016]

² Whitehouse.Gov website

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/ERP_2016_Book_Complete%20JA.pdf> [accessed 16 October 2016]

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<http://futurism.com/elon-musk-theres-a-pretty-good-chance-well-end-up-with-universal-basic-income/>

Getty

What will we do with all of our spare time?

How do we psychologically deal with this type of change and freedom?



Wall-E, Dir. Andrew Stanton, Disney Films, 2008

Imagine yourself growing up in a society where there is never any want or need or financial insecurity of any sort. You will be a very different person. You will be absolutely uninterested in conspicuous consumption. ... You will probably be interested in things of a higher nature—the cultivation of the mind, education, love, art, and discovery. – Maanu Saadia 2016

Mastery /
Reputation

If most of us were living under
the Universal Wage....

What would you pursue in your
life?

What type of life would you
have?



2066



2016

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World Population Graph File: Population curve.svg

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Still Future Cityscape Image labelled 2066 from Creative Commons, image copyright for reuse and modification, <https://www.google.com/search?site=imghp&tbs=sur%3Afm&tbs=isch&sa=1&ei=OWsOW_zgEdKRsAeBzJXgBw&q=sheffield+millennium+gallery&oq=sheffield+mil&gs_l=img.1.1.014j0i30k116.30711.33883.0.35455.15.11.1.3.3.0.189.1107.0j8.8.0.1.0...1c.1.64.img..3.12.1181...0i67k1.0.nvOj-hl2xcg> [accessed last accessed 21 April 2017]

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Appendix 6.3

Case Study Six: Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Audio Transcript of Feedback Session

00:00

Dana Koellner: Alright, because uh the main thing for taking the audio recording is I can never process all the notes and write quickly enough and listen to what you're saying so right that's quite a bit of information what did you guys think about this experience any thoughts

Bridie Moore: Um I think I thought at first I was quite skeptical about the idea that the jobs could go in the ways in which were predicted you know these are predictions and when we look back at predictions that were made maybe in the 60's about what we were going to be doing now

Dana Koellner: Yea Yea

Bridie Moore: we laugh don't we so that's that was my initial thought

Dana Koellner: Did that eject you from the scenario

Bridie Moore: No no because I think part of what's going on is what you're saying you know yes we are going to be automated to some degree erm I have that issue about essays being able to be marked by robots but you know that something bad is going to go wrong with that and there's going to be a rethink somewhere down the line so it's not always going to be this one trajectory there's gonna be a lot of backwards and forwards until well all through human history that's been the case and it will be in the future

Dana Koellner: Oh yeah (Inaudible) (laughter)

Bridie Moore: Yeah so so there's on one part of my brain's going I'm skeptical about this I think there's a lot more nuance to this and the other half of my brain is going yeah let's go with the utopian ideals that we'll all have free time and erm that the automation of jobs is actually gonna be more beneficial

Dana Koellner: Oh, that's that's interesting that you thought that was utopian ok

Bridie Moore: Well the automation jobs could be (inaudible) if it's well managed in my view of utopia

Dana Koellner: Ok

Bridie Moore: Even though we will all have more free time

Dana Koellner: Cool

Bridie Moore: But then maybe we all will lose the will to live and not procreate and result in the death of the species (Laughter)

Hayley Alessi: (Inaudible) Just watching a computer screen going (Inaudible)

(Multiple overlapping dialogue inaudible)

Bridie Moore: Sex drive... we all feel shit about ourselves

X: I think we all could be a lot closer to utopia because oh yeah I think that would all be fantastic except that it's like the capitalist society keeps throwing these obstacles in the way and the one that's come to mind it's like you have to spend so much time to find the cheapest phone contract electricity it's just such a waste of time I mean and I want some machine to do it for me and just do it and I don't want to waste my time doing it I spend a lot of time doing stupid things like that it makes me very (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: And the more AI develops the more develops then it will know you personally better so it will order your groceries and say would you like anything else by the way but I'd like you to try this cause I think you might like this I mean that's interesting

X: I'm all for it

Bridie Moore: But then you sorry

Hayley Alessi: I was (inaudible) it made me think actually especially before we started it when you were on about time and that you are always going to get luddites like me who are going to refuse to use it even I've got voice software for typing because I've got bad wrists but I'm not going to use it cause I know they keep the data and I'm always going to go browsing so what if I don't engage with this society so what's going to happen to me

Dana Koellner: That's true that's true

James Smith: I think I am very suspicious exactly like you in things like that but if you asked a 15 year old what they thought it would not even occur to them but that's the problem that Google knows where you are or iTunes knows where you are or Facebook knows where you are because that's just what they've grown up whereas you know mobile phones were still a novelty in some respects to me because I never had them when I was that age so I think looking into the future in 50 year's time they'll be amazed at what we're quibbling about now coz it'll just seem second nature that you won't even have to think about shopping a drone will probably just deliver it on a Tuesday

Dana Koellner: That's it

Bridie Moore: Oh I fancy that

(Laughter)

Hayley Alessi: But then it's that mindlessness that they're taking things away from us they're not giving us stuff I feel like it's taking things away from us

Dana Koellner: Well strangely the argument is that most lucrative jobs in a post AI society is the arts

(laughter)

Hayley Alessi: Well yeah I did sit there and think thank God we make artistic work

Dana Koellner: Finally... Finally

(Multiple overlapping dialogue inaudible)

Bridie Moore: Well that's right because you can only have delivered to you what is available and what's available might only be all those shakes you know like on that image and the guys all sat drinking the same shake

05:00

Bridie Moore: and it sort of feels a bit like that at the moment doesn't you know we can have pizza or chips or there is not very much variety in what we are offered as choice

Dana Koellner: Well the strange thing too is now they're doing 3d printing of food so for example you just put in the ingredients and they print you out a loaf of bread or a slice of bread

Clare McManus – I really can't get my head around 3d printing

Dana Koellner: Yeah that's actually already happening right now

Hayley Alessi: Yeah they've made their first piece of actual raw meat haven't they

Dana Koellner: Raw meat organs body organs that stuff yeah

Hayley Alessi: Yeah for them to cook

Dana Koellner: Which is great for medical because like for example you need a new liver a new kidney a new heart they inject you with nano technology and that just goes in and repairs it or fixes it so there's no more and this is not far actually cause they've already grown the first liver and kidney um using nano technology and cellular plastic with genetic material

Hayley Alessi: yeah but who's going to pay for all this

Dana Koellner: Well that's the point isn't it

Bridie Moore: But pay

Hayley Alessi: any why not take care of what you've got as well

Bridie Moore: In this sort of society the concept of money and paying

Dana Koellner: Doesn't exist

Bridie Moore: It's sort of it's a man-made construct isn't it the idea of money

Dana Koellner: Its completely man made

Bridie Moore: An finance and all of that its only ever about resources

Dana Koellner: That's right

Bridie Moore: And the exchange of resources

Dana Koellner: And the purpose of government you remember that big list at the beginning so governments are going to have to transition into actually taking care of people instead of trying to maintain power and control which they don't do now

X: They don't they don't

Dana Koellner: No and this is why there's a big revolts right because people want a better and different type of life there way of life is dead or dying you know

X: But there's a lot of people that have been written off in this society

Dana Koellner: Of course yes

X: And the level at which you're written off will increase because they know they're lumping the working class and there's an assumption that we're all gonna be equally involved in a society like this how are you gonna change the nature of the people at the top who won't (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: That's the question

X: And and it's also going on assumption that everybody is self-motivated in the same way a university student is and there's a lot of people that (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: That's my worry so that's where we started talking over in the hub with mastery and the reputation

X: Yeah

Dana Koellner: So because you what happens when you first go on holiday

X: I don't go on holiday

(Laughter)

Dana Koellner: If you did you'd know rest... food... drink...

Bridie Moore: Yeah swimming drawing

Dana Koellner: Drugs particularly for some you know whatever that is

James Smith: We're not in Cleethorpes you know Dana

(Laughter)

James Smith: What holidays are you going on

(Laughter)

Dana Koellner: That's great maybe for a week or two but now it's the rest of your life you know and then you're dead so yeah yeah

Bridie Moore: Sun sea swimming and drugs like it I could do that

X: Well the drugs are fine cause you wouldn't need to be right in the head for work

Dana Koellner: You wouldn't need to be right in the head for work and maybe it would inspire you creatively who knows

Hayley Alessi: I think there would be more people wanting to take their own lives because there's no point in living so more into the drugs because I think the big thing about all of that is none if it already includes the people who are forgotten by society who already have nothing and I don't see where they fit into this either I think about this over the years there's quite a few of us here who are teachers or ex teachers I think of the students I've had who've been from like two or three generations who've never worked and their sense of worthlessness I don't think having more money or enough to get by is gonna help with those psychological problems

Dana Koellner: That's the worry too and that's why they talk about reputation so it's about you self-building and self-

Hayley Alessi: but you have to care enough about your reputation in the first place

Dana Koellner: That's true

Hayley Alessi: If you already feel worthless how do you

Dana Koellner: But then you don't have to pay for education as well so education can be something else it's not a corporation anymore which it is very much now you know so that may influence those people's lives as well

Hayley Alessi: But but not everybody wants to be educated I just think it's really difficult isn't it

Dana Koellner: No no I agree with you

James Smith: Um just since you mentioned the T word earlier on I think we had an example of mastery in Mr Trump himself because why would he want to be the president he's got all the money he needs he doesn't want for anything so it's purely about ego

Dana Koellner: Yep yeah yeah sorry

James Smith: That he wants to be top dog and he can afford to do it

Dana Koellner: And it's a kind of show isn't it is like look at all this stuff be fearful of all this stuff but this is actually what's going on below us that really

James Smith: What worries me is just if everybody is equal why would you choose to have a stressful job why cause somebody's got to be in charge somebody's got to be impose law somebody's got to you know rescue cats from up trees and burning buildings why would you choose to do that job when you're getting exactly the same amount of money as someone who sits and doesn't do anything all day

Dana Koellner: It's just what interests you I think like why would you be captain Kirk if you know what I mean

James Smith: Yeah yeah

10:00

Dana Koellner: Like I want to be in that thrill-seeking position or maybe not maybe it's

James Smith: So would that be more reputation in that you get kudos of being a fire fighter a police officer or

Bridie Moore: I think that yeah I think because the wage of a fire fighter is a sort of arbitrary thing isn't it

X: People don't go really to be a fire fighter for the wage

Bridie Moore: Yes they have to have a job because otherwise they starve or you're on such low benefits that you're not gonna have a good quality of life but no body puts themselves in the way of that sort of danger without it being more about camaraderie and lifesaving and

James Smith: Yeah exactly yeah

Bridie Moore: But yeah maybe who's gonna sweep the streets who's gonna empty the bins

James Smith– Yes

X: Robots robots

Bridie Moore: Corse robots will be able to empty the bins

(laughter inaudible)

Dana Koellner: Well I'm really excited that you're at least interested in the topic and discussing it I just want to shift a little bit away to form here because this is kind of the question for what I have set out to do I have a coupla questions for you guys which is you know what I asked you to do is quite difficult I realise it I'm asking you to imagine something that doesn't I give you a bit of information then I'm asking you to imagine something that doesn't exist in your place in that world that doesn't exist which is quite difficult to do isn't it so any thoughts around that

X: People have always got that wrong people sorry have always got that wrong like images of the future I have never second guessed the future

Dana Koellner: Hmm second guessing ok

X: But in a way it should be easy to imagine because it's just like you automatically become a retired person before you ever went to work

Dana Koellner: Yeah that's true

Clare McManus: retired before you went to work that's an interesting

(Laughter)

X: You're not retired from anything you just have that existence all these retired people

Clare McManus: Well that's but that's childhood really isn't it

Bridie Moore: Yeah

X: Yeah it could be

Clare McManus: I mean just something (Inaudible) but being retired or semiretired actually the universal wage is what you get for your state pension

James Smith: Hmm

Clare McManus: So that already exists and it's amazing

(Laughter)

Clare McManus: This money just comes into your bank account every month so and and one of the things sorry I'm thinking about form is a lot of the things that were going through my head when you're saying what would you imagine the future, I'm kind of already there with part of it not with all the AI stuff but just some of the personal questions around how do you deal with working and not working

Dana Koellner: Yes

Clare McManus: And and the one being you are naturally cause obviously you know there are times when people are unemployed or they're having babies or whatever but when you're thinking actually well I do need to for a living (inaudible) but I will only work with people who I want to work with doing things I want to do and that's a huge liberation and I think in terms of sorry I'm not articulating this very well but I think in form I think there could be something very interesting in you exploring different ages of people imagining what it would mean to them because what they imagine would be based on their own already lived experience

Dana Koellner: Yes

Clare McManus: And that will differ massively

Dana Koellner: I'm actually thinking about that in the next experiment because I am in retirement right now doing a PhD that's what it feels like I mean I govern my own time I decide

what to do or not to do I don't have to necessarily work but I do you know what I mean like and that feels like retirement and a lot of these questions about self come up even in this so there's different ways of being in retirement as well so I was thinking about that for further experience so thank you

Clare McManus: But I've also got people I mean we had some guests at the weekend I mean friends at the weekend and the woman is 78 the husband is a bit younger but they run this massive stressful project and they won't stop until they both die and I know somebody else like that because the thought well in the 70's he won't stop working even though it doesn't matter because the thought of if he stops working the thought of it's like

Dana Koellner: What do you do with yourself

Bridie Moore: (inaudible)

Clare McManus: What do you do and that's really interesting isn't it

Bridie Moore: What I found running Passages have been there's a space for people to come together and think and make work about something that's quite intellectually challenging and those spaces aren't really available outside or they're very rarely available outside work environments or universities or whatever and it just occurred to me as you were speaking there about what happens in retirement you know what do you do with this where do you find that place because I don't know where I'd I'd I'd have to create it whenever I've been unemployed or in a situation like being a young mum

15:00

Bridie Moore: I've always ended up putting on a group of some sort you know making a group out of mainly for my own benefit so I started a NCT class in London in two

X: I was in E3

Bridie Moore: She was in the posh woman's one and I started the plebs group I think I managed to make you defect in the end and I started one in Leeds as well and then started Passages which

was yeah a research group but it was more about finding a group of people that I could work with on this project and engage with yeah yeah but it's more about community

Dana Koellner: Yeah it depends on the person yeah

Bridie Moore: Finding others

Dana Koellner: Yeah cause I also think too like when you accomplish a goal you get into the same position cause once you achieve that (inaudible) you know once you hit that mark you've got to look for the next goal

Bridie Moore: Yeah

Dana Koellner: And there's also that period of limbo of what you're doing did any of that speak to you in terms of form of theatre like in terms of let me see if I can

(inaudible)

Bridie Moore: Oh you mean, how did it translate into performance?

Dana Koellner: Yes, well I would classify this as somewhat of a lecture performance that's what I would classify it as

Clare McManus: I thought you reading the letters 'Dear Dana' was really powerful actually

Dana Koellner: How? Why? Thank you, could you tell me a little bit more

Clare McManus: Um cause obviously they were our letters, except you hadn't said we had to write so you could read it so you couldn't read mine (laughter) but it was just... and also cause you set it beautifully so the lights and the chair and things And just you go Dear Dana reading this and I ah thought maybe she's done a top one you know to start it off but it was just obvious that you were reading other peoples and somehow it made it... it made it more personal cause even they weren't yours, the fact that you were saying them all was more personal than if you'd said this is a list of things people have said cause we could have written it on post it notes or something but it made it intimate

Zelda Hannay: Yea I really liked that as well.

Hayley Alessi: ..And universal as well because there was lots of us putting up our hands thinking yea I feel the same about that yea I know what you are really asking us now is about the format and what you've done isn't it and how to improve it I think for myself the kind of Ted Talk at the beginning was interesting but it kinda felt a bit of a distance cause of the kind of jobs he was talking about and stuff and I know it was just a brief snapshot but it almost feels like the better stuff you've done is a bit more of the talking cause it's been more of a provocation so maybe you have more of the provocations on the screen or something like writing the letter was a nice idea wasn't it once we realized what you were asking us to do

Dana Koellner: It felt to me that it was hard for you guys to understand what I meant by the letter so maybe I need to clean up that language a little bit

Several – Hmm

Clare McManus: I I did have a thought which is probably not helpful but at one point when you were reading them out cause there were bits that I agreed with and bits where I wanted to go ah but and it's almost like was it tomorrow's parties

Dana Koellner: Mmhmm

Clare McManus: You know that was set in the future everyone will have their 15 minutes of fame or but you know that 15 minutes of fame will be whatever there were bits it needs punctuating and challenging

Dana Koellner: Challenging to you the audience

Clare McManus: Uhhh well it should be challenging to the audience anyway should it no but

Zelda Hannay: You mean a delivery of the letter not the writing of it

Clare McManus: Yes yes the delivery of the letters needs yeah it needs challenging at some point

Bridie Moore: Do you mean that there should be another voice in there

Clare McManus: Yeah not consistently or anything but just contradiction

Dana Koellner: Ohh I think it's because I'm trying to avoid tomorrow's parties so much (inaudible) because that's part of my research

Clare McManus: Oh ok

Dana Koellner: On my PhD so like I just that counterpoint but you felt it needed a counterpoint or were you just

Clare McManus: I didn't feel it at that length you did then but I think it would be interesting to work out how you could do a counterpoint that wasn't tomorrow's parties

Dana Koellner: Ok

Hayley Alessi: you could insert your own voice sometimes a bit like how I did with my selfies that was all over her conversation but then I had the idea that I wanted to speak and you noticed who said there's two or three of yours that's your voice isn't there and I said how do you know I'm saying the same over the mike and your like no I know it's your voice so you could just think some on the spot by what you read and insert your own not all the time but once in a while

X: Well maybe there's

X: Sorry go on

X: I felt that more in the lecture. I felt the lecture... I wasn't convinced by the lecture in a way

20:00

X: And I either wanted you to go at it really as though this is absolutely the truth this is you know a real performance regardless of how factual it actually is but as though this is I'm telling you that this is the truth um so it's performance rather than any sense of reality.

Dana Koellner: Ohh.

X: Or I want us to have a chance to challenge cause there was a lot in that I wanted to challenge and I didn't have a chance and then I was a bit confused when we got to the next bit and that was partly cause we didn't have a chance to challenge. I think.

Several – Yea, Yes, yes. (more inaudible)

Dana Koellner: It's more of a provocation than it is, that's how I set it up to start to enter you into the world because the real point is just for you to grasp of that there might be some kind of situation change in your finance and then what would you do to react because I'm interested in that mental health question really in some way what would you do and what are the ramifications of that

X: But then you could do that more as a story, and in imagination this is what I want you to imagine that this is what is going to happen this is all rather than

Dana Koellner: the problem is a little bit because of bleed in the LARP elements because essentially what is happening is your playing a role so you are playing yourself at 50 which is a role you that you are playing and then I'm playing a role as performer and I'm also reading you what you are writing as that part of it

X: No I'm talking about the beginning bit not the

Dana Koellner: Yea yea

Hayley Alessi: I understand what you mean I think she means if you would have come in and just given those facts and figures as if your delivering it and you're involved in the moment it's more convincing well feel more like we can bite back or are immersed in it if that makes any sense I know and what you mean

Dana Koellner: Yeah I think this is where I am struggling cause I don't actually want to do a performance I'm not really thrilled with the idea

Hayley Alessi: but I think you do need to adopt a bit more of the authority a bit or you seem a little hesitant it kind of slightly distances..

Dana Koellner: Yea ok

Bridie Moore: I think the idea sorry I think coming back to you saying that I want you to imagine is a good premise because you don't have to be somebody other than yourself and asking the participants to imagine and I think it's just coming at it from that angle what really made me go the hairs on the back of neck stand up is this claim that this will happen in fact you didn't even say this will I noticed it in your language it was by 20 uh something has happened, you sort of presented it as if it was already the past there was a really interesting linguistic construction that made me go ohhhh I don't like that because it won't necessarily even if you are claiming something you say will happen I feel more happy about I would have felt more happy about that sort of language because then I would feel more like well then it might happen it might not happen its more conditional

Dana Koellner: Yes

Bridie Moore: So what I'm trying to say is that really choosing your language will be really important and I think imagining that something will happen, imagining I'm putting this as a premise as a possibility that might prevent your audience from really resisting it whereas saying something already has happened

Dana Koellner: I kind of like the fact that you are resisting it though it's a little bit

Bridie Moore: Yea yea true

Zelda Hannay: I was just going to say that I think it ties in with the exercise we did as well cause I think future is a very personal thing and I think for me that what was a tricky because ok here is a universal kind of objective view of what the future would be and then you are being asked to put yourself in that but my version of the future doesn't look like that at all and I have all sorts of questions critical questions about that of kind of when that was presented to me like this is what is what's going to happen, like well I don't think it will so I then struggled to put myself in that if you see what I mean I found it really difficult because I don't really believe in this future so I don't know what I would do to some extent

James Smith: Perhaps another question to ask is what will stop that coming future what does everybody collectively need to do do we need to stop do we need to I don't know boycott lawyers who use computers to write because frankly people would if its 10 pound cheaper they'll go to the one who use the computer

Bridie Moore: Well I'm already doing that I won't do that I won't order an Uber cause I don't want my local taxi firm to go out of business I don't care how much they've got a bad reputation I want my local taxi firm to be my little taxi firm and not to be owned by some German company so as fact

Hayley Alessi: It's the same as my local take away near James and their on Just Eat

25:00

Hayley Alessi: But I watched a program on television that showed how much they had to pay for that and they actually will lose money on every meal So I ring them to direct I collect it anyway but I ring them direct cause I think if I'm not going through the kind of middle man and that and take away that personal side of it cause they are really nice people

Bridie Moore: So the things we might have to do is make more aware bring about more awareness about the issue

James Smith: Yea yea this is it yeah

X: I always queue up in the bank and I try and use the tills in Sainsbury's

Bridie Moore: To keep people in work yea

Dana Koellner: Can I just ask one last question cause we only have 5 minutes left – when you were writing your letter and the list at any point did you feel that you were imagining yourself in the future did you have any sensation whatsoever

X: Only when you resorted to fiction its only when you resorted to reading our letters that it became fictional it actually had that more present intimacy and resonance because I (inaudible) fighting this privileged image of the future that you were giving us

Zelda Hannay: Yea

X: When you think of the all the um xenophobia and things that are going on now that's not going to stop just cause people have money

Zelda Hannay: Yea

James Smith: Personally I think I could understand why it was so far in the future but I'll be in my 90's by then and I think asking me to imagine myself in the 90's as I am now it's like asking my 10 year old self to imagine me now you just need to see

Dana Koellner: So maybe too far

Bridie Moore: I'll be 104

(laughter)

Dana Koellner: I'll be 200, so too far for you James

James Smith: Yea maybe if you'd have said 10 years I'dve been alright brilliant

Bridie Moore: I think if you said you know with modern technology nanotechnology whatever you'll live to 200 so you might be able to imagine ourselves at you know the equivalent of say 70 when it comes to actually

X: I think what was been interesting for everybody instead of you telling us what the future was you've offered a futures (inaudible)

Zelda Hannay: Yea and that's what I was thinking about futures is so personal so in the exercise somehow built into that was your own the possibility for each person to imagine their own future but not to have it kind of well this is the scenario but to just to be able to do that yourself

Dana Koellner: It's funny because I don't feel like at any point ever said this is the scenario but presenting this information says this is potentially what can happen do you know what I mean like I didn't say this is gonna happen but

Zelda Hannay: But you did though that is very much how it seemed that is the impression yea

Bridie Moore: That's the impression because I was thinking now what is the language that you are using

Dana Koellner: Yea because that's what I was very careful about

Bridie Moore: That is making me have that impression and at some point you literally said it as if it has already happened

Dana Koellner: I'll think about that

Bridie Moore: So by we have done this and by 2020 such and such we have done all jobs have already been automated these types of jobs

Dana Koellner: Yea or these jobs have or yes those did that's for sure I'll think about that yea

Bridie Moore: Do you know that sort of way of putting things just pull back on them reverse a bit, if potentially this will if potentially this might happen make it more conditionally unsure possibly or if you are going to go for the full like this has already happen then set this up more as a fiction as more science fiction cause there is benefit in science fiction it isn't there it is about imagining a possible future and that's really the strength of what you've done here is make us imagine a possible future

Dana Koellner: But I don't think you did did you

Bridie Moore: I did yea I fully totally entered into it with you know I had my the other part of my brain going on you know I don't necessarily believe this but given this scenario for the future then I can enter into that because I can see it as possible scenario or as a fictional scenario and in which case then that makes me think that I might have this attitude it would be great to

have 250 quid a week to do whatever I wanted yeah I did have that factually or a few years (laughter)

James Smith: It's a whole other topic isn't it it also begs the question what do we do when the machines are (inaudible) are intelligent are (inaudible) write poetry yea do some painting what do we do then invent some more machines that aren't too intelligent in which case

Dana Koellner: I actually don't think any of this is going to come true I think it will be a different scenario I think we'll develop things like we did the relationship with the phone do you know what I mean like that'll be more subtle graduated kind of thing

X: If you don't believe

Zelda Hannay: Sorry I was just going to say

30:00

X: Go on

Zelda Hannay: I'll just say quickly what if you presented like 3 say scenarios of the future and they could one that's completely dystopian one that's completely utopian and one that's something else so its very clearly like these are sort of different options or presented that kind of undermines the idea

James Smith: Kind of middle ground

Bridie Moore: Maybe there's something else could be constructed within the session by the participants in some way you know

Dana Koellner: Did you feel uncomfortable at any time

X: All the time all the time that you were offering me this vision

Dana Koellner: Not by the ideas but as a person, as an audience member

X and Multiple - No no I didn't

X: No the ideas

Bridie Moore: It felt safe it felt

Dana Koellner: There was never any time that you felt like you didn't you felt uncomfortable or ok good

Zelda Hannay: I struggled a little bit with it not in any big way at all like absolutely fine but the thing about kind of telling yourself because I've have I've sort of done so much kind of work in myself of not having regrets and trying not to do that thing of like oh I should have done this and I should have done that and you know I want my future self to be like this and my past self to be like that and you know so I kind of I I kind of was like no I don't mind if I didn't if I wasn't going to do all the things that I you know that are set out in this vision that would be fine if I hadn't done them and I had just like sat in my pants that would be ok (laughter) cause its sort of yea you know

Hayley Alessi: I think that's a really good point I found my letter much easier if I was writing to someone else and if you said imagine writing someone what advice would you give them that would be a better opening cause you did have to stop and think about your own particular traits and not everybody

Dana Koellner: But then would you have to know somebody else how well

Hayley Alessi: But it doesn't matter if you have to name someone else I would say what kind of advice would you give to people what kind of problems could you foresee people might have I think I would have it more open than that

Dana Koellner: But I like the option

Hayley Alessi: Because your right a lot of people kind of do they are kind of journaling and stuff and beat themselves up far too much in life anyway so they don't actually

Dana Koellner: I love the option of that of doing that you can either write to yourself or to somebody else

Hayley Alessi: And you don't have to give them a particular person

Bridie Moore: For me it's actually quite therapeutic the reason why I say give them an option because I actually enjoyed writing to myself this idea of myself because I'm writing to me now

Dana Koellner: Yea aren't we always

Bridie Moore: I'm writing about you know what I don't do which is I fill my time up with stuff and then I realize I'm too frazzled and too burnt out too I'm doing it all halfcocked and yea and it's not and I need to stop I need to find some spaces where its proper down time so that actually was really valuable not that I'll do necessarily do anything about it but at least I wrote it down

Dana Koellner: Yea lots to think about

Hayley Alessi: Yea I wondered where the space was in the utopia but probably also in this workshop what if you've got somebody who's has got some kind of disability or ill health or something is it harder for them to imagine how they function in that kind of world because personal care can't be done by robots

Dana Koellner: Yea I know I think about that

Hayley Alessi: And I'm thinking in particularly maybe your folks whose in retirement and its gone completely differently than to how they expected

Dana Koellner: Yeah

James Smith: The thing is I've never asked Siri what she'd like to do in 50 years' time

Dana Koellner: no never

Hayley Alessi: Retire

James Smith: Siri might want to (inaudible)

Dana Koellner: That's it yea that's it yea

Bridie Moore: Its really interesting though

Zelda Hannay and others: Yea yea

Dana Koellner: I don't know I definitely feel strongly like there are so many weird things about trying to get the LARP elements into this that you're doing right now that you don't know you're doing and that's the weird bit because that's the PhD part but it's kind of it's it's difficult

Clare McManus: But is the LARP stuff the disruption and the challenges

Dana Koellner: Huh?

Clare McManus: Is the LARP stuff the disruptions and the challenges to people's thinking

Dana Koellner: I don't know

Bridie Moore: You mean you want to create something where it is more explicit that people are in role or less explicit where people are in roles

Dana Koellner: Less explicit I don't like to ask people to play a role I mean I know we are all playing roles and we can argue all this stuff but I'm just saying I'm not talking about that I'm just talking about like for example if if like come and dress up in the future you know I don't want to do anything like that so it's hard to get people to involved in the some of the steps of live action role play so when you did that 50 years from you to yourself what happens is there is a thing called bleed so when you create that self you are drawing parallels in your emotions between now and there

Bridie Moore: Which is exactly what I was saying

Dana Koellner: Which is exactly the point of what I was trying to create

Bridie Moore: Right

Hayley Alessi: But then I think that is going back to point and you coming in in role we automatically accept the situation and we are in it from the beginning with you being slightly more hesitant and quiet at the beginning with slides and a little bit like this may happen or not then you are not really fixed in the role in my head I'm kinda of slightly wondering I'm questioning I think you won't (inaudible) stuff in my head and now I don't think I quite understand that whereas if you come in more authoritively we're in we're in we're in

Dana Koellner: You bought it

Bridie Moore: We're in the role we're in the scenario

Dana Koellner: Yeah

Hayley Alessi: As well as you and I think that's what you were trying to say

Bridie Moore: We're sort of there and in character because we are now in your play your scenario

Dana Koellner: Which takes away the realism doesn't it in some way

Bridie Moore: Yea but then live action role play isn't realism is it

Dana Koellner: Well is it anyway another story

Bridie Moore: I mean yea it's sort of like a quasi-realism quasi realism you might call it

Dana Koellner: Well thank you all so very much I really appreciate it is now 7oclock and I just want to say thank you

Bridie Moore: It was fascinating. Thank you

(Clapping) [END]

Appendix 6.4**Audio CD Exploring Mastery and Reputation Performance Lecture Feedback Session****Readable on PC, MAC and CD Player****AIFF File**

Appendix 6.5

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to the Mastery and Reputation Workshop. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Hayley Alessi

Aldona Aliejune

Zelda Hannay

Clare McManus

Bridie Moore

James Smith

Appendix 7.1

Case Study Seven: The Care Chip Performance Practice Plan, Notes and Script

Practice Plan

- 1) Secure location, make props: PDF on iPad for ‘thumb printing’ and the ‘Care Chip implantation device’
- 2) Need post-it notes and pens for performance, make slide presentation
- 3) Do consent forms and questions prior to entry
- 4) Set up slide presentation and put on costume
- 5) Performance starts as participants enter
- 6) Feedback discussion

Rationale

In this session, I intended to take stock of the previous session’s notes about creating more of a ‘character’ and also attempted to design a performance based on Candy’s work of creating future experiences through environment and Design Fiction. I incorporated Candy’s four principles: ‘Don’t break the universe, The Tip of the Iceberg, The Art of Double-take, Make it Fun [provocative].’ I also used heroism from LARP, through the consideration of empathy and action within one’s own life and individual communities. I began by thinking about a concept of the future that would inspire empathy and wanted to use a piece I could feasibly create which would be as realistic as possible in an immersive environment. I decided to portray a representative from the NHS at a gathering of people who were considering having a new health chip (the Care Chip) implanted in their skin in a realistic environment. I tried to present myself from as neutral a position as possible. However, there were elements in the

dialogue of the ‘unreal,’ but very few to stimulate thought on the overall concept, in line with Candy’s principles. The Care Chip would represent issues of personal choice concerning technology as a means of future health protection.

Session Notes

I booked a lecture hall that has a ‘scientific’ type look to it in the hope of securing an immersive realistic environment. I then created the story of a fictional tech company called *Microdyne* and constructed the slide presentation using the NHS logo. I acquired a white lab coat and made a lanyard labelled with ‘NHS’ and my name. The devices were designed to be believable and as realistic as possible to support the futuristic environment, as promoted by Candy in his ‘don’t break the universe’ rules. I used an iPad as a futuristic scanner which was capable of ‘reading’ not only the biostatistics of a human but also their emotions. The iPad was a familiar object that people could recognize without explanation but it had an unfamiliar element to it through its ‘empathic scanning’ capability as a representation of future technological advancement. In addition, I created a small device made from plastic and metal that would be the tool to ‘implant’ the Care Chip into the participants. The implant device was mostly unrecognizable and was devised as an object of future technology that would illicit curiosity. This element served the principle, ‘Tip of the Iceberg,’ in that the unfamiliarity and function not only helped to establish the future setting of the performance but also served as an impetus for considering the larger issues (such as post-humanism, autonomy, empathy toward charity) presented.

When the audience arrived, I was in character and thanked them for coming. I used a pre-written piece of text to explain why the audience was invited and to set up the idea of the Care Chip with as little room for improvisation as possible in an attempt to keep the language

consistent throughout.

Performance Script

‘Welcome... thanks for coming.

My name is Dana Koellner and I work as a specialist for the NHS Department of Health and Welfare’s subsidiary tech company *MicroDyne*. I am here today to explain how the Care Chip works and to install your Care Chip. *MicroDyne* is fully owned and operated by the NHS. When privatization of the NHS occurred in 2019 and healthcare costs sky rocketed, the NHS decided to invest in supply and service, creating our world-renowned NHS pharmaceutical and research company Genatech, and the health technology company *MicroDyne*.

We want to thank you for enrolling in the advance Care Chip Programme. We are so glad that you have chosen to get your implant prior to the government mandate next year. This will make it much easier on the NHS clinics and your own GP before the deadline.

As you may know, the British government will provide you with either a tax free £7000 cash reward or donate £7000 to the charity of your choice for your early implantation of the Care Chip. The £7000 is the estimated saving the NHS will actually save in your preventative health care over the next five years (by things such as GP visits, ambulatory services or prescription renewals and diagnosis). You can go onto our website starting tomorrow to indicate which charity you wish the donation to go to.

The Care Chip was invented by Dr. Ron Adeshi. The purpose was, in his mind, to combine a holistic physical health device and mental stimulator. The chip itself is nano-technology. It

works with a free app that is directly connected to the NHS and your registered GP. You can monitor all information yourself via the app at any time, night or day. The chip monitors all aspects of your health: blood, cholesterol, sugars, hormones, white cell counts, free radicals, etc. Additionally, it connects to your frontal cortex and acts as a mental stimulator to increase your sense of empathy 10 hours per week. For these 10 hours, you will simply be more inclined to help others, to get involved with community, to be an advocate of goodness and charity into the world. It is 100% side effect free and has been thoroughly tested over the last five years in human trials.

Are there any questions?

I must ask you now, that if you continue to agree, I will take your thumb print as your agreement to the implantation of the Care Chip and with this small device I will implant the Care Chip. We will then go through some fun questions that will begin to calibrate your individual Care Chip.’

(WALK AROUND AND PUT IMPRINT ON IPAD AND THEN IMPLANT CARE CHIP
— GIVE OPTION OF NECK OR HAND)

‘Now we will go through some fun questions that will begin to calibrate your individual Care Chip.

First, I would like you to write down on this blue paper a super power, as if you were a superhero, which power would you love to have?’

(COLLECT THEM)

‘Great. Now I would like you to close your eyes and think about your community. This could be in any community, the one in which you live, your friends, the community of your workplace. Whatever comes up first for you is correct, there are no wrong answers.

Wonderful.’

(TAKE MEASUREMENT)

‘Now, I would like for you to write down on this yellow paper, one very small action that might help your community. It can be anything — buying someone a bunch of flowers, having coffee with someone who needs help, picking up trash in your community, organising a food drive — anything you can think of that might help your community.

Now I am going to give you a super power.’

(DISTRIBUTE THEM)

‘Now, I’d like you to imagine yourself several weeks from now. I would like you to turn to your neighbour and tell them the story of how you performed your one action that you just wrote down using the superpower I just gave you. So, you will tell them the story of how you accomplished your action using your superpower.

Brilliant.’

(TAKE MEASUREMENT)

‘Aside from calibrating your Care Chip, which we have almost completed, your health measurements have increased two points! I don’t know if any of you remember this, but a long time ago there was a program called PayItForward, where individuals performed random

acts of kindness to complete strangers and reduced their stress levels significantly by performing compassionate acts towards others. So, aside from calibrating your Care Chips, you just boosted your serotonin level by 3%! Well done.

I will now come around and scan you individually. You may leave as soon as I have scanned you and, as a specialist for *Microdyne*, I just want to thank you for your participation. If you have any questions please visit the NHS website or contact your GP. Thank you all so very much and have a wonderful evening.'

(WHISPER IN SOME INDIVIDUALS' EAR – 'YOU WILL DO AMAZING THINGS TO HELP OTHERS AND YOURSELF')

Post-Discussion Notes

I did not communicate well in the feedback session and this probably had a large influence on the conversation. I was unclear when I used the word 'neutral' in terms of the political stance. This led to an assertiveness that what I was doing was political, which I agreed with. While it may not have changed the participant's opinion, in hindsight, I should have explained at the time what I meant by the term 'neutral'. I meant that, though it was impossible to avoid it completely, I was trying to achieve a less direct expression of my own opinion. Of course, my position was evident to a minimal degree. I wanted to provide a platform for imagining the future where there could be degrees of political assertion allowing more room for the audience to both consider and imagine different possibilities within alternate futures. This was too confusing for the participants and they viewed it as suspicious rather than open. The call for a stronger performance persona was evident in their statements in order for these participants to suspend their 'suspicion'. I disagreed with this approach. However, their

participation in the performance, particularly by generating fictional narratives from the super powers and their stories of compassionate action within their communities, were moving.

There also was an issue of complicity in participation. For one of the participants, this was a result of feeling confused without lines and boundaries that they felt were clear. I think this was a result of my attempt to create a type of realism within the setting and the performance more than, perhaps, boundaries because the audience was given the option of declining. There was much resistance in the feedback and from the participants. The length was also an issue for one of the participants. I think that the 'realness' and the 'hypothetical' are too confusing for the participants in this type of performance state as they mentioned that it was very close to present considerations of technology.

Revised Goals

- Try to create a more democratic co-creative experience
- Explore further the storytelling concept I experienced within LARP
- Use a more minimalist performance lecture form

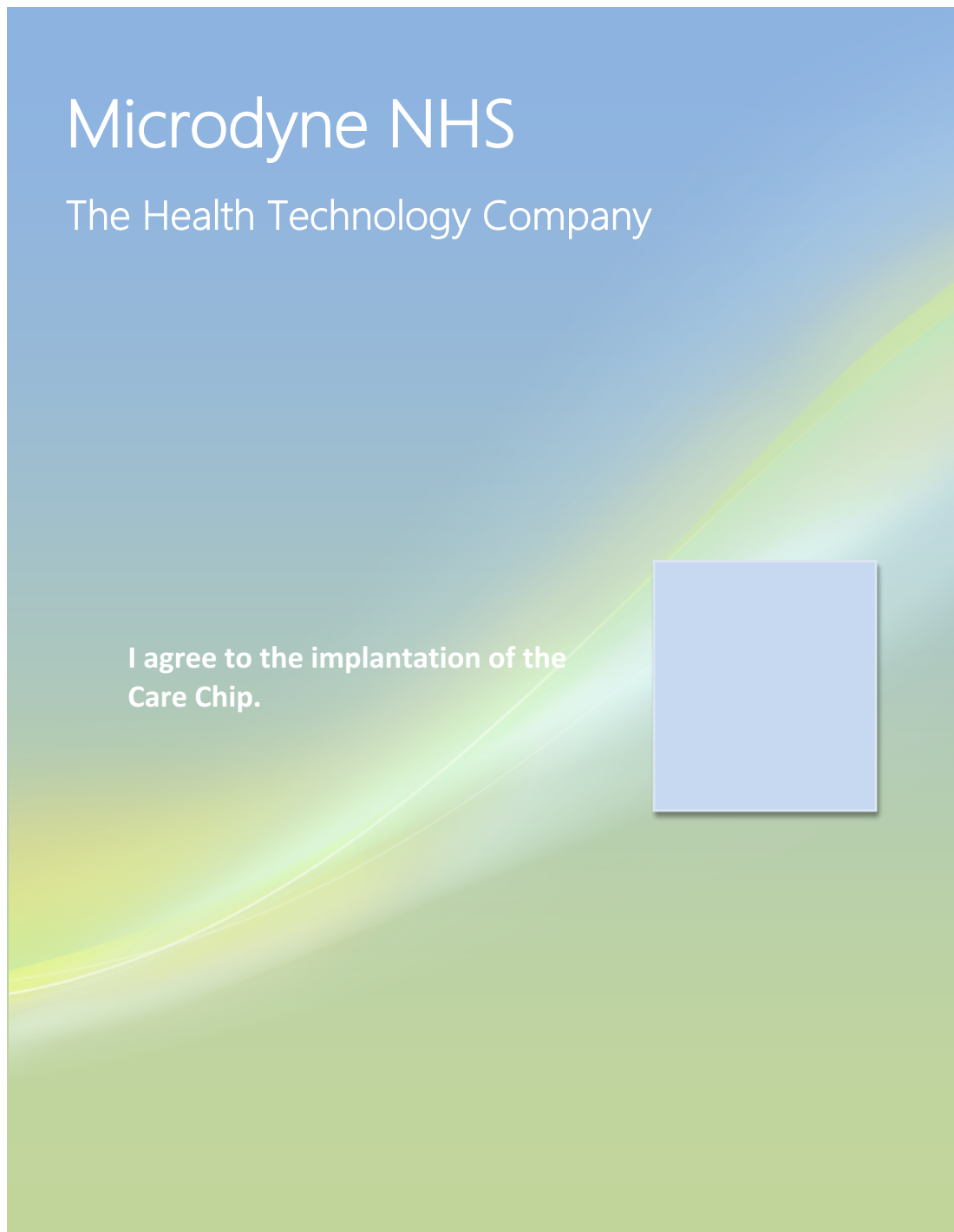
Appendix 7.2

Slide Presentation of The Care Chip Backdrop



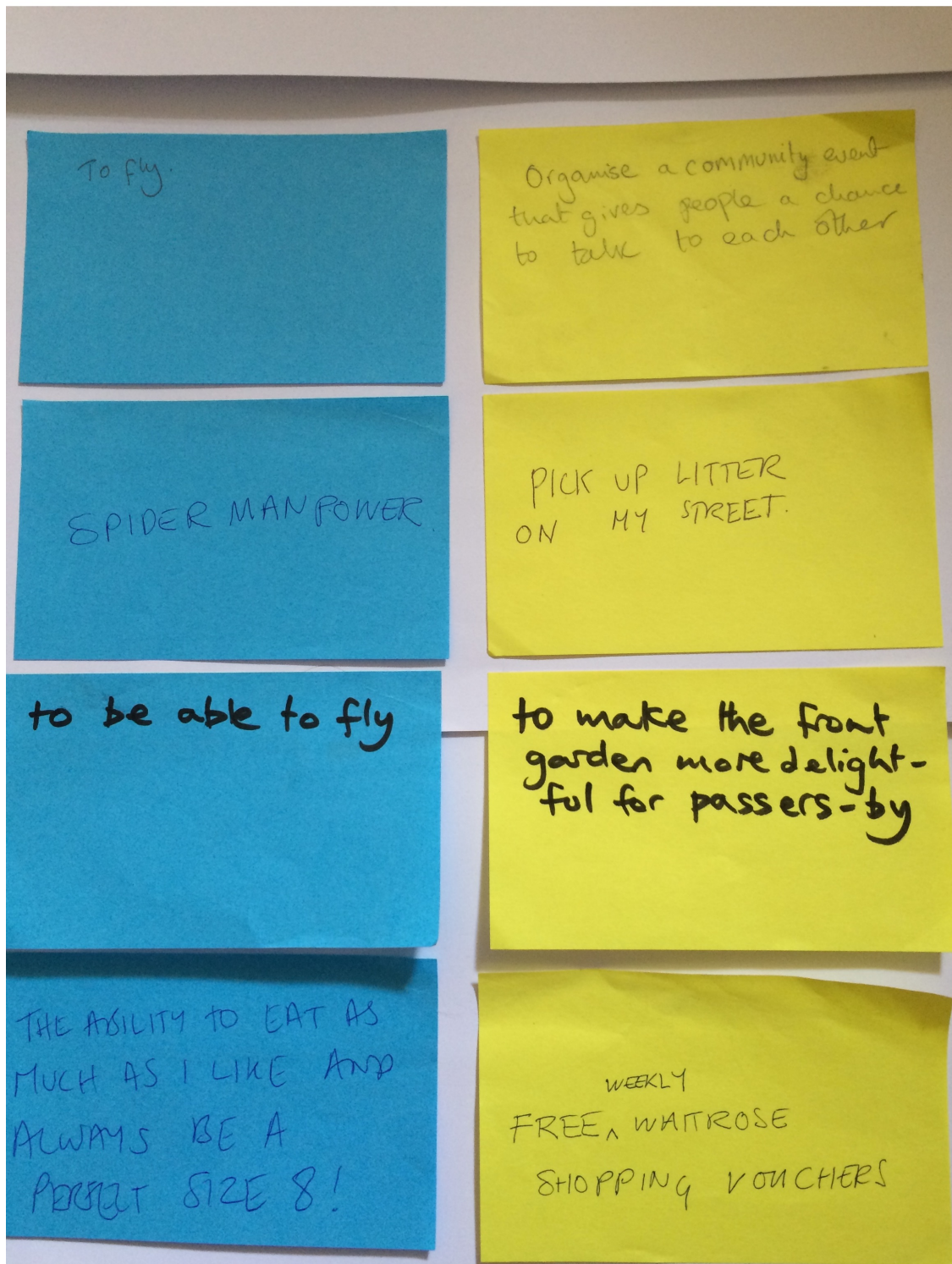
Appendix 7.3
iPad Thumbprint Care Chip Agreement

Appendix 7.3 iPad Thumbprint Care Chip Agreement



Appendix 7.4

Participant Superpowers and Actions



Appendix 7.5**Case Study Seven: The Care Chip Performance Feedback Discussion Audio Transcript**

The beginning of the recording starts while we are waiting for the remaining participants to join us in the room.

File: MOV00704

00:00

X: Oh Oh maybe she is putting a chip in me really

Dana Koellner: (laughter)

Zelda Hannay: I love that yea like coming into the theatre and the lecture theatre and you been there in white coat and everything I just think it is great yea

Dana Koellner: And did you like that different venue I liked the different venue it was so bizarre because people were checking it out the whole time

Zelda Hannay: Oh really

Dana Koellner: Like the students were like were looking into the windows and professors like looking through the windows and I think because they saw that Microdyne thing on the

Zelda Hannay: Yea yea yea yea

Dana Koellner: for like an hour the past hour they were coming up like I thought they goanna come in

Zelda Hannay: Did anyone talked to you

Dana Koellner: No, they didn't come in they thought that because I was practicing they thought you know that I was doing busy sometimes you know

X: [in audible]

Dana Koellner: I know

X: By going four of us

Dana Koellner: Yea yea well I know so at least we got some participation today it's on pretty bad weather I didn't think anyone was going to turn up think it's good you know... it was I hate performing though

Zelda Hannay: You really good tonight

Dana Koellner: I absolutely abhor it

Zelda Hannay: Really

Dana Koellner: Yea well I think I skipped the whole paragraph so I'm surprised any of it made sense yea I just don't

Zelda Hannay: Do you think that you would ever have any one else to play that role or would it... yea

Dana Koellner: Definitely definitely yea but I had to see how it works because this is um this kind of thing I did tonight is like another practitioner think this was am Dr Stuart Candy and he is a futurism guy and so he does this with his students and they create these whole different environments and worlds and practical scenarios were people can come in and so based on our last conversation I thought I should give it a whirl because the last the last one was a bit difficult in terms of the performance lecture and coupled with the performance itself so this was only the performance straight through so I just was very interested in seeing what you guys thought the differences between the two and stuff like that so I don't know I'm recording so we don't have to wait and it's up to you

Zelda Hannay: Okay yea...um

X: I can't remember what the other was about

Dana Koellner: The other one was universal wage one you were here I think yea yea

X: I know [inaudible]

Dana Koellner: That was the universal wage one it was a long time ago yea we were discussing at and in the end we you wrote a letter to yourself from fifty years in future

Zelda Hannay: Oh, yea I remember yea

Dana Koellner: And then I read the letters back yea that was that part of it yea mix from everybody and then you raised your hand if you thought it may applied to you kind of thing yea

Zelda Hannay: I mean I think yea that I like the completeness of it the fact that with that one that you know you go you go in and then there's this character and so you are creating the whole kind of world there I suppose I think that was pretty good that's really good yea am

X: It seems any question we asked you got an answer for don't know if you worked them out beforehand

Dana Koellner: I did one trial run with somebody to ask the questions I was like they can ask anything so you just have to kinda to go with it I felt like I was stumbling quite a bit actually

X: Oh No it didn't seem like that at all

Dana Koellner: Oh really

X: It felt like you got all the answers you like super [inaudible]

Dana Koellner: Oh right okay

X: Thanks [inaudible] do you need one moment

Dana Koellner: No I'm good thank you yea I'm burning up so...

X: You need the Care Chip

Dana Koellner: Hey

Zelda Hannay: You need the Care Chip

Dana Koellner: I need the Care Chip

X: Thought you got one

Dana Koellner: I've got one of course I've got one

X: I didn't ask you that, I should have asked you that

Dana Koellner: We were talking about just like from before the comparison between the two kind of projects the universal wage one where it had one of the performance lecture and more kind of performative element at the end and then versus this thing which was more of a complete start to finish performance thing if you have any thoughts about any of that

X: It felt more today it felt more... like performance is not really a helpful thing to say really but that wasn't cause clearly it was more like performance cause like you just said the other thing [inaudible] performance it felt more am...maybe more structured that isn't quite what I mean though

05:00

Dana Koellner: Do you have anything?

X: Yea it was kind of more fictional it more kind of exuberant than fictional and it drew me in more than the first part last time

Dana Koellner: Right ok

X: Yea more sort of fantasy but I felt that I was inside it more I don't know if I said that right

Dana Koellner: Inside the performance or inside of

X: I was part of it I was drawn into it and more whereas when you were talking you have to feel things on the last one like um it didn't quite work as being in the performance being in a theatre

Dana Koellner: Right umm how did you feel about your role as an audience member or a participant audience member

X: It's easy to participate I thought that once you kinda really drawn in you kinda get pulled along with it and you feel that you can contribute [inaudible]

Dana Koellner: So did you feel there was no participatory interaction in the beginning on the last one it was only in the second half when we did the letters

X: Yea yea but it's talking drawn me yea I didn't feel included in it

Dana Koellner: In the second half as well

X: No in the first half I know you I wasn't supposed to I felt more critical that performance there

Dana Koellner: Critical in terms of examining the performance this one or the last one I'm sorry

X: No the last one

Dana Koellner: Alright okay got ya

X: I don't know I don't know

Dana Koellner: No no it's great I mean I realize there is specific things I'm drawn at too that's new which it's part of

X: I think it's got more polished I think it's got more am in resolving things

Dana Koellner: Do you think it was too simplistic

X: No it might but I got lost in the description of the Care Chip so in that in the beginning there was a lot of information and I thought that I needed you know breaking down of information visual stimulus or something that would because by the time you got to any questions yes I'm sure I've got some questions and I was by that point

Dana Koellner: Oh yes so still too much of information then

X: Not necessarily too much information but it needed chunking down a little bit more

Dana Koellner: What do you mean chunking down

Zelda Hannay: Just drawing out a bit to make it a little bit longer but still keeping the same amount of information

X: Yea

Dana Koellner: I don't know can you tell me again

X: A bit repetition almost sort of like saying the same thing in two different ways

Dana Koellner: Okay

X: Cause the bit about I got a bit a little bit lost of in there cause a bit about empathy suddenly popped up loads and I thought oh I don't remember hearing in the introduction

Dana Koellner: I think I skipped a paragraph

X: Oh did you

Dana Koellner: I think I did I can't remember and the thing was in the recording so I'll never know if I actually

X: Oh I like that

Dana Koellner: I don't know I think I missed a paragraph and I think that's why it got a bit construct I mean construed or

X: It's just quite a lot a lot cause I visual and kinesthetic

Dana Koellner: Okay so maybe combined

X: So I've got a lot of talking at me and I'm not making notes I'm gonna struggle to keep that in my head

Dana Koellner: Okay

X: Um So I need something you know I don't know just a head line on a on the thing

Dana Koellner: Okay

X: That says this and another one that says this it doesn't need to be much just something that or or an image so you tell that story thing which breaks it down so that cause it's completely new information you are giving us

Dana Koellner: Right

X: We don't know anything about this walking completely cold

Dana Koellner: Yea

X: I need to [inaudible] I'd I'd just need time to work out what

Dana Koellner: Maybe a pamphlet at the beginning

X: Yea I was just going to say that

Dana Koellner: I was thinking about that as well

Group – overlapping 'yea yea'

Zelda Hannay: and actually bits like that add to the world of the performance things that make it more complete you know yea

Dana Koellner: Mmmmm, I was thinking a pamphlet actually before you walk in so you kinda of a an idea of course I would be repeating a lot of information but

Zelda Hannay: I think that I think that would be okay yea because I think like cause X said because we as audience would be sort of new to it I think that would just help even if it was repeated in different ways I think

Dana Koellner: Mmmm ok yea is it too sciency

Group – No

Dana Koellner: No?

X: In some ways it is too simple

X: I like that I like the Dr. Strangelove kind of thing I like the fact it was sort of quite basic like from the 60s or 50s

Dana Koellner: That's what I was going for

[inaudible]

X: I like that you could do a flyer that looked like what like that kind of

X: George Jetson

File: MOV00705

00:00

Dana Koellner: ok

X: Well you need some NHS on

Dana Koellner: Yea

X: Well she had a logo

Dana Koellner: I did I did cool... hmm

Zelda Hannay: I felt that umm it so because I obviously said yes to have the Care Chip fitted and I did that because I wanted to like you know do what yea what you needed us to do sort of thing but I think I would of said no had I like had I like if it was or I've not known yours something so I suppose that is something to think about what if everybody says no

Dana Koellner: Yes it I mean I imagined much bigger audience and I figure some people would feel that pressure like oh I've got to go along with it because it is a theatre show you know and I think that will happen and it's okay that people didn't umm I anticipated that it might be but if it's a bigger group it would've been a lot easier but um that's small a group that was like uhh please somebody so thank you

Zelda Hannay: Exactly exactly yea

Dana Koellner: So yea thank you

X: You could have a few plants

Dana Koellner: Yes you could do you could do yea

X: Cause I kinda [inaudible] by what you did if you said no I would been Oh I'm not sure now

X: Then you always have to have plan B another sort another umm scenario that you could

Dana Koellner: well I was kinda hoping because I kind of really didn't want to leave it open like to the people but I felt like you should do you know so I kinda assumed in the language that everyone was here they already agreed to the Care Chip but still leaving it kind of open

Zelda Hannay: But what about if you if you just took that bit out so it was like okay you've all agreed to having a care chip so I'd like to welcome you and now tell you a bit more about you know like

Dana Koellner: Yea I know that was weird I felt weird forcing people to do it you know

Zelda Hannay: I think but I think that would be for me anyway that would be would be more interesting because you'd you would still feel slightly uncomfortable but I think in a good way were as I think I would feel more uncomfortable about saying yes when I

Dana Koellner: Yea

Zelda Hannay: When I didn't actually really you know given that happening in reality I would I'm pretty sure I would have said no I feel more uncomfortable about saying yes because I want to help with the fiction

Dana Koellner: Yea

Zelda Hannay: Then I would

Dana Koellner: Well I was hoping that that would lead people to think okay so there is an incentive and this stuff is coming in the future it's already here but like I was hoping that lingering thoughts after this performance people would think well am I goanna do it because it is just coming up I mean for real in real life they have just come up with this chip for rheumatoid arthritis

X: Have they

Dana Koellner: Yea so it gets implanted in your neck and it monitor and destroys the cell nano technology destroys the cell that create that starts the rheumatoid arthritis is going to be trailed now

X: Then we can put chips into Parkinson don't they

Dana Koellner: Yea they've got it but this is real do you know what I mean so this is not so far off so I was kinda hoping that might stimulate if you had a choice to think about well how do I really feel about this actually but I really want the 7000 pounds but how do I feel it you know I don't know I don't know if that is interesting though

X: But what unsold me on it was the fact that there was no problem with it cause I didn't believe that happen for one second that there was no problem with this

Dana Koellner: Oh okay no problem

X: And the fact that you kept going no no there is no side effects there is no this there is absolutely

Dana Koellner: That was the Dr. Strangelove bit coming out I would've been I planned that

Zelda Hannay: Yes I quite liked and I quite like that because and you can play that up even more I think so

Dana Koellner: I

Zelda Hannay: Hi and welcome

Dana Koellner: I was thinking about yea I was thinking that but then it's not real

Zelda Hannay: To get that feeling of uneasiness and I think that is useful I think that's interesting to

Dana Koellner: But is it important that you think it's real I think that's a thing I think it's important that you think it's real and you don't have this weird other element

X: No I like that weird element

Dana Koellner: You know It's weird it's slightly weird because I did think about the 100% thing and cause I thought that was like brainwashing a little bit like cause I would be the same you know

X: Yea but whereas if you said well in 98 because it does on drugs or whatever it always says like 98% of things you know no problem you know the other 2% we won't mention that

Dana Koellner: Yea

X: But you know that sort of more

Dana Koellner: Plausible

X: Plausible

Dana Koellner: Yea okay but you were saying that you don't like it Zelda

Zelda Hannay: Ehh that I didn't like what

Dana Koellner: That you don't you would prefer it if it was 100% safe and it was a little bit more weird with the you know

Zelda Hannay: I think because and I think yea I think would prefer that other the I think because it would make me think that the the work it was more critical because if so like had more of the critical awareness

05:00

Zelda Hannay: About the politics of this

Dana Koellner: Because then I think that I would be doing that I would be making the choice statement with that

Zelda Hannay: Yea because because otherwise it makes me go look so that was my question why we are in this performance and what is this person you know trying to say so if you sort of create that world sort of extremely faithfully I think actually does this person kinda want this to happen where I thought your approach would be more critical critically aware than that you

know ammm so if there are little kinda parts to it like this kinda of slight strangeness or or whatever it was I would think there is something a bit more going on here

X: It also makes it more authentic although you know it's a fabrication it adds authenticity to it

Dana Koellner: Well this is a huge dilemma

X: Which [inaudible] You know the performance becomes more artificial but the experience becomes real

Dana Koellner: Well this is a huge dilemma that I just went over with X my supervisor I think that the problem is because my audience here are artists and performers that they want that context and that frame and I actually don't want to do that I want you to experience whatever you experience and I don't want to say what I think I'm giving you this experience of the future do you know what I mean and then it is up to you to take the way

X: Are you being patronizing to your audience in assuming that people aren't from the university might think in a less critical way

Dana Koellner: No no no no no no I I mean because of your experience that you are used to like talking about the word performance frame and things like this you know what that means and then the idea that being political by saying okay but if I put something weird in it then I'm I'm making a statement I'm slanting I'm skewing in this direction and that's kinda opposite of what futurism tries to do it doesn't make a statement but in performance we are used to making a statement of something so this is the huge dilemma actually

X: But You mean you're going for verisimilitude you want it to be the same as in real life

Dana Koellner: Yes I want it to be the same as if you walked into your GP down the street I mean obviously it's not gonna be the entirely the same

X: And you expect people to believe it

Dana Koellner: I don't expect you to believe it I expect you to be considerate it to consider the material that is being offered so like for example

X: Tricky

Dana Koellner: Now you have RA chips that are real and think about that in your own life and that experience that just got mimicked today could actually potentially be very real experience you know how will you decide to do you know what I mean

Zelda Hannay: But I think I think for me the problem with that is that doing it is never neutral you know...

Dana Koellner: But it depends on how much you charge it do you know

Zelda Hannay: I don't know I don't think I don't think that could ever because just by virtue of creating a scenario that could realistically happen in thirty years from now that's still kinda a vote for the main stream kind of understanding of health care and it's still it's not a neutral act to to do that to to to recreate a situation from the NHS in an uncritical way twenty years from now does that no everyone looks confused

Dana Koellner: I see what you mean you're pointing it out as political but I don't I think you can be more political or less political in performance and so I think the aim of futurism is not to be to all to actually just to create the experience and allow person to think what they want which comes directly in conflict with kind of performative theory in a way doesn't it

Zelda Hannay: Yea

X: You don't want provoca... you don't want to be provocative

Dana Koellner: I want to be provocative in terms of the ideas presented I don't want to be provocative in terms of I'm telling you what my opinion of this is does that make sense like I think this thing with the Care Chip is bad like I don't want to if I make this thing is really weird like a California doll and I'm talking to you like this then you're going to think something is really *f up do you know what I mean

X: No no that is important that you believed in it I thought that was important

Zelda Hannay: Do you believe in it

Dana Koellner: The Care Chip

Zelda Hannay: Yea the generally

Dana Koellner: I haven't thought to ask my own self that do I think it's going to happen yes I do do I believe in it what do you mean believe would I want it myself

Zelda Hannay: I don't know cause someone just said believe in it so I just I don't know

Dana Koellner: Do I think it's going to happen absolutely not a doubt do I think do I have it I think I probably would I think I probably would I mean I'd be suspicious

File: MOV00706

00:00

X: Is that if you don't have that kind of critical edge that Zelda was talking about

Dana Koellner: What do you mean sorry

X: How do you that you are not left looking silly in twenty years' time that what your ideas are your presenting your ideas as like real as not kind of uncritically like Zelda is then you lay out maybe the criticism that you're ideas you know like well what happened to that idea and who is your audience

Dana Koellner: Amm well there is a lot of futurism people in general that would be the first argument but I'm trying to branch out and open this up to a different group of people so if they criticize and say I mean I'm not necessarily making the claim myself it is still a performance but generally I wouldn't do things that I didn't think are pretty probable I guess so they didn't pan out then they didn't pan out I mean you know

Zelda Hannay: So what kind of people working is cause I kind of know futurism from from the context like earlier twenty century

X: Yea I wanted to ask you about that cause I always thought that cause Futurism to me is that movement

Zelda Hannay: Yea

Dana Koellner: You are talking the architecture movement or you talking about

Zelda and X: – Futurists

Zelda Hannay: Paintings and whose the painter...

Dana Koellner: Ohh yes that is not what this is yes yes

Zelda Hannay: No no So futurist are working now what do they do

Dana Koellner: Well it gets really mixed up with a lot of things called strategic design and strategic foresight amm it is relatively new field in a last five years but basically there's a lot of philosophers scientists amm teachers etc. and the idea is that some people work with objects so they try to design future objects and it's also performative like for example they'll create future objects like future vending machine with actual objects that you can buy and it's got like a teleportation ray or something you know umm and there is other ones that do basically guerilla flyering with amm scenarios like amm there was like put up a huge poster in the Iceland airport that says picture of Obama as old and said I could've given a world a free health care and it was because of WTO was happening there people are flying thru Iceland airport so there are artist working in the area very few like the yes man you were talking about

Zelda Hannay: Yea yea which is very political

Dana Koellner: Extraordinary political

X: There is a provocation there isn't there

Dana Koellner: Yea absolutely they have an agenda that's that's definitely set for like the yes men and all that umm and then there is teachers who are trying to advocate this in the universities because it makes people think 10, 50, 100 years ahead and try to engineer

backwards what we are actually doing where we are standing so the field is all over the place so it's very very new so that's why

X: So where is your niche like that is it almost like Obama news up in the Iceland airport are

Dana Koellner: It could be

X: Are you like focusing on like fake news

Dana Koellner: I mean they've already done that I mean you know they had huge stint with Bhopal they already kinda done that so I'm not really trying to recreate what's already been done so far

X: But is that the kind is that the kind I don't know genre that method

Dana Koellner: I don't know because part of it I don't entirely agree with like there is an ethics responsibility

X: Right that is actually what is happening you presenting that like documentary almost

Dana Koellner: Amm could be that's what I'm trying to figure out that's what the purpose of this is so I've done like various different forms this is the closest to somebody else form I've ever done before that but like each kind of this is like an iteration I'm trying to find my way to create exactly

X: Yea yea your bashing out your own ideas

Dana Koellner: Exactly to see what I think sticks what I like and what doesn't work you know what I mean but yea does that help

X: Yea yea so you're really not trying to be provocative you want something that was pretty authentic

Dana Koellner: Yes, I think for me my PhD the basic root of it is how can you know it can be different if you don't experience difference and so my main aim is trying to make an experience

that makes you think or imagine something and it doesn't have to be in that room at that time it can be later but that piece is a piece of provocation

Zelda Hannay: But isn't but isn't this so for an example is from today it as it seems like this is the way we are going it isn't a point of difference though it's like it's so like amm so for example with people with futurists like the yes men and stuff

05:00

Zelda Hannay: The idea is that you know they create a vision of an alternative future so like for example like they did with the edition with New York times that had all stories in it that could if we put people above profit then these are the things that will accompany them they made all these editions of New York Time and gave them out in New York it was really lovely project so they are saying is an alternative vision of the future amm the way you are describing isn't an alternative vision of the future it is a sort of main stream or sort of homogenous version of the future do you know what I mean because this is because sort of for example you know health care being in this way this and so on is the main this is sort of main thrust of the discount at the moment isn't it like in our in our society

Dana Koellner: Uh hum

Zelda Hannay: This is what we are talking about now you know so it's not an alternative vision

X: You are just being a few months ahead of what's going on

Dana Koellner: Well let me ask you how many how long did you think we were ahead or did you not

Zelda Hannay: Amm I don't know maybe at some point you said twenty years

X: You said it twenty nineteen you said I no no looking back in twenty nineteen you said in twenty nineteen when the NHS

Zelda Hannay: yea yea

Dana Koellner: Did you catch that

Zelda Hannay: No I don't

Dana Koellner: You didn't catch that but you did did you catch it

X: I caught something

Dana Koellner: Something

X: I knew it was in the future but you didn't specify it

Dana Koellner: That's it yea did you have a feeling that you were in a time frame that you kinda thought from there

X: I'm talking about 10 years hence

X: I thought it was a bit less than that I thought

Dana Koellner: Ten years less and more

X: I thought we were at the cusp of what you know

X: But then I didn't know that they were already doing it for some technology

Dana Koellner: Did you feel at all that at all that they was located in completely different time

Zelda Hannay: Aaa yes I did yea

Dana Koellner: But you lost it because you didn't hear that twenty nineteen

Zelda Hannay: Yea I suppose I was kind of like you know even if you don't know a specific date you kind of think and it is interesting to think how how we do this sort of the way we look old in this amount of years this will happen sort of thing so I suppose like maybe yea not not in the next few years but a reasonable kind of jump sort of to twenty years or something

X: Is that ideas you were talking about like UBI the universal way are current they are current like if you listen to the radio they talking about UBI and robots things so it's not like that far ahead you are talking about things that just on the cusp

Dana Koellner: And how those different scenarios might play out so for example you know if we had an UBI what how would you feel can I create a scenario that for five seconds you might feel live in that just to see how it feels if it works and what are your thoughts about it in that scenario for five seconds do you know what I mean it is not going to be a lifetime obviously or a long period of time that I can create that or sustain that disbelief in that

X: The problem is there is politics to all this

Dana Koellner: Of course yea

X: That you are kind of ignoring that by saying you aim not aiming at an audience like us but there is a problem

Dana Koellner: There is always going to be politics

X: And when you said that NHS went private in 2019 that was a political statement say say then you try to be neutral and it's that kind of tension that I I find quite difficult whereas if you went more towards the way that Zelda was talking about

Dana Koellner: So you like it more direct

X: It makes more plausible and you kinda can go along with it when but I don't know

Dana Koellner: Yea see I just every time I just feel like really shy against it and well it's the same way the same way with the whole performative vs kind of the performance lecture thing that happened last time it about avoiding putting you in a familiar location so that you I'm telling you and you understand what this is so

X: It was a current issue that the universal basic wage is a kind you know like people are talking about it so it's terribly difficult well like today that wasn't quite so current topical

X: Familiar

Dana Koellner: Did that help did that help

X: Yea for me

Dana Koellner: So yea what if it's like something like completely foreign would that help

Group – Yes yess what do you think

Zelda Hannay: Yea yea

Dana Koellner: So if it's something way I mean there obviously there is going to be I have to think of something you haven't ever heard of

Zelda Hannay: If it's if it's something if it's the exercise is about literally kind of imagining yourself in the future and that would be apolitical [recording cuts off]

File: MOV00707

00:00

Zelda Hannay: Themes of things in it like universal wage and health care and stuff cause yea I'm very much thinking about that now and my reaction to sort of say oh I wouldn't want to have that is very much to do with how I feel about how are things going so it's it's just on radio this morning about am there some sort of academic conference going recently and there is a professor talking on radio 4 amm about twenty years we are going to have chips fitted which track our movements in shops amm and yea it was talked about on radio and I just sort of recoil in horror

X: But they do that already with cctv

Zelda Hannay: Yes yes and our phone

Dana Koellner: And now there is face technology

Zelda Hannay: Yea and so just this morning I thought oh my God so you know and it made me think of that immediately so it's really an emotional kind of response I suppose so I think if it was something completely removed from all of those things

X: And there's also an impulse to reject what you are proposing

Dana Koellner: Why?

X: Don't know if you feel that there is a really strong impulse

Dana Koellner: why

X: Because I don't have to do what you are telling me to do

Zelda Hannay: Yes yes

Zelda Hannay: Yes yes –yea I have

X: That's the problem I have with what you are saying

Dana Koellner: [Laughing] Yea that seems to be an ongoing problem yea

X: You are proposing solutions and you are not asking questions and you are not asking us which I know is not your PhD what do you think would happen you are trying to tell us all the time and I feel like I am a naughty dog kinda like biting at my lead but no I'm not going there and I want to see what you got up your sleeve

Dana Koellner: So you're suspicious you're suspicious and you think that I'm telling you what to do is that true

X: I want to see what your performance is if

Dana Koellner: So you can't just have the experience

X: No because you have to have another performance up your sleeve if you say no

X: But also I didn't know if you were supposed to say no so part of my breaking it was cause I thought well maybe we weren't supposed to say no we were supposed to argue it cause you were so convinced it was right

X: That's what I thought with your last one the universal wage I thought we supposed to argue I thought you being provocative

X: So I thought maybe we should say no and see if that if that's what it supposed to go cause maybe you are going to try to convince us or maybe you are going to chuck us out so in saying no I wasn't sure if that was if they'd done it right or if we'd done it right after we'd said it I realized they did it right not us

Dana Koellner: Do you think this is

X: Well we didn't have a different experience did we

X: No

X: The ones who said no and the ones who said yes

Dana Koellner: Did you I don't know

X: Oh well you didn't treat us any different

Dana Koellner: No no I try not to

X: We did all the same things

Dana Koellner: Yea yea

X: Yea But we didn't get scanned I thought that was sort of sinister

Dana Koellner: So can I, I I'm just going to ask you this question so do you think if we never had any conversations about this ever and you would have just walked into the Crucible and saw this performance do you think that you would still feel the way that you do

Zelda Hannay: Yea

X: I would hope it was a bit longer after I paid for it you know what I mean I want my interval. You know what I mean

Zelda Hannay: [laughter]

Dana Koellner: Do you think other people would feel like that

X: I actually think there is something genuine in what is saying there cause I would I think I haven't got long enough to get into it if I'm going to get properly immersed I need... I I sort of need there to be more sections I need to be a bit longer I think

X: You are also contradicting yourself because you were giving us the example of Iceland airport so it seemed that you wanted that verisimilitude of like real life and you were going to present it like it a news thing as if it was real and not a theatre thing and then you say what would you say if you went to the Crucible full so now you are presenting it as it as a theatrical piece which is in Iceland airport people would

Dana Koellner: The Yes men don't call themselves futurists in what they are doing I'm I'm arguing that they are but no I'm not be going that route that's not my route I'm not gonna be putting things up in the Iceland airport

X: So you are going to be

Dana Koellner: No because this is a PhD in theatre so I have to stay in this kind of well yea but I'm really curious about what you are saying so let just see if I can get this straight

X: go on then

Dana Koellner: so you are saying that you are being told what to do and you feel like suspicious of something suspicious of the idea or the performance itself

X: Yea I've actually talked to somebody about this who was it a friend of mine I said that I felt you weren't giving me the answer and you weren't asking me a question

Dana Koellner: Do I have to ask you a question

X: no if you impose an answer on me I will buck against it I will kind of like

Dana Koellner: So unless I'm asking

Dana Koellner: If your telling me this is how it is I'm then saying is this a provocation

05:00

Dana Koellner: Even in a performative state

X: Is this a provocation are you asking is your real agenda soo to be provocative I guess I refuse what you are saying

Dana Koellner: Fascinating

X: Do know that in like you can't predict your audience you know

X: I want to ask you something so Zelda said yes if I said no would you decide yes or no

X: I think I would probably still inclined towards no If you both said no I might have said yes but I'm thinking about the Crucible as well if [inaudible] as I walked and we got to the part where we rejected it I would've walked down

Dana Koellner: where we what

X: Where we rejected it I would've walked out at that point

Dana Koellner: Because

X: If I didn't know you I am umm and I'm in that performance because again it's that thing of you're telling you what to do I need tough space to make the decision to stay or to leave

Dana Koellner: So how did I told you what to do exactly

X: Umm by telling us that this care chip was the best thing you are not really giving us a choice to do thing else so I would I wouldn't

Dana Koellner: So you can have it or not wasn't that a choice

X: Yea so that's a choice I've already said not and it walked out

Dana Koellner: Okay

X: Do you know what I mean

Dana Koellner: That's fine too

X: That is what I'm saying that's what I would do as in a participatory genre of that sort If I'm not if I don't feel kind of... I don't feel entirely safe with it and secure with it which I did cause it was you and I know and I trust you but if I didn't know you and I didn't know what you were doing and thinking this is a bit a bit scary potentially I will walk out and I have done that in the past.

Dana Koellner: Mmm mm yea

X: [inaudible] Performances before an like in one to one situations and things because I don't feel like the person is listening to me and that's possibly getting back to me asking the question thing so so you asked questions but your answers felt very it was the same sort of answer so the sense of whatever we asked you it's fine everything's perfect it's brilliant so that sense of thinking right well now I'm not sure I trust you because of the answers are all the same so if it

is in Crucible and I didn't know the situation I will walk out and I will just give you one word answers and I won't give you I won't play unless I know the rules and the boundaries

Dana Koellner: So how would you do this in a performance how would you change that in this performative state

X: It has to do with the ... um... see it was the coming into the room and partly it comes back to what I said in the beginning umm it is sort of structure of the beginning it's not being lost umm

Dana Koellner: So not being lost

X: So like I got lost in the instruction

Dana Koellner: Oh right right right

X: So it partly goes back to that to that clarity of knowing exactly what is happening umm I'm dealing with looking after the audience look at the work of Ellie Harrison and people like that who even Bobby Baker who really look out for the audience and something about that I forgot the name of that company in Manchester I can't remember but that that sense of being... it's knowing where the boundaries are somehow so so in a we are playing a game with you and it's knowing umm I don't know

Zelda Hannay: There is also theatre isn't there that kind of you know cause I think my own theatre is like that as well but I think and I thought about this before you know where you an audience or a theatre maker is actually purposefully trying to make an audience feel uncomfortable like saying Tim Crouch the author which is a piece all about the audience really so basically so it was upstairs in the Royal Court and [audio cuts off]

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Zelda Hannay: And then the house lights never go down and nothing happens on the stage and basically the cast are in the in amongst the audience and it's about you as an audience member

and what you how you react to it and then there are times in that that I didn't see it but when people and people did walk out quite a lot

X: That's like between the acts like Virginia Wolf isn't it

X: Right yea and in fact in that one Tim Crouch had a plant of somebody an actor who got up and walked out just to make it ok for other people to get up and walk out and that kinda makes you it made the audience clearly feel very awkward and uncomfortable and and stuff you know so there is that but I suppose if that's going to happen and being really clear on why why are they gonna feel if I'm making them feel a bit or kinda scared what's the kind of reason for that

Dana Koellner: Ummm So you felt uncomfortable about the Care Chip like scared implantation of the Care Chip

X: Yep cause it's a bit scary this thing that's gonna follow me around and I'm not gonna put my fingerprint for something that I don't understand what it is and I never have and it I'm the kind of person who insists on carrying a card rather than rather than giving my fingerprint

Zelda Hannay: Yea like if someone came up to me in town and said oh by the way they've developed this new technology would you be interested I would be like no like go away like get away from me kind of thing

Dana Koellner: But I bet you if I would have done that to the engineering students they would be like yea yea me first me first

X: I think it's also problematic because that's just the huge question of like autonomy and freedom and with what's happening now is quite scary so I think any audiences first instinct will be like this is quite a frightening scenario you are imposing on them but I prefer this one because you seemed to be ready am I had a word for it for the audience not to do what you want to do you seemed to have an alternative because I felt more comfortable with that because I yea I know that's okay then we will go this way so I think you have to have more branches of...

X: World Factory they showed us a diagram of the different paths that it could take and it was thousands that this performance could take cause they've done it

Zelda Hannay: What that what was that

X: It was a performance in Manchester that I went to a workshop about it cause I didn't actually really know it was a performance at the same time so they had done it on a diagram which this a incredible diagram of all different ways this performance could start this place and end at this place but the different decisions people could make up like maybe that's it it's something about having that autonomy and I wonder whether if you would not include us if you would not let us to pick super power and so we would then be excluded from it

X: Or just given us the super power

Zelda Hannay: Yea well giving or yea

Dana Koellner: Or excluded you it's all about the point of what you want the people think or feel do you know what I mean what I'm thinking about it is the point of what you want people to think or feel

X: But does it matter if I walk out

Dana Koellner: No

X: Is that but what I'm saying

Dana Koellner: But does it matter if you feel excluded that's something you know

X: Is that not what you are looking that this this technology will exclude some people and will potentially make me not want to be part of it

Dana Koellner: And that's one of the ideas

X: So if that's what you up if I decide to walk out at that point that's part of what you are

Dana Koellner: Going for

X: Yea

Dana Koellner: It's up to you do you know what I mean

X: Yea I did feel that I had a choice

Dana Koellner: that's good if you feel that you have the choice

X: But I didn't have to pay to feel that I want to leave do you know what I mean if I have to pay to go to the Crucible I want my interval and I want I don't want to have that feeling of being pissed off enough to have to leave because I have walked off

Zelda Hannay: How would so you know were saying about different kinds of audiences... not necessarily a theatre audience would be how would you what kinds of people how they come to the work and would they pay or would it be free or what

Dana Koellner: I don't know yet no idea I know it's not for a umm what my aim my ultimate goal is not necessarily for people who are already aware of this so that's I don't know how to get there yet

X: So how do you do you put it on the posters for people who that aren't aware that this is going on

Dana Koellner: No it would just be if you are interested in it

05:00

Dana Koellner: So If you saw a poster you are interested you come along do you what I mean know nobody is what I mean I'm not targeting an audience

X: But you don't want people who are doing PhDs'

Dana Koellner: No people all people are welcome I'm just saying what I have in my mind is opening up the information to broader circles you know people who might not know what futurism is for example and that clearly that can be PhD students can be a lot of people you know it's just like anything what you can be interested in I'm trying to open it up to

X: And I liked it when it went into off into the super you know like write these things down I thought there was a lot of mileage that but that was deviating from the aim of your project

Dana Koellner: The super heroes deviating

X: Well it was getting like you know you wanted to present something that was about the chips and about NHS but then when you start giving people the options to do things quite absurd not what you are proposing isn't an absurd but when you get people to sort of like you know think of a super power think of this other situation and then you know

Dana Koellner: You don't you don't think those things are related... for me they are directly related

X: Absurdity

Dana Koellner: No the super powers and the do the action is directly related to the Care Chip you don't oh you don't see that ohh okay that's good to know

X: Why it is related with the Care Chip

Dana Koellner: Amm cause first of all when you are thinking about the whole idea is that I am sort of measuring your compassion and empathy level and also your excitement and enthusiasm so you don't need to know that's not important for the audience not to know that's just theory behind the idea so when you think of a super power people are usually having fun and it's a game and it's something positive and it's also kindling in you a strength or an idea that you would have to connect to your charity or your action

X: Oh I see then you measure that

Dana Koellner: Yea so if you if I can fly then I can deliver more charity goods or whatever it is you are constructing in their mind or or not do you know what I mean so those thing are directly connected for me the super power the Care Chip and the action because it's all positive kind of empowering things do you know and that that information about the pay it forward is actually accurate that was just on BBC the other day so like when you do the positive things

like that it works in your serotonin levels boosts and you have better health something like seven percent per year or something so that's actually true

X: I was just going to say you should have some kind of ongoing graphs

Dana Koellner: Yea you know I thought about that digitally like to get somebody like to animate like what I'm really and you can see the levels in there

X: Yea yea and theirs would be much lower than ours

Dana Koellner: Well especially yours because yours was really high
[inaudible]

X: What was that about was that about dividing us

Dana Koellner: umm

X: Cause that felt was very very divisive

Dana Koellner: Yea it was a little bit about wow why was she more... you couldn't hear what I said though could you

X: I could

Dana Koellner: Oh you could hear it oh sorry you could hear it

Zelda Hannay: I didn't hear it I didn't hear it what did you say

X: What did you whisper to her

Dana Koellner: It's up to her if she wants to tell you

X: No That's okay no no

X: My empathy is really high, or something like that

Dana Koellner: Something like that

X: What I enjoyed your performance I enjoyed your performance

Dana Koellner: Oh that's good for what particular way or style or just the actual doing of it

X: I felt like although I felt uncomfortable about certain things I really felt that I liked being in your company the affability and all that

Zelda Hannay: Yea yea absolutely

Dana Koellner: I find it extraordinary awkward that's so wonderful that you feel that way

X: And I just think what you are doing is quite head bashing you know there is a lot kind of layers of stuff is quite complicated

Dana Koellner: Yea it is and I think that getting peoples feedback is so extraordinary because it I think it's very difficult if you don't know the context of what the person is doing so I'm giving you something which is great cause I'm getting your impression back not necessarily will lead you to you need to do exactly what I'm doing but it helps to form it and move it and shape it and that's really really good

X: You are also creating fictions aren't you, they are covered but they are sort of [inaudible]

Dana Koellner: Yea I mean like some of these people are working like doing way forward stuff and some of them are doing famine and disease stuff that's happening right now and you know I mean there is a lot of things about you know about augmented human reality now going out what's happening so we are all gonna [audio cuts off]

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00:00

X: I think that maybe they'll be like 1970s so be back to the nature commune yea I think [inaudible] of community won't want to be in driverless cars and say I'll get by

Dana Koellner: But see I love the idea of driverless cars because

X: Yea I do too

Dana Koellner: Because I mean I would like to be a hundred and still be able to just call somebody like I'm ready to go to [inaudible] I'm ready to go ASDA you know like I think that's safer like I think about that stuff I mean somewhat technology is good some technology is bad

X: They are not safer though cause there is the whole ethics and they have to build the ethics in and its around something like if there is a crash the computer has to work out who to save whether its gonna save 7 people or 1 person yes there's a huge ethics to do with this that they have to build into the computer so these [inaudible] pedestrians on the pavement so you might be in a car that's programed that you would be destroyed

X: But it's the same if a human was driving it

Dana Koellner: That's it actually much less

X: Worse

Dana Koellner: Much less I mean there would be so many fewer accidents so many lives would be saved

X: But then if only it would take you know a few accidents in order to be pulled of the road

Dana Koellner: Possibly

X: Whereas how many accidents would it take

X: You've got a rosy idea of the future whereas I'm a conspiracy theorist do you I mean that I don't go along the

Dana Koellner: No I mean I don't have a rosy idea I think just like you have an iPhone nor or a phone

X: I don't I don't

Dana Koellner: But you have a phone right so the point is and in my life time when I was growing up I didn't have a phone I remember my mom had a car phone and it was like this big you know like it the the the I love the fact that I have my iPhone or a phone that I can call somebody in an emergency or I find or I can read my emails and it's okay it's doing a lot of negative things as well less communication between us all this kind of stuff but I think the technology is going to be more like that I don't think it's goanna be like this dystopian cataclysm you know which is goanna wreck all of the humanity there is gonna be things like what's happening for the steel workers and all now that that's over that time period is over you can never go back to that why would we want to go back to that its polluting the world but that whole work force is decimated that's the same thing that is going to happen with transportation that whole work force is going to be decimated but think of how many lives will be how many how much less of a burden on the NHS because somebody can't get to an ambulance a car will show up

X: Se maybe do it in the manner of like Bobby Baker cause I could really spend an evening listening to what you are telling me if it was in the manner of Bobby Baker do you know what I mean

Dana Koellner: Oh I'll take a look at it maybe that's the way to go

X: Oh amm I don't know there must be other people maybe it's in the kind of manner of your

Dana Koellner: But now I'm specifically telling you something and you're not rebelling though

X: Yea but you're not asking us to do it

Zelda Hannay: And you are very clearly saying that's my opinion

X: Yea

Zelda Hannay: So we wouldn't rebel

Dana Koellner: But wouldn't a performance always be an opinion

X: Yeaas, but particularly when you're asking an audience to do something and to enter into a fiction with you your... that's different I think

Dana Koellner: I don't know how it is specifically different cause I'm giving them the option

X: You are making us complicit

Dana Koellner: Or giving you the option

X: We still but... so, you gave us the option but that's what I'm saying cause at that point I would have walked out

Dana Koellner: Yea

X: So as long as you are somehow asking us to be complicit in what you are saying then...there is a sort of lack of control or something I don't know

Dana Koellner: But that's in every case of everything that you do, I mean if you are given the option to do it or not do it then you are always going to be complicit in whether or not you do it or don't do it. I don't know what other form that you could make that frame so that you don't feel challenged or you don't feel... do you know what I mean? Does that make sense?

X: Yea it does, I'm trying to think of a specific example... its cause I have done, it is to do with the laws and lines and the boundaries and how much it is that I am understanding of what is going on

Dana Koellner: Ok so understanding and rules, are you sure it's not the technology of this thing specifically

X: Yea yea no that

Dana Koellner: Because last time you didn't feel this way, do you remember that you said specifically and you as well said you felt extraordinarily safe

X: Yea

X: I feel safe with you and I like watching you as a performer but I still had huge issues with the fact that you have given me something fait accompli [recording then fails, end of recording]

Appendix 7.6**Audio CD of The Care Chip Performance Feedback Discussion****Readable on PC, MAC and CD Player****AIFF File**

Appendix 7.7

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to The Care Chip Performance. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Zelda Hannay

Appendix 8.1

Case Study Eight: Writing New Fictions Performance Workshop Practice Plan and Notes

Practice Plan

- 1) Make slide presentation
- 2) Arrange room, set up flip-chart and stage lighting
- 3) Introductions
- 4) Read through consent form and ask for questions
- 5) Turn on stage lighting and put up slide #1
- 6) Discuss aims of the session. Go through slides
- 7) Do storytelling exercise
- 8) Feedback discussion (15 minutes)

Rationale

As I feel that I have reached an impasse, I decided that I needed something more democratic/co-creative. It has been clear from previous sessions that the language and political stance are issues. In this session, I wanted to use the storytelling concept found within LARP. I wanted something new, something minimalist that anyone can do and use easily. In a podcast concerning Artificial Intelligence (AI),²⁸¹ Yuval Noah Harari said that there will be new technologies that will enable us to experience different realities through augmenting our brains and through the use of virtual reality devices.²⁸² He discusses not only

²⁸¹ Harris, 'Reality and the Imagination'.

²⁸² Ibid.

AI, but also how storytelling shapes our collective future (what we believe, the stories we tell ourselves, how we make up our reality now) and will consume our reality in the future through new methods of experiencing stories. LARPerS construct new worlds to experience by imagining and creating new stories through improvisational dialogue. I put together a slide presentation to provide a context and a short game in which participants had to answer a question posed on the slide presentation.

Session Notes

Begin by announcing the politics of the act, ask the participants to suspend disbelief for a second and to consider the thoughts of Dr. Yuval Noah Harari. Read the following quotation (at least the bold portions) from the podcast of Harari:

Being able to distinguish between what is real and what is just a story or fantasy of our own mind — at least my understanding is that, that is **a source of human power but also the source of human imagination, the ability to create fictional stories and to believe them to such an extent that they can start entire wars just because they believe and this is what really gave us control of the planet...but rather because we are the only mammal that can cooperate in very large numbers and we can do that because we believe in fictions.** If you examine any large-scale human corporation, you always find a fictional story at the basis whether it's about God, or the nation or money or even human rights [...] they are just a story, invented by humans; they are not a biological reality and this is again the source of our power and also of many of our calamities. [...] But what happens is, even **if you start with a convention of money that, yes, everybody knows that these pieces of paper have no value and it's just an agreement between people that invest them with a certain value, very soon what happens is that people forget that, or ignore that, and**

if you open a suitcase full of \$100 bills, and you look at the brain of the person looking at the pile of money, you see all the neurons go crazy and the person sees the money as really valuable [...] he will agree, ah, actually it's just a convention, but the immediate experience of the person looking at the pile of money is you know immense greed, and even a willingness to kill for it and it's the same with corporations. If you tell somebody that Google is just a story or General Motors is just a story then, yes, if you sit for a long philosophical discussion or legal discussion they will understand what you mean, but in most cases in everyday experience we treat these entities as if they are completely real. Whatever we fantasize on, whatever our dreams, whatever stories we believe — it [the stories] becomes the most powerful force in the world. The very future of evolution of life will be shaped by human fiction, by human fiction I mean by the stories we believe. Science and technology will give us the power to realize whatever fiction we believe in. Then the question 'what is your favorite fiction?' will become maybe the most important question in the evolution of life. What we are seeing or what we will see in the not so distant future is exactly the collapse of the separation between fiction and reality because things that begin as fiction in the human mind, we will have the technology to make them a reality then they are no longer fiction. Technology makes stories and fantasies more important than ever before 'cause it makes them more powerful than ever before.' I would tend to say that we need also a good story, better story. Part of the problem with this explanation is it's too abstract. It's very difficult to get people together unless you have an emotional enemy. You could say that climate change is an enemy and that disruptive technology is an enemy but these are very abstract enemies. Most people, you cannot motivate them, you cannot harness their emotions unless you have a more human-like enemy. This is why in Hollywood movies, even if you make a movie about climate change, you have to have some evil person to serve as the bad guy without which there is no movie. I don't have a story to offer but my guess is that we will need a powerful story to get people together.²⁸³

²⁸³ Ibid.

Then state from the slides (Appendix 8.2): the provocation about writing a new fiction ‘maybe it’s about how to write a new story.... How would we begin?’ Improvise the next steps, letting the group lead.

~~Backup Game in the event the first section doesn’t work:~~

~~‘This is a game. The topics we will share with each other are necessarily political, though may not be our actual feelings, as we are role playing and this is game. Some of the thoughts, however shared, may be real. (We win the game when we reach three consensus points?) Time to create a new human fiction. Together we are going to write a story, a story that will change the future, our futures by considering and connecting to other fictions. By writing this story we will be in an imagined future, because today we are challenging our current fictions to move toward new ones.’~~

Post-Discussion Notes

It was clear that this session was very different. Several key ideas were expressed by the participants: the agreeability; the like-mindedness; how different counter arguments might be made by a different set of people and how they might be more controversial; the potential of role playing initiated through the language that encouraged some participants to play opposing points; and whether the immersive quality of either playing a role or being engaged was more potent. They liked being invited to participate in a group discussion and voicing their own ideas and learning about their own opinions in new ways that counter thoughts about certain topics. There was an ‘openness’ within the session that made it different from

the rest. There weren't any debates about hierarchy, linguistic construction or character portrayal. And they didn't reject the concept. Considering, debating, and viewing different stances on 'what we want' opened up the perspective. There was also a type of group imagining formed by improvisation and speculation, an *improvised speculation*. The improvised speculation imagined different scenarios that might play out if the group could change an element in the present. The participants, through improvised speculation, imagined what the world might be like – both positively and negatively – based on their current fears and concerns, and after listening to one another's counter proposals. Imagined then spoken, those imaginings exist in a physical memory and in a tangible experience of feelings and ideas shared and expressed within the performance. This was a significant finding.

Appendix 8.2

Slide Presentation Writing New Fictions

Appendix 8.2
Slide Presentation
Writing New Fictions

Future Imagining: Writing New Future Fictions

Dana Koellner
TERRA WORKSHOP
Thursday, April 27, 2017
5-7pm The Hawley Building

My aim is to explore methods of investigation in hypothetical futurised situations while negotiating areas of agreement between a variety of perspectives, ideologies, ambitions, needs and pressures.

The topics we will discuss are necessarily political though may not our actual feelings -as we are playing roles. Some of the thoughts and feelings shared however may be real.

TERRA WORKSHOP

Thursday, April 27, 2017

5-7pm The Hawley Building

FUTURE IMAGINING: WRITING NEW FICTIONS

BACK GROUND:

LARP ETHNOGRAPHY IN HOW TO CREATE NEW WORLDS UNCOVERED THREE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS

- 1) STORYTELLING - 'To tell good stories'
- 2) HEROISM
- 3) 'BLEED'

STORYTELLING - 'To tell good stories'

- b) to share the adventure with others
- c) to excite
- d) to create a shared mutual history that creates a long-term relationship and memory

HEROISM

- a) perform brave or memorable acts that contribute to the story
- b) to be included in the story
- c) to make a difference

BLEED

Bleed refers to the crossover between emotional reality and performance emotion in participants

- a) to experience immersion fully
- b) bleed happens when you are so immersed in the character and game and is sometimes the goal for some players
- c) 'bleed' in my work occurs in the meta state - self referential emotional connection to the roles we play within different life scenarios

FUTURE IMAGINING: WRITING NEW FICTIONS

'Whatever we fantasise on, whatever our dreams, whatever stories we believe -it becomes the most powerful force in the world. The very future of evolution of life will be shaped by human fiction, by human fiction I mean by the stories we believe. **Science and technology will give us the power to realise whatever fiction we believe in. Then the question 'what is your favourite fiction?' will become maybe the most important question in the evolution of life.** What we are seeing, or what we will see in the not so distant future is exactly the collapse of the separation between fiction and reality because things that begin as fiction in the human mind we will have the technology to make them a reality, then they are no longer fiction.' - DR. YUVAL NOAH HARARI ¹

'But what happens is, even if you start with a convention of money that yes everybody knows that these pieces of paper have no value and its just an agreement between people that invest them with a certain value very soon what happens is that people forget that or ignore that and if you open a suitcase full of of \$100 bills, and you look at the brain of the person looking at the pile of money, you see all the neurons go crazy and the person sees the money as really valuable [...] he will agree ah actually it's just a convention, but the immediate experience of the person looking at the pile of money is you know immense greed, and even a willingness to kill for it and it's the same with corporations. If you tell somebody that Google is just a story or General Motors is just a story then yes if you sit for a long philosophical discussion or legal discussion they will understand what you mean, but in most cases in everyday experience we treat these entities as if they are completely real.'

- Dr. Harari²

Agreement

Fundamental agreement in LARP and in making 'new fictions' and therefore in creating new worlds or better states of existence

NEW FICTIONS

‘...but rather because we are the only mammal that can cooperate in very large numbers and we can do that because we believe in fictions.’ - Dr. Harari³

...maybe it's about how to write a new human story from this point forward.... How would we begin?

retell/reenact our story....

A GAME

My aim is to explore methods of investigation hypothetical futurised situations while negotiating areas of agreement between a variety of perspectives, ideologies, ambitions, needs and pressures. The topic we will discuss are necessarily political though may not be our actual feelings - as we are playing roles. Some of the thoughts and feelings shared however may be real.

Please write on the piece of paper what you would like to talk about in terms of the future. For example... the NHS, AI, employment, relationships etc.

A GAME

Please write on the board an answer to the following statement:

In the future, I want the _(insert the topic)_ in my opinion, to be more like...

Points of
agreement...
&
Points of
disagreement..

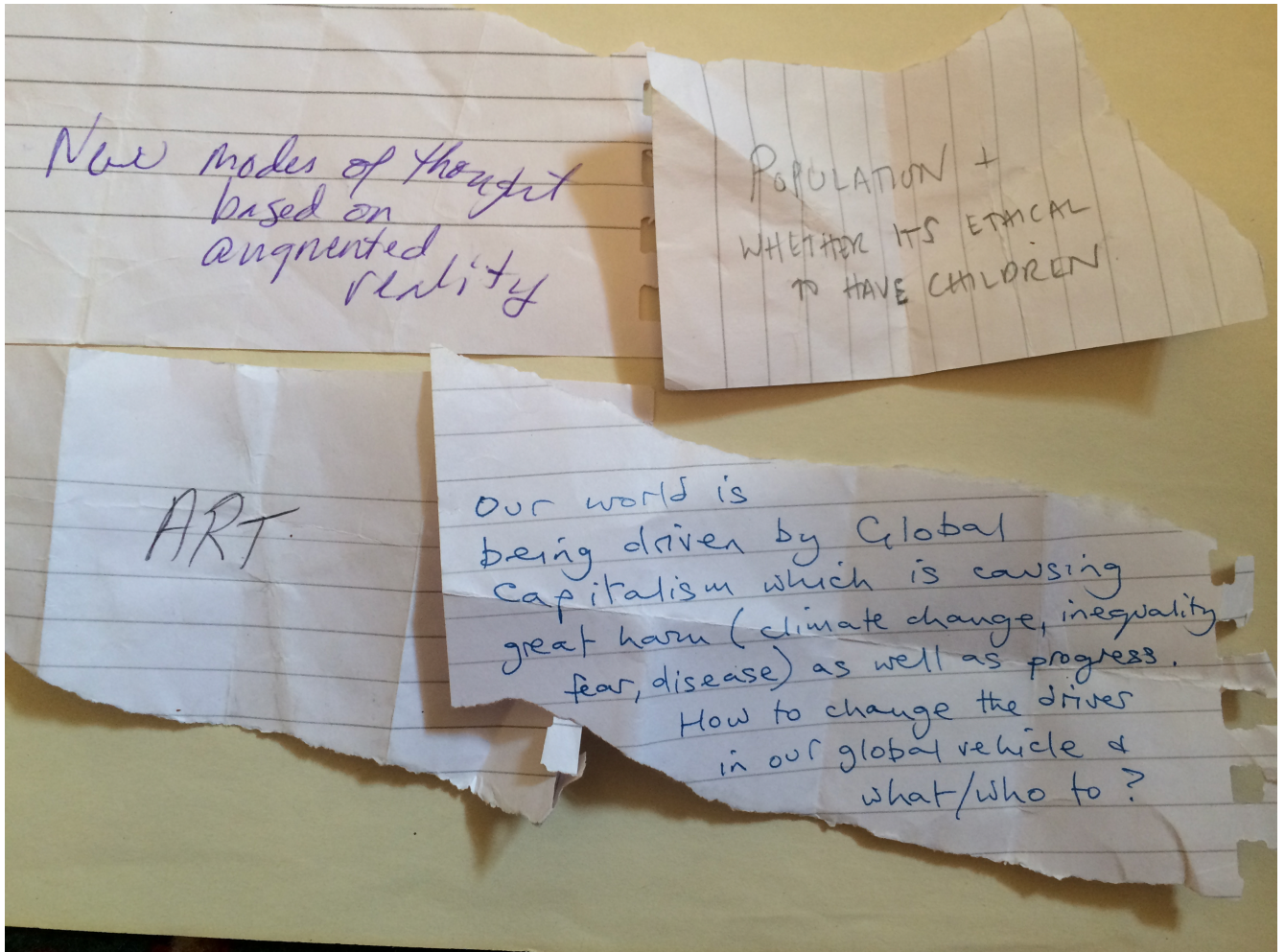
Discussion

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<<https://www.samharris.org/podcast/item/reality-and-the-imagination>> [accessed 19 March 2017]

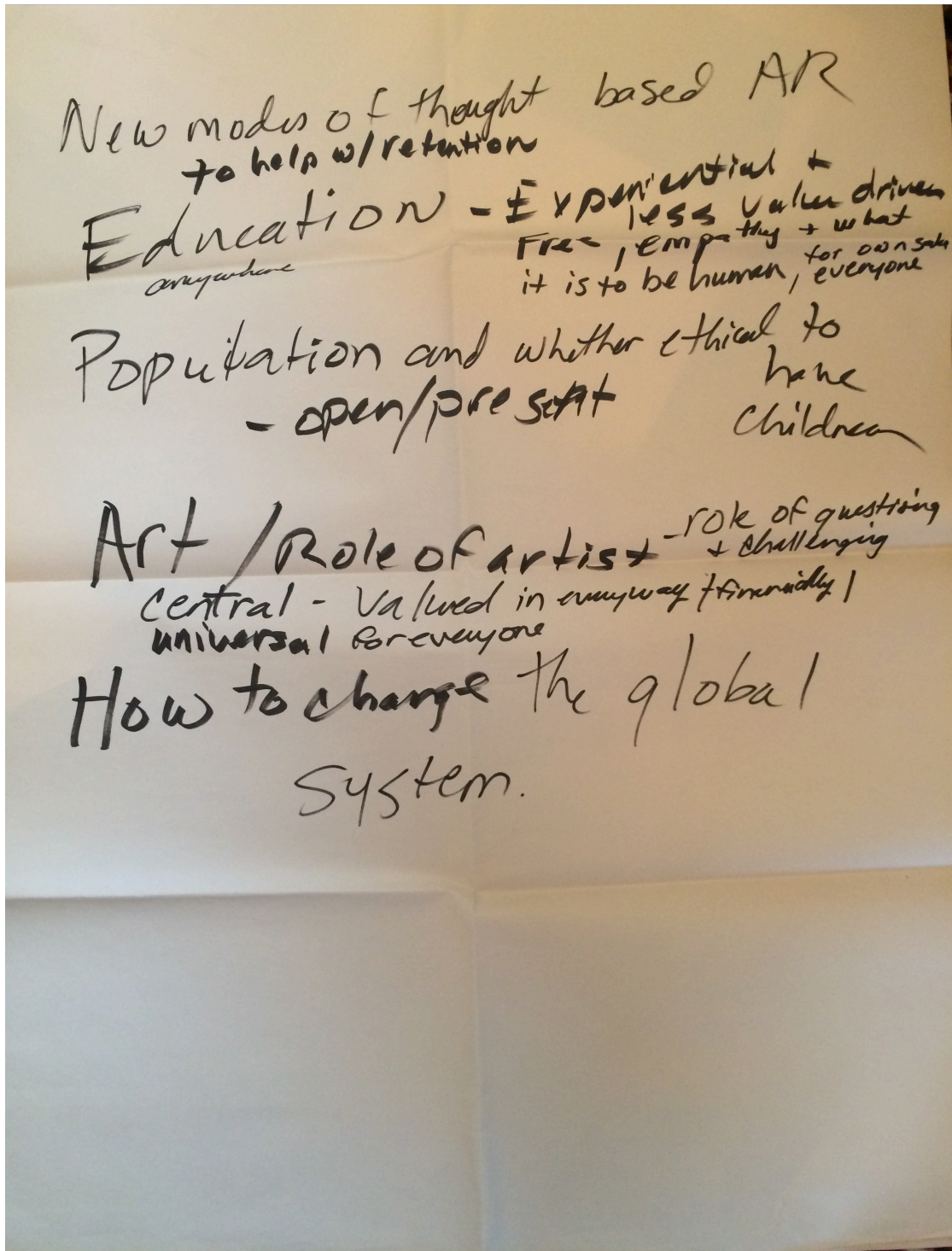
Appendix 8.3

Document Image of Participant Ideas



Appendix 8.4

Document Image of Flip Chart



Appendix 8.5

Case Study Eight: Transcript Excerpts from Feedback Session

43:25 Dana Koellner: [...] and how they [LARP] do that going back to what you want, I mean part of it is the costume, part of it is the um endowment with a new self a new role you know what am I interested in kind of idea

43:45 X: I think there is something quite to me there seems something important about that because that fees you up to think about different things in a way that if I'm me I'm not free to do that does that make sense?

43:57 Dana Koellner: Oh interesting yea

44:00 X: so like The Care Chip I was sort of in a way freed up to go no I'm not doing that cause that was the role I'd taken on

44:09 Dana Koellner: Yea that does make sense

44:11 X: So that sort of sense of being more immersive I think is to me is quite an important part of it

44:19 Zelda Hannay: Yea that is, it's interesting that idea of like giving people permission somehow in a theatre space, giving people permission to sort of act certain roles and imagine certain futures, you know what are the different roles that we could be put in that would mean that we would act out certain futures

44:39 Dana Koellner: Yea because I remember like if you try to tell somebody what's happened then you automatically – no I don't believe how that is or whatever, that comes back at you which is interesting in itself because that shows what the people are believing and how they're thinking

44:54 Zelda Hannay: Yea

44:55 Dana Koellner: So that kind of put them in a role automatically, which is a different

way

45:00 Zelda Hannay and others: Yea yea, it's a different position

[...]

46:15 Zelda Hannay: [...] It was sort of this collaborative sort of event and you took you were to play roles in the story and the nurses put you to bed and things then you sailed on boats on the Thames and it was absolutely amazing.

45:25 Dana Koellner: It's a LARP.

46:26 Zelda Hannay: Yea well yea and he was sort of saying well I don't think that immersive this idea of immersive theatre gets bandied around all the time and actually you have to be really careful to think about what is immersive and what isn't and he talked about hospitality, and sort of generosity and openness and sensitivity and all these things and I thought it was really interesting cause I've only seen one PunchDrunk Show and as much as I did like I find it very, it was quite aggressive, I found it quite sort of exclusive, and quite kind of I don't know it isn't I had sort of problems with it, a few problems with it and stuff, this anonymised, you have to wear this mask and your sort of milling around with this 600 other people in masks and all the actors ignore you, and you know well that's not very inviting its great it's fun so I don't know yea yea exactly but what is immersive then, so I actually feel quite cut off even though I'm in it physically in the set

[...]

47:50 Dana Koellner: Well I'm kind of arguing I think at this point, that like if you are writing new fictions and you are telling new stories and you are thinking about the future then that is immersive in itself because you are involved with the making the creating the thinking and then somehow projecting yourself through time and space a little bit because you are having to place yourself in a different scenario. [...]

[...]

1:37:42 Zelda Hannay: Yea yea I thought it was, I really liked being invited – it makes me sound like an egomaniac – but I really liked being invited to talk about possible futures sort of all together and there was a sort of yea that sort of discussion and I really liked actually umm kind of voicing some of the stuff that I think about, learning about what I think about it so I thought about what I think in new ways I think cause a lot of this stuff is unresolved for me and I think about it all the time and it goes just round and round and I just feel really depressed about it so actually umm it was really nice umm to hear myself saying it out loud.

1:38:33 X: I think it was interesting in that sense of like you said voicing and generally we had moments where we weren't sure whether we were talking about the same thing but then we came to an agreement and I think that interesting what you [Dana] are saying about having that agreement but I think there's a thing again about the fact that are we likely to agree with one another anyway and is it a case of should we be having other people into this discussion who disagree with us on varying ideas and how would that discussion make us feel then if it became more argumentative cause it hasn't been today it's been quite nice and quiet umm I'm not saying I agree with everything everybody says at all but what I have I felt like I was being listened to and felt that I was able to persuade somebody for what I was saying or at least they would listen and not shoot me down in that sense that wouldn't necessarily always be the case but what I just came into where you said but if we all agree on these things why can't we change them because we don't have the power maybe we should have maybe we've got more power than we realize but that's whole different question but but those people need to have this discussion to find out if they agree and that's the issue.

[...]

1:42:23 X: Umm my thought is it's like thinking about the future and all the scientific part of it is so... it's such a different kind of different bag to the sort of the kind of political discussions that a lot of people I know have its almost like same old same old on the political front and the scientific front is like forging ahead all this amazing new stuff new materials all kinds of incredible things are happening and yet yet again it's almost like the actual humans aren't there it's like this great huge divide

1:43:11 Dana Koellner: That's true I agree with you

[...]

1:43:40 Dana Koellner: But as a piece of theatre, if we called this a piece of theatre right now, I think for me you are discussing exactly what I would want to have discussed, not to come up with any solution, but to be thinking about this scenario or these scenarios.

1:44:00 Karen Mulcahey: You know when you say a piece of theatre, I mean would you set up a frame like what Boal does Forum theatre, would you set up a new framework in order to discuss these things or create these new fictions, that isn't just sit and discussing, do you know what I mean, do you know what I mean that's the idea.

1:44:23 Dana Koellner: That's the goal yea, how it works, what does work, what doesn't work.

1:44:25 X: One of the big things with how it started, was you asked such a massive question, that we did all go kinda...Ohhh...(stammers) I can't remember it what now even..how do you see the future? Or how you –it was such a big question, but yet we did get in from it, I don't know how you did that. But there was some way that became a very open conversation, umm but yea cause I got a bit kinda floored by the question and again with that write down something that you want to talk about and again it was massive, I could have written anything and I think that was quite interesting – cause interesting that you saying that we talked about what you wanted to talk about, not what you wanted us to talk about but like you didn't guide us in that at all, I suppose that you did the opening did to a certain extent. But..

1:45:20 Dana Koellner: I could have left that whole opening out actually

1:45:21 X: Yea it wasn't it was fairly.. we've done your workshops before so we've got an idea of what you are interested in but then actually I don't think any of us particularly picked those things we've done.

1:45:35 Karen Mulcahey: Well I was new to that wasn't I, I suppose but if you are going to talk about the future or anything you can only like you said you can't get rid of the past so you are thinking within the system and institutions and so yea so I guess that kind of there's still things gonna be we gonna be thinking about but just in a different way

1:45:54 Dana Koellner: Yea

1:45:55 Karen Mulcahey: I think it's difficult is so it's not abstract it's so strange and new the concept that we've only got the past to go on and it's like there is a massive gap that we need to take a massive leap to create something new and we almost haven't got the language to do it

1:46:11 Dana Koellner: And we also have a lot resistances.

1:46:16 Karen Mulcahey: Yea

[inaudible]

1:46:16 Dana Koellner: Like yea and talking about the form [meaning more familiar forms such as one-to-one performances] like just even the question there is a resistance [from myself] an automatic resistance to the question and we've been through several iterations of resistances and agreements as well and new insights and now what I am trying to figure out is how why is this one different other than me asking your rather than presenting something for you to look at can you think of any ways that this was different cause I was asking a question problem larger than every other topic.

1:46:47 X: Yea yea cause the other questions have been more specific about...

1:46:51 Dana Koellner: A particular thing

1:46:55 Zelda Hannay: I think its cause so you said um write down on a piece of paper and you put the thing on there and it said something in relation to the future and

you put in brackets e.g. and I thought well I don't actually want to talk about those but because you said e.g. so that meant I was invited to talk about a part of the future that I was really interested in, and that for me was the difference. Because I guess before um you know, when you said before ok that we are going to talk about the universal wage or we'll talk about you know the chip and so on, I suppose my reaction to that is that I would always go well what about this, this and this before I actually talked about those things you know I'd always go yes but, you know, whereas because you said well what do you actually want to talk about and didn't give me a kind of well it's this particular thing that was open enough for me to go ok well these are the things that I've been thinking about and they don't have yes 'buts' in front of them, it's me do you know what I mean. And I think that was the difference and feels that to me feels very very hospitable and open and good it feels good.

1:48:14 Karen Mulcahey: Yea and like arts, I didn't really have a way of putting it into put it in that question, but I just knew it was important to me and so that was quite open I suppose that helped yea.

1: 48:27 X: There was also quite a nice thing that you said early about this that we might not be saying what we think, which again just frees you up to just say well this isn't ness...so you don't know how much of what I said is me and that is quite nice

1:48:41 Karen Mulcahey: Yea its useful actually that isn't it

1:48:42 X: Nice because it just lets you go ok but that could be (inaudible and video interrupted)

1:48::48 Dana Koellner: And that lets you pick another role

1:48:49 X: Yea and that might be me and it might not and but that just that little edge of possibility means that you've got a little bit of freedom to go oh yea I get that

1:49:01 Dana Koellner: Would you call this a piece of theatre?

1:49:06 X: I wouldn't call it theatre, I might call it performance

1:49:10 Karen Mulcahey: Oh I don't know I think I'd go the other way around, I don't know I'd have to now go back and define those terms again

1:49:18 Dana Koellner: Can you just throw out a couple reasons why, just anybody

1:49:25 X: I'd call it a cooperative environment.

[Agreement sounds]

1:49:29 Karen Mulcahey: That's probably more like it isn't it?

1:49:32 X: Plus some dissenting voices could make it more interesting and challenging

1:49:38 Karen Mulcahey: I always think of the theatre as sort of an arena in which things happen, even if you go back to Greek tragedy –

1:49:44 Dana Koellner: Cause this was an arena

1:49:46 Karen Mulcahey: Well that's why say theatre rather than performance if you know what I mean, but then, I don't know

1:49:50 Dana Koellner: What about for you?

1:49:52 X: I think of theatre as something that is happening over 'there' in a way that I tend to think of it as having an audience, whereas performance I see...

1:49:58 Karen Mulcahey: Yea I suppose

1:50:02 X: Yea no no I'm not saying I'm essentially right...

1:50:04 Karen Mulcahey: Yea I'm just chewing it over yea

1:50:06 X: But that sense of performance being I'm performing this part that thinks these things and so I'm performing for you as an audience in a way

1:50:18 Zelda Hannay: In the same way we do in our lives

1:50:20 X: In the same way you do in your presentation and you know...(inaudible)

1:50:28 Dana Koellner: Cause I don't know that I want to change this too much actually, for me this kind of hits the button this is exactly where I'd want to take it but I don't know if it needs [additional] theatrical elements or...

1:50:39 Zelda Hannay: I do think it would be really interesting I just suddenly thought when you were talking you know those kind of exercises where you give people a piece of paper and it has your objective on it or who you are or something so it like

1:50:52 X: Like a role play

1:50:55 Zelda Hannay: Yea you want to... you want to be best friends with so and so but you don't want them to know whatever it is, I wonder it would be quite interesting to have some discussions about the future and about some of these different topics but you hand people objectives or identities or something

1:51:14 Dana Koellner: I had a game, that's the second part of this game yea yea

[...]

1:45:19 Zelda Hannay: Cause I'd love to that it be really interested to do that

1:51:22 X: That might get that dissent in that we were talking...

1:51:29 X: I was going to say that people might take a sort of caricature if they weren't speaking from the heart

1:51:34 Zelda Hannay: Yea

1:51:35 Dana Koellner: Well you could get bleed with that but the only thing I like about this format is that's it's you in some form, in some form, not that a character in a

role even if I gave you something –

1:51:49 Zelda Hannay: Well, sorry, just going on with ideas, but I was just thinking because what I was going to say is that one of the things that perhaps the exercise of kind of taking on different roles might do is allow people to be free-er – as you probably notice British people are a bit kind of (gestures) you know we are not very good with disagreement or conflicts we are all a bit like (gestures) with sticks up our bottoms so I wonder if you know a first exercise could be the kind of playing different roles and things and playing around with it a bit and then maybe a second exercise would be more like this one so potentially you've been freed up by a bit by a sort of a performance sort of interaction and that freedom that we get from playing other roles and then we feel freer perhaps to talk and try ideas out without feeling like we've terribly offended somebody and you've terribly offended me and stuff.

1:52:53 X: Yea, yea

1:52:57 Dana Koellner: Yea, I do like, I do like the element that know that you can carry this out with you that these are your thoughts in so form or not, but that they are probably potentially more than if I said ok you're an architect or you're a doctor and something and I said right we're going debate the NHS you know.

1:53.15 Zelda Hannay: Yea, yea

1:53:20 X: Something about, I want that immersive idea is that integral to your work?

1:53.26 Dana Koellner: Not necessarily no, but go on, go on

1:53:31 X: But I was just thinking about that immersive idea and whether, which is more immersive, whether I'd be more immersed I don't know, cause I've not done it whether I'd be more immersed if I was taking on a role that wasn't me because I could just throw myself into it or whether I was more immersed because we just got into the discussion and I had to respond to things that people were saying.

1:53:53 Dana Koellner: Well because I – oh sorry

1:53:55 Karen Mulcahey: No, I was just saying well they're both immersive aren't they, just different.

1:53:59 Dana Koellner: And I thought about the end result of this is not necessarily speaking to theatre people

1:54:05 Karen Mulcahey: So they might find that a little bit weird going I'll take on this role

1:54:07 Dana Koellner: I think they are going to find it slightly weird I mean it depends on how you handle it but in general like...

1:54:15 X: Are you going to take this somewhere?

1:54:16 Dana Koellner: I'm thinking, I'm thinking to if I can find a way

1:54:20 Zelda Hannay: How is it different then from you know a sort of political conversation sort of thing, because I was just wondering you know because I'd imagine sometimes what can happen with these kind of conversations is, it ends up being a kind of critique of everything that's happening now and sort of slagging off a bit and those endless political conversations you have with people and what the left gets told off for doing constantly just talking about stuff so I wonder how is it different, how could it be different?

1:54:58 Dana Koellner: Well the setting is different, so that's it's kind of self-referential in its setting that would be the basic level, but at the end I think what I would do is I would have an agreement, so the whole thing is that we come to at least one agreement that we can agree on, one thing that we can all agree on and then the question I was thinking of before and either take that further like into an action like you were suggesting or have them enact out different roles both sides of the agreement but I don't, I'm not leaning towards that now so I don't know

1:55:33 Zelda Hannay: I think that would be quite meaningful to have if that was what was going to happen, to then have an action, you know it wouldn't necessarily have

to be something kind of like that people wouldn't want to do or something but just something

1:55:46 Dana Koellner: What could we do basically what might we do

1:55:49 Zelda Hannay: Yea yea to sort of change the future sort of thing as it were um you that we wouldn't if we hadn't of all been here in this moment together

1:55:59 X: Then there's the question of (inaudible)

1:56:02 Karen Mulcahey: And how do you realistically

1:56:03 X: Those are so massive cause I'm looking at that list and those are so massive yea I completely know what you are saying but those are such massive things that we decided to change over there

(several) yea yea

1:56:13 X: If we're gonna decide an actual practical action that we come out of this conversation to do wha...

1:56:18 Dana Koellner: Where that's where I'm getting to now because I don't I I find that um marching and this kind of stuff

1:56:25 Zelda Hannay: Yea

1:56:27 Dana Koellner: Is not what I'm looking for.

1:56:30 Karen Mulcahey: I do like the idea of one, an agreement of some kind cause I think it sort of reinforces with that group that you can find agreement and that in itself a little change or a little hope

1:56:40: Dana Koellner: That's what I think, that's exactly what I think

1:56:43 Karen Mulcahey: Get in!

1:56:44 Dana Koellner: Get in!

1:56:45 Karen Mulcahey: I'm loving that, that's ace! Because actually you do, like you said critiquing everything and going it's really rubbish and there's all this power and when somebody does surprise you with a thought and you go well actually yeah that, yea, it lifts you a little bit and it opens your mind a little bit and you get (gestures)

[...]

1:57:02 Dana Koellner: mmm. That's what I think.

1:57:03 X: So maybe the outcome could be an agreement, we agreed on these things it wouldn't be actually all of that

1:57:10 Karen Mulcahey: Yea even if it's just one agreement

1:57:12 X: Cause we didn't actually agree on everything, we agreed on this one thing and you take that one thing away with you that everybody, cause even if you had a group that had more argumentative [argument] in it should, you'd hope that's one thing, that's ONE thing that you'd come away with

1:57:26 Dana Koellner: Because that's my idea, is that if you can take, if we can just work on one things [thing] that we agree on, all the other problems are going to be there always we know that and we will get to that. But right now... Have you seen this new Heineken commercial? [continues about the commercial]

Appendix 8.6**DVD Video of Writing New Fictions Performance Workshop Case Study Eight
Readable on PC, MAC and a DVD Player**

Opens automatically on Mac in *DVD Player*

Opens automatically on PC in *Windows Media Player*

Otherwise open the Video TS Folder and click on each of the 5 individual VOB files:

VTS_01_01.VOB

VTS_01_02.VOB

VTS_01_03.VOB

VTS_01_04.VOB

VTS_01_05.VOB

Timecode text references match through *DVD Player* and *Windows Media Player

Appendix 8.7

Participant Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to the Writing New Fictions Workshop. Some participants wished to remain anonymous and are designated as 'X' within all text and citations.

Zelda Hannay

Clare McManus

Karen Mulcahey

Appendix 9.1

Facey Photo Consent

University of Sheffield Mail - Photo Permission

23/04/2018, 18:32



Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Photo Permission

4 messages

Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk> 20 April 2018 at 11:43
 To: [REDACTED]
 Cc: Dana L Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi Oliver, my name is Dana Koellner and I contacted you several years ago about using a few of your images for my PhD to illustrate LARP. I know it has been a while, but I am about to submit my thesis and just wanted to confirm again. The thesis will be published online as an e-thesis and maybe much later as a monograph if the opportunity arises, which I will recontact you about.

Could you please let me know if you are still ok with me showing some of your images with your trademark and a photo credit as (Photo Credit & Copyright Oliver Facey) in the thesis?

I was also wondering if you might have this image in colour as I absolutely love this image and would like to have it in colour for the thesis!

Thanks so much!

Kind regards,
 Dana Koellner

Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk> 20 April 2018 at 11:46
 To: [REDACTED]
 Cc: Dana L Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi - sorry the image didn't appear in the previous email- but its the Empire 2014 LARP black and white photo with the orcs running through the portal gate with a flag.

Best wishes,
 Dana
 [Quoted text hidden]

Oliver Facey [REDACTED] 23 April 2018 at 17:03
 To: Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi,

I absolutely support academic research into LARP so you are still welcome to use any of my images as part of your thesis and the credit that we agreed upon before is fine.

The image of the orcs running through the gate is B&W only I'm afraid, it didn't work as a colour image so that is the only one that has been published.

Appendix 9.2

Moss Photo Consent

University of Sheffield Mail - Photo Permission

20/04/2018, 20:36



Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Photo Permission

3 messages

Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk> 20 April 2018 at 12:33

To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Dana L Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi Charlotte, my name is Dana Koellner and I would like to use one of your images from Odyssey LARP for my PhD to illustrate my experiences with LARP.

The thesis will be published online as an e-thesis and maybe much later as a monograph if the opportunity arises, which I will recontact you about.

Could you please let me know if you would permit me to use the attached image with your trademark and a photo credit as (Photo Credit & Copyright Charlotte Moss larpimages.com) in the thesis?

Thanks so much!

Kind regards,
Dana Koellner



IMG_1699 copy 2.jpg
121K

Charlotte Moss [REDACTED] 20 April 2018 at 15:14

To: Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi Dana,

I assume it is you in the picture? If so, absolutely fine! I'd forgotten that picture, it's a really nice one!

I would LOVE to read your research, since I've just finished a masters on gaming and I'm about to start my phd in September.

Charlotte.

Charlotte Moss [Photographer]

M: [REDACTED]
W: [REDACTED]

Appendix 9.3

Candy Photo Consent

University of Sheffield Mail - Photo Permission

13/08/2018, 14:00



Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Photo Permission

Stuart Candy [REDACTED]

16 May 2018 at 14:48

To: Dana Koellner <dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk>

Hi Dana, thanks for your email. Your PhD research sounds great, do you have anything to share about it?

The short answer is yes, of course I'm happy to give permission to use images where I can.

Most of these come from a project that I directed with Jake Dunagan, FoundFutures: Chinatown, and more specifically an experiential scenario within that called 'The Bird Cage'. It is described in The Futures of Everyday Life, Chapter 5, which deals with Guerrilla Futures practice overall: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305280378_The_Futures_of_Everyday_Life_Politics_and_the_Design_of_Experiential_Scenarios More images and context for this specific intervention (about a bird flu outbreak, staged in 2007 but set a decade out, in 2016-17): <https://futoryst.blogspot.com/2007/10/bird-cage.html> The photo credits are all listed there for specific images, and they may also be higher resolution than what you've pulled from the slideshare.

However, the first shot you have selected (the Obama billboard) comes from a campaign that I've written about, but that I was not involved in staging and so do not hold copyright in. <https://futoryst.blogspot.com/2009/12/climate-of-regret.html>

Let me know if you have any other questions I may be able to help answer.

Stuart

Stuart Candy, PhD
Director, Situation Lab
Associate Professor, School of Design
Carnegie Mellon University

MM 110, Pittsburgh, PA 15213
[REDACTED]

[Quoted text hidden]

Appendix 10.1

Blank Consent Form

Dana Koellner PhD Study
Future Imagining: The Rise of Imagination and Application to Political Theatre:
Information and Consent Agreement

1. Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you, as a prospective participant, with information that may affect your decision to participate in this research and performance project, and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the project.

2. Researcher

My name is Dana Koellner. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Sheffield in the first year of this PhD study. I am studying aspects of performance relating to imagining the future and its application to political theatre, and as part of that study I will be making performances.

3. Project purpose

In order to study the performance aspects of imagining the future, I want to perform workshops, hold interviews and discussions groups to collect data for my research and to explore the themes which emerge, and thereby use this information to create performances.

4. Description of workshops/performances

The workshops and performances will involve different types of discussions; field work to be incorporated by the researcher; drama work; and performance. At some point in the future, an open call will be made for those who wish to volunteer for performance work. If you decide to participate in performances, you will also be involved in devising work which aims to develop ways of representing the future. You may be asked to take part in recorded or written interviews, to bring in objects and/or images, to create speech, music and/or movement and/or to write passages of script.

The aim is to create a body of research that culminates in a performance or series of performances that will be shown, with the group's agreement, to invited audiences, in the first instance, at the University Drama Workshop or Studio. Work may also be taken to invited or public audiences at other venues. If performances are scheduled for the general public then a separate consent form will be presented for you to give permission for this to take place. This project will last for at least three years.

5. Risks

During the discussions, workshops, exploration, devising, rehearsal or performance process you may encounter upsetting or difficult themes or feelings. I hope this won't be the case: but if it does happen, and you

- a) want to stop participating either temporarily or permanently, or
- b) do not wish to take part in a particular discussion, exercise or process

then it is your right to withdraw. There is no compulsion. If you are feeling uncomfortable with anything you are asked to do, or anything we may talk about, it is important to make me aware of this.

Risk assessments for all the activities you will be asked to take part in, will have been done before the process begins and every effort to maintain a safe working environment in line with Sheffield University policy, will be made.

6. Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this project are:

- a) the positive effects of contributing to a new form of theatre;
- b) the positive effects of contributing to a deeper understanding of our collective future and the potential for social and political change.
- c) feelings of wellbeing that come from the group activity, or discussion, and mounting a performance;
- d) the possibility of making new friends and connections;
- e) the benefit of being involved in a serious research project which will challenge you intellectually and creatively;
- f) And it should also be good fun....

7. Anonymity, recordings and acknowledgements

Part a) Discussion Groups, Workshops, Interviews and Field Studies:

I may make sound or video recordings of some parts of the discussions, interviews, workshops or field study (this will be discussed with you at the time); these will form part of my research material and I will keep them as part of my study. Any or all of these recordings could form part of my final PhD submission, which will be submitted to and held by the University of Sheffield. The PhD submission, including recordings, will also be published online as an EThesis. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

- If you withdraw at any time during the project, all recorded individual Interviews or cited quotations will be deleted from the PhD submission.
- However, devised Performance material that you have contributed to through discussion groups, rehearsals or performance may still be used as part of performances or the PhD submission. Due to the collaborative and devised character of the project, this data will be impossible to extract and delete from the devised Performance material (see below).
- The procedure for withdrawal will be by your email notification sent to dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk.

- Your name will be recorded on this consent form, which will be held securely as part of the documentation of the project. I am the only person who will have access to this particular information.

Part b) Rehearsals, Devising and Performances

Some of you may be interested in participating in rehearsals, devising and/or performances. As you may be taking part in live and recorded performances the anonymity that is usually given to research participants will not be possible. The performances you might take part in will be video recorded and I will keep all these recordings as part of my study.

I may also make sound and/or video recordings of some parts of the exploration rehearsal and devising process (this will be discussed with you at the time); these will form part of my research material and I will keep them as part of my study.

I may also use sound and/or video recordings from the exploration, rehearsal and devising process, in the final performance, or sound and video recordings from one performance for other performances as part of my study. Any or all of these recordings could form part of my final PhD submission, which will be submitted to and held by the University of Sheffield. The PhD submission, including video recordings, will also be published online as an EThesis. If you withdraw at any time during the project, material that you have generated and/or recordings of you during rehearsals, devising process or Performance(s) may still be used as part of performances or the PhD submission.

You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, however, given the collaborative and devised character of the project, data from the rehearsals, devising process and Performances will be impossible to be extracted and deleted.

- In the event that you withdraw from the project; given that this is a collaborative theatre project, only your name can either be deleted (thus not associated with the project anymore) or, if you wish, your name can be still associated with the project as credit for the ideas contributed to it.
- The procedure for withdrawal and credit preference will be your email notification sent to dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk prior to the preparation of my PhD submission June 1, 2017. I will notify you by email if this date changes.
- You will be acknowledged as part of the PhD submission, and your names will be used on programmes created for the performances unless you expressly withhold permission by email notification to dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk.

There will be a box to initial to record this permission. Your name will be recorded on this consent form, which will be held securely as part of the documentation of the project. I am the only person who will have access to this particular information.

Part c) Acknowledgement for Books, Articles, Public Presentations

I would like to be able to name and acknowledge you and your contribution in any books and/or articles that I might write and any public presentations that I might give.

This would take the form of naming you, in order to acknowledge your contribution, which might have been given in the form of speech, text or actions, and might be communicated by written and/or verbal descriptions and/or recordings and/or pictures of you participating in the project. This might be done in the body of the published text/public presentation and/or in the list of acknowledgements that might accompany any published text or public presentation.

I will endeavor, as much as possible, to share with you any texts and/or presentations that I am proposing to publish/give. These will be shared by sending you or letting you read inspection copies of the work. This process may be curtailed by copyright agreements with publishers, but wherever possible I will give you the chance to see the ways in which you, personally, are being represented.

Part d) Data Storage and Deletion

Consent agreement forms will be kept securely at my private home in a locked safe box and form part of the PhD submission unless needed; if required for submission, the names will be blacked out for those who chose anonymity.

The data will be stored until January 1, 2020, whereby all original data material will be destroyed by me and I am the only person able to access the original material stored in my home. In the event that the deadline for the material needs to be extended, each participant will be notified of the new destruction date by email.

All recorded material, both audio and video, will be held on a password protected external hard drive or via the University's password protected and encrypted data storage system, depending on storage allotment.

8. Payments

Unfortunately, there is no *payment* for your participation in this research.

9. Contact and questions

Any questions you have concerning the research project, the performances or your participation, before or after you consent to take part will be answered by Dana Koellner, mobile no.: 07476 462224, email: dana.koellner@sheffield.ac.uk
The University of Sheffield, School of English,
Jessop West, 1 Upper Hanover Street, Sheffield, S3 7RA. Tel: 0114 222 8480

I understand the nature of Dana Koellner's research project outlined above and I agree to participate on these terms. Please sign below. You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Are you over the age of 18? _____

Please initial ONLY if you wish your name to be credited, please do NOT initial if you wish to remain anonymous in citations.

Name	Signature	Date	Name use permission (initials please)
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Please print clearly your preferred email address for communication:

Appendix 10.2

Ethics Approval Letter



Downloaded: 14/10/2016
Approved: 03/11/2015

Dana Koellner
Registration number: 140108152
School of English
Programme: School of English PhD

Dear Dana

PROJECT TITLE: Future Imagining: The Rise of Imagination and Application to Political Theatre
APPLICATION: Reference Number 003380

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 03/11/2015 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 003380 (dated 10/04/2015).
- Participant consent form 1006750 version 1 (23/03/2015).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

Emma Bradley
Ethics Administrator
School of English