

1. THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

Introduction

THE RED SHOES

ONCE THERE WAS a poor motherless child who had no shoes. But the child saved cloth scraps wherever she found them and over time sewed herself a pair of red shoes. They were crude but she loved them. They made her feel rich even though her days were spent gathering food in the thorny woods until far past dark.

But one day as she trudged down the road in her rags and her red shoes, a gilded carriage pulled up beside her. Inside was an old woman who told her she was going to take her home and treat her as her own little daughter.

So to the wealthy old woman's house they went, and the child's hair was cleaned and combed. She was given pure white undergarments and a fine wool dress and white stockings and shiny black shoes. When the child asked after her old clothes, and especially her red shoes, the old woman said the clothes were so filthy, and the shoes so ridiculous, that she had thrown them into the fire, where they were burnt to ashes. The child was very sad, for even with all the riches surrounding her, the humble red shoes made by her own hand had given her the greatest happiness. Now, she was made to sit still all the time, to walk without skipping, and to not speak unless spoken to, but a secret fire began to burn in her heart and she continued to yearn for her old red shoes more than anything.

- Women Who Run With the Wolves (Estes, 1992: 216-219)

1.1 Research Focus and Questions

This study seeks to explore the creation and development of character in improvised drama, to find patterns that could function as tools for self-understanding and personal growth. It is suspected that the clarification of values may be such a recurring pattern and tool. If one can understand a dramatic character by clarifying the values that form part of its belief system and consequently influence its actions, can such an understanding serve as a framework for understanding how one's own value system influences one's actions?

A person's values form a complex system and stepping back from this system in order to evaluate and question them, may be difficult because it is what constructs a person's social, cultural and personal identity, a person's 'self' (Fried, 1970). In addition, these values and this identity do not exist on a metaphysical plane, but are embedded in a context, a life (Macintyre, 1981). Yet, this ability to reflect upon oneself and one's own actions, thoughts and feelings, is an innate human capacity; albeit one that needs fostering and training. The ability to gain critical distance is an important and necessary life skill, particularly in a post-colonial multicultural South Africa where social and cultural constructs need re-evaluation (Dalrymple, 1992; Van Zyl Slabbert, 1994). This study suggests that a carefully crafted educational drama process, which centres on improvisational character creation and development, may be a useful tool for teachers to aid young people in this evaluation process and in interrogating the values promoted by the South African constitution. This suggestion is rooted in the idea that self-reflection is fundamentally a dramatic skill, i.e. the capability to be an actor acting, feeling, thinking, while at the same time being one's own audience observing, empathising and evaluating. In order to support this hypothesis, the following questions will be explored:

1. How can **improvised drama be used as a means** for making the value system an individual subscribes to apparent, while remaining mindful of the complexity of such systems and the difficulty of self-reflection?
2. What role could **values clarification** play in the creation and development of **fictional characters** that are multifaceted enough to be compared to 'real' selves?
3. How can the complex **relationship between the actor/participant and character** be mediated in such a way that **learning** takes place?

These questions are focussed on in Chapters 2 to 4 of the thesis respectively. These chapters form Part One which deals with the theoretical foundation for using the clarification of values as a link between dramatic character creation and self-awareness. Chapters 5 to 7, Part Two, seek to put these theories into practice with a group of high school pupils in Pietermaritzburg. The outcome of the study would be a practical programme that could be used either by drama teachers to develop characters with their pupils, or by life skills teachers who are looking for a practical and enjoyable way of teaching self-reflection and critical thinking in relation to value systems.

1.2 Definition of Terms in Context of the Study

The term *values clarification* refers to the ability to step back from one's value system, in order to understand what constitutes it, so that it may be critically interrogated. A value system is the network of presuppositions an individual might have about perceived reality (Fried, 1970; Lull, 1995). The term 'perceived reality' is used because these presuppositions determine how one might interpret life. In this way values form a frame of standards through which events are interpreted as being true/false, good/bad, right/wrong (Haber, 1994; Hall, 2002).

To explore the potential of **improvised drama as a means** for the clarification of complex value systems, I focus on the work of Augusto Boal (1979, 1992 & 1995) and Robert Landy (1993, 1994 & 1996) in the field of Drama Therapy. Boal writes "Theatre — or theatricality — is this capacity, this human property which allows man to observe himself in action, in activity. The self-knowledge thus acquired ... allows him to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives" (1995: 3).

However, drama can do more than simply allow one to see oneself from the outside and imagine other possibilities. It can be used to create a fictional context where such alternatives can be tested (Cattanach, 1992; Jennings, 1998). The definition of *drama* thus expands beyond the act of distancing (Landy, 1994: 112-115) to include the structuring of a make believe situation with setting, plot and characters (Hatlen, 1975). In *improvised drama* a written script is absent and characters, setting and plot are devised by the group of actors/participants under guidance of a director/facilitator (Johnstone, 1981).

If **values clarification is a valid basis** for the creation of fictional characters in improvised drama, the dramatic simulation can be used to test adaptations to such a value system and the effect it has on the characters in the story. This is especially true if the clarification of their values assists in creating characters that are multifaceted enough to be of use in a comparison to ‘real’ people. If so, participants can learn in this way about how value systems and adaptations to them might affect people’s lives. Two processes are identified for the construction of dramatic characters in improvised drama. First the actor/participant creates the character; secondly, she develops that character within the context of a story. *Creation* occurs when the value system or paradigm of the character is clarified. This paradigm will present motivations for choice and action. *Development* takes place when those same values are strengthened or challenged and the dramatic character chooses to continue a present course of action, or to act differently. Clearly the distinction between creation and development is a logical one and not a chronological one. There is a reciprocal relationship between them (Clements, 1983).

For the *creation* of character the study draws on the work of Gary Izzo (1997 & 1998) enriched by the work of Bertolt Brecht (1957 & 1964). Despite their very different approaches, both theatre practitioners find the key to creating complex dramatic character in an investigation of such a character’s actions and the system of beliefs that the actions reveal. These ideas are further supported by reference to the work of various practitioners of process drama (Bowell and Heap, 2001; O’Neill, 1988 & 1995; O’Toole, 1987 & 1992; Winston, 1998 amongst others) to ensure its usability for creating learning opportunities.

For an understanding of character growth or *development*, the work of Christopher Vogler in ‘The Writer’s Journey’ (1998) based on ‘The Hero with a Thousand Faces’ by Joseph Campbell (1988a), is used. In this work Vogler strives to find a pattern, or structure, for the writing of a story and the development of its main character. In doing so he writes: “I found something more: a set of principles for living” (1998: ix). Indeed, the Hero’s Journey becomes a recurring pattern throughout the study as a description of the growth of both fictional and non-fictional people as they undergo learning.

The same pattern is identified in Educational Drama theory and practice (Bolton, 1998; Heathcote in Wagner, 1976; Morgan & Saxton, 1987; Way, 1967). The study researches

these theories to find ways of ensuring that **learning takes place in the complex relationship between participant and character** so that personal growth occurs. *Personal growth* refers to the adaptation of behaviour that occurs as a result of a deepened understanding of an individual's place/role within the context of her life story (Way, 1967; Jennings, 1975). Such growth has two aspects: the new understanding or insight, plus the ability to translate that insight into behaviour change in the midst of social, cultural, political and economic forces which may support or counteract the attempt at growth (Boal, 1979). This relationship between self and context will be discussed at length in the next section.

The term *dramatic character* will be used to refer to the people in the fictional context of the drama. When referring to 'character' in terms of personal growth and the development of integrity of one outside of the drama, the term *personal character* will be employed. An example of the difference can be found in the following sentence: Dramatic characters can be used to build personal character for an individual who reflects upon the drama from the outside (Grotowski, 1969). To eliminate further confusion, throughout the thesis female pronouns refer to the individuals who are participating in the drama, while male pronouns refer to the role/character in the story¹.

It is the contention that a person can learn to understand herself better by reflecting on the comparison between her own values and those of a fictional character she creates. She may then undergo personal growth by reflecting upon how that character reacts within the fictional context of the improvised drama. She may also learn about herself and her relationship to her context by reflecting upon the reciprocal relationship between character and context. Reflection is an important tool for helping the individual to learn from the drama (Bolton, 1998; Heathcote, 1980; Morgan and Saxton, 1987).

The theories researched in Part One of the study, are then used to **develop a practical programme** which is the focus of Part Two. This programme was structured to involve

¹ I also chose this way of using gender as a comment on the traditional binary oppositions present in Ancient Greek theatre, oppositions that are still influencing theatre today. This is the idea that the male gender is stable and unchanging while females are deceptive shape-shifters (Taaffe, 1993). In ancient Greece this meant practically that men, being stable, were able to play female roles, because "masculinity cannot be hidden under women's skirts" (Taaffe, 1993: 21). Women were not allowed to act at all. Since they were unstable, unessential in being there was no actual person to play the role, no 'real' face to put the mask onto. I therefore play with the genders deliberately, inverting them and making the player/actor female and the role/mask male.

the processes of creation and development of character within fictional contexts. There was continual reflection by participants on the processes in order to determine what was learnt. The programme was tested with a multicultural group of pupils. Ultimately such a programme should suit the needs of life skills, or drama teachers in similar contexts².

1.3 Theoretical Framework

At the basis of the argument developed in this study, lies a debate around the relationship between drama and perceived reality. If it is true, as Aristotle had supposed, that drama imitates nature, then it should be possible to use drama as a tool to frame nature in order to examine it and come to a clearer understanding of it. In the context of the study, a dramatic imitation of a person, a 'self', may be used as a reference point for understanding 'real' selves. However, the binary oppositions: art/nature and imitation/reality, have been deconstructed and greatly problematised by post-modern thought (Culler, 1983). It is important to recognise the value of such deconstruction, and this study will look at particular interpretations of the relationship between art and nature, imitation and reality in order to investigate how improvised drama may be used for understanding the interrelational network of signs that make up what we perceive as reality. In particular, it seeks to explore possibilities of how dramatic character development may be used as a specific frame for understanding the self and personal value systems that guide the actions of that self. While the understanding of the relationship between theatre and everyday life, dramatic character and 'real life' person will develop throughout the discussion, there are some concepts that still need clarification such as *self*, *value system*, *belief system*, and *frame*.

When dealing with the concept of the *self* as used in words like 'self-understanding' and 'self-awareness' and implied in terms like 'personal growth', one is faced with the philosophical nature-nurture debate. Is the self determined internally by inherent personality traits and genetic make-up, is it determined externally by social conditions and context, or is it a combination of the two? The argument of this thesis is located in the 'post-structuralist', or 'discursive' position (Foucault, 1972) along with thinkers in the field of cultural psychology such as Jerome Bruner (1996) and Michael

² More information on the group, their age, gender and demographics can be found on p.12, 117-118.

Cole (1996) who deconstructed this binary opposition. The self is not located in the internal nature of an individual as Idealist theory proposes, neither is it determined solely by her external context as in Marxist theory (Bakhurst and Shanker, 2001). Rather, the self is constructed by the relationships between the individual and her context.

Modernist philosophies sought the meaning of things either within themselves with reference to Idealism (Hegel, 1977 & 1988) or outside of themselves in their context with reference to Marxism (Marx, 1983). These ideas were subsequently challenged by the Structuralists (Foucault, 1972 *in his earlier thinking*; Levi-Strauss, 1963; Saussure, 2000; and others) who sought to prove that meanings existed not in the units of the system, but in the structure, or the way in which the units hang together. Using language systems as an example, it means that words do not mean something in themselves, but they gain meaning from the way in which they hang together with other words (Saussure, 2000). Yet, here there still lurked the idea that such structures existed beyond, or behind the language or the system of meanings on a metaphysical plane. This idea was further challenged by the post-structuralist and the post-modernist way of thinking which found even the structures themselves, that is the relationships between the units of the network, to be contingent upon context and culture. Meaning is always and forever historically and culturally determined (Heidegger, 1962; Nietzsche 1961 & 1989). In addition, these meanings are always mediated by language and one can not access them in any way other than through words, and so the notion was developed that nothing could exist outside of language and outside of interpretation, outside of the text (Derrida, 1978, 1979 & 1997).

The network of relationships between the self and its context become a complex system of meaning mediated by language, ever changing and contingent (Berry, 2000). Since it is always changing, it evades one's attempts to grasp it, begging the question: How then can it be studied and how can a young person in a multicultural, post-apartheid South Africa, undergoing an 'identity crisis', make sense of it?

Paul Cilliers (2000) suggests that it is possible to use conceptual tools that apply to the study of complex systems, such as the brain, to other complex systems such as the one suggested by the term *self*. A comparison between the brain and other complex systems such as the *self* is possible because all complex systems adhere to two basic characteristics. They represent meaning within the relationships between the

elements/nodules of the network and they are self-organising. According to Cilliers, (2000) it is possible for a critical subject to reflect upon the complex system and identify patterns of meaning. In this way complex systems do represent meaning, but not by pointing to something outside of itself, but by the patterns that are formed within the system itself. These patterns reoccur over and over, but in reiterated forms. There is no true or final pattern. Such a reflecting subject may apply two useful tools to complex systems in order to identify such meaningful patterns: the *frame* and the *snapshot*.

1.3.1 Frame

By framing a certain section of the changing and contingent network, it is possible to study that which is enclosed by the frame in terms of its relationship to the frame. Framing is the act of selecting a relevant position from which events can be analysed and understood (Culler, 1988). In the use of framing as tool, understanding or meaning making is perceived as a process that is constantly evolving. Framing enables analysis appropriate to a particular perspective and time.

In the context of the study, there are two primary frames, two main positions, or perspectives, at work. They are the frames of *drama* on one hand and of *perceived reality* on the other. The dramatic frame is consciously and purposefully created so that it may be compared to the frame of perceived reality, which is created unconsciously. John O'Toole (1992: 12) refers to these frames as 'contexts'. There is the 'real context' which refers to the cultural background, attitudes and experience that each participant brings to the process; while the 'fictional context' is the make believe world of the drama which participants agree to work within. He also explains that the real context and the fictional context are not on the same plane:

In one very important sense, fictional context is a derivative from real context. It is a particular framing of aspects of the real, for purposes which relate very directly to the real, and the real network is never fully or deeply suspended (1992: 51).

1.3.1.1 *The Frame of Perceived Reality*

The field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) offers a useful theory that applies framing to how we perceive reality and therefore the *self*.

NLP is an applied and descriptive psychology, with the key value to promote excellence, or at the least, to empower a person to have more choices, in particular experiential contexts. (Kruger, 2002a)

This psychological methodology is currently used in therapy, education and business contexts to effect behavioural change. It is applicable to the current study because it is founded on an understanding of *self* as being a network of relationships between person and context, and because of its emphasis on framing as a way to understand identity.³

The term *perceived* refers to the way in which every person views reality through a network of presuppositions. This network is not made up of one frame only, but rather a “matrix of frames” (Hall, 2002). There are three groups of secondary frames (the primary frame being that of perceived reality) in the ‘matrix’: neurological frames, which include perceptions that emerge from our senses; representational frames, which refer to the encoding of information by the brain into pictures, sound or feelings; and conceptual frames. The latter includes *values* and *belief systems* and the reader should, therefore, not be surprised if these terms are used somewhat indiscriminately. The understanding is that a set of *values* hang together in a particular way (discussed later in Chapter 2.1) and together form a *belief system* which informs the conceptual frame.

The framing of reality is an unconscious action natural to the human brain. It is the way people cope with the complexities of everyday existence. *Self*, being part of a perceived reality, is also interpreted through the framework of presuppositions. NLP practitioners go further saying that, since our frames are the go-betweens between us and our contexts, and since each person’s matrix of frames is unique, our frames tell us who we are. Through knowing one’s frames one gets to know oneself and construct (consciously or unconsciously) one’s identity. However, a person’s frames may become oversimplified, inflexible, or inappropriate to the particular context. In such cases it

³ While both person and context are studied in this thesis as partners in the formation of identity, the methodology developed here chooses to use the dramatic frame to lead participants firstly to an understanding of personal values and then to apply the insight to gain a clearer understanding of the person’s context. It is conceivable to choose the opposite: to lead them to an understanding of external circumstances first and then to apply that insight to gain an understanding of personal choices. The latter approach is more evident in the work of Augusto Boal (1979) and Bertolt Brecht (1957, 1964) whose contributions are taken into account in this study. The inclusion of these practitioners and the acknowledgement of the external influences in the lives of young South Africans, indicate that the choice of emphasis on ‘person’, does not negate the importance or shaping nature of ‘context’ for this study. It is a choice of personal interest rather than one motivated by theoretical justification, apart from an ever-present scepticism regarding our ability to judge external circumstances objectively.

becomes important for the frames to be re-evaluated and adapted. Because frames are “partially inherited ... from the cultures that we are born into and partly from the ones (cultures) that we create” (Hall 2002), this implies a re-evaluation and adaptation of our culture. However, since one only perceives reality through cultural frames one does not have the option of stepping outside the frame in order to see reality as it truly is. The only option is to compare frames to one another and choose different ones that may be more appropriate to the particular context (Hall, 2002). For this to occur, a person needs to:

1. step away from her ‘matrix’,
2. evaluate it by comparing it to some alternatives,
3. adapt the frame or choose a different, more context appropriate one and
4. ‘try out’ the new alternative.

This is the process followed in NLP psychotherapy. The first three steps are akin to the idea of the self-reflecting subject being able to identify the patterns that reoccur in the complex system that make up her identity. In fact the frames themselves become such reoccurring patterns that may need re-evaluation and critical interrogation. The act of identifying a frame and being able to describe and take recognisance of it, is what can be understood as the critical evaluation of one’s values. Yet, practitioners of this method emphasise that pure insight is not enough. The actual application of new frames in the fourth step is where true change of behaviour may occur (Kruger, 2002b). It is here that the use of drama as a method of creating distance as well as providing a simulation for practising the new frames seems feasible.

1.3.1.2 *The Dramatic Frame*

The aim of this study is to use drama as a conscious framing tool that will help a person gain perspective on the unconscious framework of presuppositions through which she perceives reality. More specifically, it attempts to find a way to make sense of *self* by gaining perspective on the secondary group of conceptual frames that inform identity through values and belief systems.

In the main frame of the drama there are also some secondary frames that will be applied consciously to aid the process. The first is that of *dramatic character*: the establishment of a simulated self. The second is the setting up of *fictional context*: the setting and story within which the character develops. As O’Toole (1992: 14) puts it:

The fictional context may be defined as comprising **situations** embodying **characters** who interact with each other, and their physical, social and cultural environment as presented in the fiction. These characters are **representations of human subjects** (or beings with recognizably human qualities) in dealings with each other in a more or less recognizable **human situation**. (My emphasis)

The complex contingent self of perceived reality is understood not in terms of inherent content, but in terms of its relationship to the fictional character in the story (Gersie and King, 1990). This relationship between ‘real’ self and ‘dramatic’ self offers a practical way of understanding the dialogue between person and context (culture) which constitutes identity by creating frames. The character and story provide windows through which the participant can gain a perspective on herself and the framework of values that influences her view of reality.

In addition, the drama can be used to test changes in the belief system of the character and the consequences of those changes. In this way drama can help a participant ‘rehearse’ a change of attitude and behaviour (Boal, 1979: 102). This means that the fictional frame becomes a model that can simulate the frame of perceived reality (O’Toole, 1992: 14). This power of drama lies in the self-reflexive stance of the participant, i.e. the ability to exist in two worlds at once: as actor in the world of the drama and as observer, or audience member in the world of perceived reality. As John Carroll (2003) noted:

The meaning and value of the drama lies in the interplay between these two worlds: the real and the enacted; the spectator and the participant; the actor and the audience. The meaning is held in the tension of being both in the event and distanced from it.

It is also possible to create frames within frames. The fictional or dramatic frame, can in this way, be viewed as a frame within the frame of perceived reality. But even within the drama itself, different frames can be created to give a different perspective on the drama. The same story can be told from many possible perspectives (Haseman, 2002). This notion of frames within frames will be elaborated upon later in this chapter as well as in chapters 4, 5 and 6 where the research method and the analysis of the drama is being discussed.

The particular questions that the research needs to answer are as follows: Can the creation of a fictional character and its development within the context of a story, provide

a sufficient model/frame for self-understanding? How should such a model be created so that it does? Can this model be used to identify and comment on other frames that a particular participant may be applying to herself that may be less appropriate to the context? Furthermore, can the drama provide a sufficient frame for the rehearsal of changed values and actions flowing from such change?

1.3.2 Snap-shot

The second tool, with which a reflecting subject can approach a complex system, is the 'snap-shot' (Cilliers, 2000). As with taking a photograph, one can freeze a section of the changing network temporarily in order to analyse it. A snap-shot of the same section can be taken from different perspectives, which can be analysed and compared to each other. For this study an equivalent of the snap-shot would be when both facilitator (myself) and participants reflect on the same action of a character within the drama, or of a particular participant in real life. This will give a picture of the frame of values functioning at that particular moment in the story of either the fictional character or the life story of the individual. Again, it is the ability of the self-reflexive subject to describe and recognise the stance, from which the snapshot is taken, which is of importance. If one is able to do so, one is also able to critically interrogate the stance and adjust it, if necessary.

Questions that need answering are: Can this kind of reflection create understanding of the *self*? How should reflection exercises be structured so that it does?

It is important to remember that neither the frame nor the snapshot has permanence. The insight gained from them is temporary and will not necessarily retain its value because the *self* will keep changing. However, such insight gained by the individual about herself will enter the network, shaping the individual's relationship to her context and affecting the patterns of the complex system. This happens because of the self-organising tendency of complex systems (Cilliers, 2000: 58-111).

It is against the background of this theoretical framework that the choice of an appropriate research methodology becomes significant.

1.4 Methodology

Two methods of research will be used: both of which are qualitative, rather than quantitative. Against the background of the understanding that reality is always mediated through frames, this study perceives knowledge as being socially constructed through discourse. Discourse around the development of character and its relevance for personal growth, is the focus of the study, and will be found in two places. **Firstly**, it will be found in literature and **secondly**, in a context where this literature-based knowledge is tested in practical workshops. Part One (Chapters 2 to 4) of the thesis relates the theoretical literary research findings, while the practical application will be the focus of Part Two (Chapter 5 to 7).

1.4.1 Theoretical Literature Research

Three fields of study will be involved in the research. They are the fields of Drama Therapy, Theatre (actor training and script writing) and Educational Drama. The cross section between the three is found where the relationship between art (theatre) and nature (perceived reality) is described in a way that creates practical approaches to using this relationship to bring self-awareness and personal growth. The choice of practitioners, whose perspective will be considered, is guided by this standard.

In the field of Drama Therapy, research will focus on the work of Augusto Boal and Robert Landy, whose therapeutic methods enable an individual to step back from perceived reality through drama in order to evaluate their own belief systems. In the field of Theatre, the work of Gary Izzo and Bertolt Brecht is researched for evidence of values clarification as a valid method for creating character in drama. These will be expanded upon by looking at Christopher Vogler's concepts around character development in scriptwriting. In the field of Drama in Education, the focus is on writings about play and engagement as the way in which learning takes place within the drama, and how it is carried into perceived reality through distancing, questioning and reflection. The literary research will provide the conceptual framework that will inform the second part of the research.

1.4.2 Practical Research in an Educational Drama Workshop Series

The theoretical findings of the first part of the study are tested in a series of workshops with High School students of the Y2Kids Youth Theatre Company. They were chosen for the multicultural composition of the group and because it was easy to control the venue and learning surroundings at the Hexagon Theatre Complex. Considering that it was an experimental programme, it was preferable that the group had some drama experience.

The main question that needs answering in the description of this workshop series is whether the process of creating and developing dramatic character within the context of a story, can assist the participants in the process of reaching self-understanding and achieving personal growth. Secondary questions that may arise are: How should the multifarious relationship between drama and perceived reality be mediated by the facilitator so that learning takes place? How close should a character that is created be to the person who is to learn from it? And: How important is it that a character and the playing of it should be of high dramatic/artistic quality? These questions highlight some of the problems the facilitator, or teacher-director, may face in the implementation of the theory.

With this in mind, participatory action research (PAR) becomes the overriding research methodology adopted for this part of the project. In this kind of research the problems of the teacher-director become the subject of the research (Dalrymple, 1995: 72). These problems are analysed in terms of the theoretical research that underpins the project, but are grappled with and worked out in the practical implementation of the theoretical ideas. The main tool of data gathering will, therefore, be that of observation and reflection on the part of the teacher-director as key participant observer. This will take the form of a detailed computerised journal containing the planning before workshops, as well as reflections afterwards.

Complementary to the observations of the teacher-director, the process will also be observed by the learner-actors both from within and from outside of the drama. From within the drama, they will be observing and reflecting on the events of the drama as the characters they have created. These reflections will take two forms, written journal entries, and verbal reflections caught on video. From outside the drama learner-actors

will be reflecting on the process and their learning as themselves. These reflections will also take the form of written journal entries, or discussions caught on video, but will include general questionnaires. The questions in the questionnaires will seek qualitative information about participants' attitudes, feelings and opinions about the process.

I have also included interviews with the two directors of the Y2Kids Youth Theatre Company to get their views on some of the kids' behaviour and the effects of the process.

The observations of participants and directors are added to that of the facilitator to create as many snap-shots as possible of the same event from different perspectives. The different types of data also provide variation in the frames used to view the material. The purpose of analyzing the data will be to identify common patterns. This process of collecting multiple and diverse forms of evidence from different perspectives to validate findings can also be termed *triangulation* (Jacob, 1990; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Maxwell, 1996).

1.5 The Importance of the Study for South Africa

Since the previous Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, came into office, the term 'values based education' has become a buzz phrase within educational circles. In simple terms this means that all educational activities should be based on a particular system of values. These values should both underpin all teaching in schools and be taught directly in life skills classes. Such a value system is not to be fabricated or left up to teachers to decide upon; rather it has been clearly named and stipulated in the *Manifesto on Values, Democracy and Education* (James, 2001). According to this manifesto the values are all rooted in the constitution, which in turn is rooted in human rights. The values are: "Democracy, Social Justice, Equality, Non-racism and Non-sexism, *Ubuntu* (Human Dignity), An Open Society, Accountability (Responsibility), The Rule of Law, Respect, and Reconciliation" (James, 2001: 1).

The reason given for this emphasis on values in education is a 'striving for a unity of purpose, creating bonds where before there were fractures, and easing the tension of past conflicts' (James, 2001: 5). This 'unity of purpose' is necessary because of a perceived moral decline which is ascribed firstly to an unstable environment marked by racism,

violence, crime, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, poverty, globalisation and an altogether precarious social and economic environment (Van Zyl Slabbert et al, 1994: 31-55) and secondly a sudden loss of common purpose, which was present during the apartheid era, but which has been deemed unnecessary since 1994 (James, 2001: 5). On account of the cultural and religious diversity among South Africans, it is to be expected that each person will select values that she finds useful and apply them in whichever way she sees fit. Consequently, South African society is multicultural not merely because many cultures are present in the society as a whole, but because each individual represents more than one culture within themselves. An individual may be Xhosa, Sowetan, Christian, male and homosexual all at once. The absence of a unifying ideal and increased awareness of diversity and multiplicity lead to a kind of ethic where each person just looks after herself. Young people are able to switch and swap identities as they please; taking on different roles at will and adjusting to the different contexts and worlds they live in. This tendency is encouraged by their increasingly technological environment, where video games and Role playing games allow them to play with status and power in virtual and imagined environments (Carroll and Cameron, 2005). This view of identity is in keeping with the post-structural notions of identity that it is culturally and contextually determined, contingent and ever changing.

Amidst this identity shifting and power play, the South African Department of Education is attempting to retain a kind of national identity. Lynn Dalrymple writes:

These secondary identities may overlap and even conflict with one another but they are contained by the idea of a South African nation. (1992: 4)

What Education would like to achieve, is a South Africa “where individuals are comfortable with both a local or cultural identity and a national South African one” (James, 2001: 3). This is to be accomplished not by trying to forge a South African nation where ‘nation’ is understood as a fixed core culture, but rather as a ‘national democratic culture, which accommodates diversity’ (Dalrymple, 1992: 4). South African society, therefore, is in a process of transformation from a divided nation toward one where unity is created amidst diversity.

One of the most important tools for ensuring a peaceful transition is education and the forging of a common system of values. However, this is only possible if people

develop a critical consciousness. This is because each individual's thoughts and actions are shaped *unconsciously* by the cultural constraints of her situation – by her value system, or interplay of multiple systems, as has been argued. In order for change to be made an individual has to learn to make different choices, but this is only possible if she is able to step back from the cultural constraints, or value systems, so she may learn to understand herself and her relationship to the cultures she chooses to identify with (Williams, 1989: 91). Dalrymple writes:

The central core of our system of education should be to develop a critical consciousness so that as a people we can make decisions for ourselves in an informed way. (1992: 9)

The same need for critical consciousness is expressed in the manifesto. Apart from the ten values specifically identified, the manifesto states that it does not want to impose these values, but “rather to generate discussion and debate, and to acknowledge that discussion and debate are values in themselves” (James, 2001: 8). For such discussion the skill of critical thinking is necessary.

The current study is interested in this discussion. It seeks a way to teach students the skill of stepping back from their value systems in order that they may, firstly, recognise their own value systems; secondly, understand what cultural forces are affirming or challenging their systems of values; and thirdly, evaluate these systems by comparing them to the values promoted by the constitution. Finally, the dramatic simulation may be used to try out different actions based on the adaptation of values, which may flow from this comparison. These processes correspond with the NLP method (steps 1 to 4 above).

The aim is to use drama not just as an embodiment of the values, but as a teaching medium through which these values can be addressed directly. More specifically it seeks to employ the creation and development of a dramatic character as a model through which an individual can learn about her own value system and learn to interrogate it critically. This discovery will not merely lead to self-knowledge and understanding, but to personal growth in the character of the individual, just as her dramatic character may grow and develop within the context of the story. By carrying out this study, the writer joins forces with the Department of Education in their attempt to create a critical consciousness, help forge the personal identities as well as the national identities of the pupils involved,

interrogate the ten values as underlined by the manifesto by way of comparison to personal values systems and, in doing these things, promote the use of art and drama as an integral part of the curriculum.

1.6 Why Drama?

The concept *drama* can be used in three different ways in the educational context. Firstly, *drama* can be used in the narrow sense to refer to plays, that is, dramatic literature or the performance of it. Secondly, it is used in a broader sense to refer to a variety of training methods that teach communication skills and other skills that support and maintain the practice of theatre. *Theatre* here means the performance of a piece for an audience in a particular type of venue. Thirdly, *drama* refers to the use of a certain method of education. This method uses dramatic conventions such as role-play and improvisation as a means for learning about other subject matters e.g. History or English. This use of *drama* is also applied in other fields such as in Drama Therapy, which uses dramatic techniques to create psychological development and healing. The study focuses on the second and third uses of the term⁴.

Drama as subject in itself as well as a teaching medium is promoted by many because it teaches certain values by default, thanks to the particular characteristics of the art form.

The *Manifesto on Values, Democracy and Education* (James, 2001) recommends drama, amongst other art forms, as ‘a way for the values of equality, non-racism, non-sexism, *ubuntu*, openness, reconciliation and respect to be instilled in young people’ (James, 2001: 7). Dalrymple adds that drama, or any other art form, should not be used only to teach the skills necessary for the accomplishment of the particular art form, but to

⁴ Further classification is possible within the three categories. The third category can thus be classified in terms of TIE (Theatre in Education) and DIE (Drama in Education). Such classification is however shrouded in debate and the delimitation of the subcategories are varied and the distinction between them full of grey areas. For the purpose of this study, TIE would be understood as the practice of trained actors who use a prepared piece of theatre written about a certain educational issue, to educate specific targeted audiences. Such an educational intervention may or may not include workshops with audience members using the theatre piece as a spring board (Landy, 1994: 11). DIE is understood as the practice of teacher/facilitators who work with untrained participants/clients around a particular educational/therapeutic issue using drama as a means of structuring the process. It does not necessarily involve a finished product either at the start or at the end of the process. This study focuses more on Drama in Education, than on Theatre in Education, since the process will be conducted with untrained participants without the use of a finished piece of theatre as catalyst.

present pupils with opportunities for self-expression and especially critical thinking (1992: 11). She also promotes Educational Drama because it uses particular educational strategies that are specifically geared to teach values. This is a characteristic of drama as a teaching medium that is often emphasised by educational drama practitioners to motivate the inclusion of educational drama in the curriculum. Hornbrook writes:

The notion generally posited is that drama, like any art, is a natural humanizing process, and that exposure to it either as audience or participant leads to greater understanding of the human condition and, as a consequence, to more tolerant and compassionate 'actions' in the world. (1983: 13)

However, Hornbrook also warns that unless the teacher is aware of the specific values endorsed by the class she is teaching, she will simply reproduce the value system represented by her own political beliefs. So-doing she may lose one of the most important life skills that the method is designed to teach namely critical thinking. Therefore:

...we must be very much clearer than many teachers are at present, not only about the explicit subject matter of the lesson, but also, and maybe more importantly, about the implicit message and values which permeate the drama process. (1983: 13)

In answer to these concerns, this study is not interested in teaching values and critical thinking as a by-product. Rather, it seeks to invent a programme that is particularly designed to teach critical thinking and interrogate values as its subject matter. The discovery of one's value systems and their critical interrogation must be the main objective of the programme. It does not simply want to endorse the values promoted by the constitution, but cultivate an understanding of them as well as an ability to critically interrogate both the value system of the government and personal value systems. This is because these constitutional values are themselves the product of the democratic ideology "fraught with the humanistic desire for wholeness and equality that can never quite be attained because unequal power dynamics are impossible to escape" (Grady, 2000: xix).

The proposed method combines the learning of drama as art form and the use of drama as teaching medium. As an art form it will teach the skill of creating a believable, integrated character; the skills of improvisation that will allow the participant to play out the character in given situations, and the skills of story making as the participant develops the character in the context of a series of events.

In terms of an educational drama lesson, the programme will explore values as subject matter and organise the class as a drama that asks pupils to engage themselves in the 'Big Lie' (Wagner, 1976: 67). Reflection on the creative process, as an essential tool for learning, becomes an integral part of the experience.

Combining the two processes means that the process will be teaching a particular content, the critical interrogation of values, at the same time or as a result of, teaching certain dramatic skills: character creation, improvisation and story-making, and reflecting upon the creation process. As in any educational drama class, one needs a dramatic framework, or simulation, that can be used to teach the particular content that one has in mind: the critical examination of values (Bowel and Heap, 2001; Morgan and Saxton, 1987). Potentially dramatic character creation and improvised drama can offer such a framework. Through the creation and development of a dramatic character an individual can learn about her own value systems and learn to interrogate them critically. This discovery will not merely lead to self-knowledge and understanding, but to personal growth in the character of the individual, just as her dramatic character may grow and develop within the context of the story (O'Neil, 1995). However, difficulties may arise.

In a regular educational drama class the dramatic context is used to create distance between the individuals and the subject matter (O'Toole, 1992). This dramatic distance ensures that the individual feels safe enough to express herself in role as someone belonging to that context. However, in a regular educational drama class, the subject matter is already further removed from the individual to start off with, than the subject matter participants in the suggested programme will be dealing with. Compare, for instance, the reasons why people move from rural areas to cities (subject matter for a possible geography educational drama lesson) and the reasons why a particular student in class has a tendency often to disrespect other learners (motivations for actions that are the subject matter of the proposed programme). The latter is much more personal and much closer to the individual than the former. It is much more difficult for the individual in question to express her opinions and feelings on the latter, than it would be for her to express them with regard to the former. In fact, the subject matter the study proposes to focus on, relates more closely to the kind of subject matter that is the focus of Drama Therapy programmes, rather than educational drama classes. The discussion will

therefore turn to Drama Therapy for methods of using drama to create distance between the individual and her own actions: the individual as subject and the individual as object⁵.

From the above it becomes clear that there are two phases to the creation of distance. Firstly a distance needs to be created between the individual and her actions and motivation. The second phase is creating further distance by placing the actions and motivations of the individual in a fictional context by using dramatic character creation techniques. Ironically, once this has been accomplished, distance then needs to be overcome again for learning to take place (O’Neil, 1995; O’Toole, 1992). Educational drama techniques may be employed to reflect upon the drama bringing it closer to the everyday experiences of the participants. Creating and overcoming distance becomes an important theme in the study. In short, drama as a teaching medium is chosen for its unique potential for creating distance between a person and her actions, and between real action and fictional action so that the drama may be used to frame perceived reality and allow participants to learn from it by means of reflection. This relationship between the dramatic context and the real context wherein learning can take place, can be called *Metaxis* (Boal, 1979; O’Toole, 1992).

In addition, educational drama, also sometimes called ‘process drama’ with its emphasis on role-play utilises the very same tendency of young people to play with shifting identities and power to bring about learning. In this way, educational drama becomes akin to video games and role-playing Games allowing young people to engage with the learning process.

Process drama is able to provide a positive idea of the place of the individual in poststructuralist thought by providing drama conventions that negotiate constantly shifting identities. Within process drama, the participant can be seen as a subject-in-process, capable of agency, role differentiation and integration within a range of environments, (Carroll and Cameron, 2005)

Educational drama is therefore not only an effective and potentially powerful tool in the hands of the teacher, but also one that can sit comfortably with the intended participants. Throughout the study the relationship between the teacher’s

⁵ While this concept of *distancing* and the idea of self-reflectivity from the field of Drama Therapy will be employed, the study will remain firmly within the boundaries of Educational Drama. Such appropriation of concepts like *distancing* from Drama Therapy for Educational Drama is not unique to this study (Bowell and Heap, 2001: 57-68).

objectives and the participants' needs will be explored. This relationship hangs together very closely with the themes of frame and distance and how these aspects work together to make meaning and bring about learning.

1.7 Schematic Layout of the Argument

As mentioned earlier, the thesis will be divided into two parts, a theoretical section, and a practical section. Chapters 2, 3 and 4, Part One, focus on the first three sub-problems of the study as outlined above in 1.1. The development of a practical programme is the focus of Chapters 5, 6 and 7, Part Two. Throughout the theory based chapters (2, 3 and 4) the argument revolves around the relationship between drama and everyday life, and utilising the distance between them in order that one may learn about the latter via the former. Chapter 8 provides a synthesis of the research findings from both Parts One and Two. The following table 1.1 gives a schematic layout of the argument and its practical application.

Part One: Theoretical Foundation	
2. The Journey Begins Drama and Self-awareness	In the field of <i>Drama Therapy</i> . Improvised drama as a vehicle for making the value system an individual subscribes to apparent by creating distance between the person and her actions.
Augusto Boal	Separating self-as-object from self-as-subject.
Robert Landy	Role as medium to create distance between thought and feeling.
3. Into a World of Wonder Dramatic character creation and Values.	In the field of <i>Theatre</i> . Values clarification as a valid basis for the creation and development of fictional characters: creating further distance by placing the actions and motivations of the individual in a fictional context.
Gary Izzo	The seven elements of character creation and the hierarchy of values.
Christopher Vogler	The Hero's Journey: a template for the journey of any individual undergoing a change in values and perspective.

4. Approaching the Inmost Cave Characters and self-awareness.	In the field of <i>Educational Drama</i> . Using the relationship between the actor/participant and character to affect learning: overcoming the distance through careful planning and reflection.
Learning/teaching objectives: The Play for the teacher.	The character and context of young people in South Africa.
Strategies and activities: The play for the learner.	The fictional characters and context of drama as an effective way of teaching young people in South Africa through engagement in the drama and reflecting on its meaning.
Part Two: Practical Application	
5. The Ordeal Putting Theory to Practice.	A description of how the theory is used to plan and execute a series of educational drama workshops based on material generated by the teacher-director.
Research Method and Materials.	Participatory Action Research and the teacher-director as primary participant-observer.
Planning.	Analysing the factors that impacted on the planning.
Chronological Account.	An account of the process from the perspective of the teacher-director based on lesson plans and reflections.
6. The Road Back Analysis	Analysing the process in relation to the theory based on materials generated by the participants.
The ordinary world of participants.	The process of eliciting their needs.
The participant's special world and the character's ordinary one.	Creation phase: Setting and characters are created using Izzo's model and Educational Drama principles.
The character's special world: Maverick 436. Identification of participant with character in The Ordeal.	Development phase: Characters develop the story guided by the stages of the Hero's Journey. Educational Drama principles are used to engage the group in the drama. Climax: The characters face their ordeal and learners exhibit their own core values.
Both characters and participants return with an Elixir.	Reflection: Learners evaluate their characters and what the characters have learned as well as reflect on what they themselves have learned.
7. The Resurrection A Longitudinal Study	Reflections one year after implementation.
8. Return with the elixir Conclusion	What has been gained from the study, and how can it be taken further?

Mirror Mirror on the Wall

Part One

Theoretical Foundation