

# **INTO THE CORRIDA:**

An analysis and testing of Geese Theatre Company's

*The Violent Illusion Trilogy*

prison Residency for violent offenders

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of

Birmingham City University

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2008

The Faculty of Education, Birmingham City University



# Appendix A

## Supplementary Material to Chapter 6

The following Appendix contains supplementary material on the thirty-six 'episodes' identified from the Residency timetable for HMP Blackwood (see table (v) pg 138 in the main thesis). As noted in Chapter 6, Analysis, a concern throughout the thesis has been to seek a model for the document which, as far as is possible, attempts to convey the lived experience of the *Violent Illusion* week and reflect or recapitulates the dynamic Residency process.

The form of the novel offers a possibility for such a focus on 'processes in motion and change' but as also noted, would not be suited to the demands of academic writing. The material here therefore should be seen as a supplement to the material in Chapter 6, to further contextualise events around the limited number of 'critical episodes' selected for analysis, and to allow space for analysis and discussion around episodes which, while interesting and part of the holistic process of the Residency, cannot be considered 'critical'.

Reference is made in the Appendix to material in the main body of the thesis, such as specific stanza numbers. This Appendix also contains material in stanza form, so to avoid confusion all stanzas which exist in the main thesis retain their numbering, and additional stanza material here is instead given a sequential letter of the alphabet.

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# Monday

## Critical episode 1

### Prologue: Before a Word is Spoken

The first critical episode selected focuses on the moment when the inmate participants enter the Chapel of HMP Blackwood for the first time in the Residency, on Monday morning, and is essentially about the elements of the Geese Discourse and the inmate Discourse meeting non-verbally. Full discussion and analysis can be found in Chapter 6, Analysis.

## Critical episode 2

### Introductions & Contracts: 'We're here to talk about violence'

The second critical episode selected for attention focuses on the Geese use of spoken language in Discourse. Full discussion and analysis as exemplars of the Geese use of language can be found in the main body of the thesis.

## Episode 3

### Performance of *The Violent Illusion Part 1*

To contextualise the reactions that will be considered in the main thesis under *critical episode 4, Group feedback of reactions to VI1*, it is necessary to consider a brief synopsis of the play. The character names given here, such as Granddad, Daughter and so on are needed to indicate who is who, but are not given to the audience before the performance starts. There is no 'programme' giving scene lists and character names. The action is backed by a specially written, sinister 'music' full of menace, threat and foreboding with an occasional hint of hope. The passage of time from scene to scene is indicated with the lights slowly fading out and back up, each new scene generally being accompanied by a change in the 'music'.

The show is played with no dialogue and the cast wear 'full' masks that cover the whole face (see Appendix H). The 'wall' panels of the set are not standard theatrical 'flats' but simple tubular frameworks holding a painted cloth backdrop over rollers at top and bottom of the frame. These backdrops can be rotated so the image of dingy wallpaper, which show at the start of the performance, is superseded by other, more particular images at significant points in the narrative, so that the 'wallpaper' becomes a particular image (see Appendix I and J).

### The Story of *The Violent Illusion Part I*

The *Violent Illusion Part I* is the story of three generations of a 'family' over a period of about three years, covering the pregnancy, birth and toddlerhood of a boy child, compressed into an hour of unremitting intergenerational and relationship abuse in all directions: Sexual, physical, emotional, substance and psychological, father to daughter and grandson, mother to child, adult male to adult male, boyfriend to girlfriend. The tatty flat in which the show is set is a scene of fear, neglect, pain and some very occasional glimpses of play or affection.

### **Scene 1 Home Sweet Home**

At the beginning of the play, the inmates see Daughter (in her late teens) attempting to make the flat her home. Granddad (played by me) enters. The character is named Granddad with reference to the as yet unborn grandchild, but he is father of Daughter. Sitting a reluctant Daughter on his knee, Granddad attempts to force her to touch him sexually; it is clear this is well-established behaviour. Daughter resists and shows baby clothes to reveal and indicate she is pregnant, and, angered, Granddad storms out. (From behind my mask I can see there is some hostility and puzzlement on the faces in the audience as they try to work out our relationship, Field Notes p15).

### **Scene 2: The Mirror Scene**

Some time has now passed, and Daughter is now heavily pregnant. We see Boyfriend 1, possibly the father of the baby, lounging around the flat. He enters from the 'bedroom' to indicate he and Daughter have just had sex. At one point Daughter poses before a mirror with a fashion magazine and a hat and Boyfriend 1 brutally pushes her aside, claiming the mirror to preen himself and causing Daughter to fall, again occasioning general frowns in the audience (Field Notes p15). This scene later forms the basis of the group Thinking Report (a cognitive technique which attempts to clarify and establish the link between thoughts, feelings and behaviour) discussed in critical episode 7 *The Mirror Scene Replay*, in Chapter 6. My character (Granddad) again enters and seeing Daughter lying hurt, attacks Boyfriend 1; Granddad is stabbed and wounded by Boyfriend 1 who leaves for good as abused Daughter attempts to comfort her injured abuser before he too staggers out.

### **Scene 3: Mother and Child**

Again, some months have passed. We see Daughter alone at home with a newly born baby and smoking dope to relax. She tries blowing the smoke in the face of baby to ease its incessant, penetrating 'colicky' crying, and there is some laughter in the audience at this (Field Notes p15). Clearly not coping, she briefly locks the newly born baby and its ear-piercing crying outside the flat before bringing it back inside to slump in defeated.

### **Scene 4: Use the Belt**

A few years have passed. The boy Child, is now a young toddler. Daughter's father (the Child's Granddad) is present in the flat ignoring the Child, and the boy repeatedly misbehaves to get some attention. His mother tells him off several times, returning him to his play and eventually slapping his hand. Granddad, who has been watching, loses patience and demonstrates how to 'discipline' the child properly, severely beating the boy with his belt. I can see from behind my mask that the men in the audience are all either bolt upright in their chairs and staring furiously at my character or sitting head downwards, seemingly not wanting to watch (Field Notes p15). After beating the Child – who is left writhing in shock and pain on the floor - my character

presents the belt to Daughter, with a 'here – your turn' gesture and forces her to beat the Child to demonstrate she can 'do it properly'.

### **Scene 5: Babysitting**

Daughter's only baby sitter seems to be my character, Granddad, who at one stage, after carefully locking the flat door when Daughter has left, leads the Child offstage through the door that has been established as leading to the bedroom of the flat. After a pause, he returns, zipping up his fly and adjusting his crotch, to indicate sexual abuse of the child. The Child himself returns, seeming dazed and confused. The audience is now radiating waves of hostility to the point where, even in a full-face mask, I dare not look towards them directly (Field Notes p15).

### **Scene 6: Bad Emu**

There is no sanctuary for the Child. Daughter plays with him in a tickling game using an Emu hand puppet, again occasioning a little laughter from the audience (Field Notes p16); but her motherly touch becomes inappropriately sexual and then physically hurtful. She has gained a new Boyfriend (Boyfriend 2) who is not as brutal as the first but is again clearly uninterested in the Child and more casually sadistic and cruel, idly toying with the belt until he notices Child's fear reaction, and then flicking the belt to frighten Child. Tiring of the 'game', Boyfriend 2 hustles Daughter into the bedroom with him. Child watches activities from the doorway before throwing toys to interrupt. Boyfriend 2 tires of the boy interrupting his sex life, storms from the bedroom and attempts to leave for good. Daughter begs him desperately to stay, taking up the belt as Granddad has shown her and beating the Child. Boyfriend 2 watches and laughs, then leaves, with Daughter slumping into a defeated heap, ignoring the sobbing Child.

### **Scene 7: Cooking**

Daughter is busy at the stove as Child plays with his toys. He seeks her attention, is ignored and again misbehaves. This time, unlike earlier in scene 4, she does not return him to his play and slap his hand but deliberately burns his hand with the hot frying pan, leaving him convulsed with pain.

### **Scene 8: Child Alone**

The show now shifts into its final scene: Daughter wanders on with a vodka bottle, clearly drunk, takes an overdose of pills and collapses. Child tries desperately to waken her. Granddad enters, also clearly drunk; he collapses in the other armchair without noticing Daughter and falls asleep. Child tries unsuccessfully to get his attention and the play concludes with the victimised little boy expressing rage and violence towards his environment, throwing and breaking objects, repetitively returning to seek reaction from his comatose or dead mother, left to fend for himself in a darkened flat. Eventually he finds a place to hide under the kitchen table and curls up, waiting for his Granddad to awake.

After the stage lights fade down those of us on stage quickly exit. There is no applause and the men in the audience seem shocked, murmuring among themselves, shaking heads, or simply staring at the floor (Field Notes p16). There is no 'curtain call', other than for those of us who have performed, quickly to get out of costume and come back on stage to be reintroduced and 'deroled' by Kirkham.

### ***Entering aesthetic space***

The performance of the *The Violent Illusion Part I* is the first instance in the Residency of a form of Boalian aesthetic space. Readers will recall from Chapter 2 that aesthetic space:

- Posses both *physical* dimensions and *subjective* dimensions
- Is 'oneiric' (of dreams) with memory and imagination serving to project subjective dimensions onto the physical
- Produces an 'affective space' which is both *dichotic* and *asynchronous*, in that the subject both *observes* and *projects* these memories & sensibilities, and is thus 'in two places at once' (metaxis)
- Has gnoseological properties able to stimulate knowledge & discovery, cognition and recognition

In Chapter 6 *critical episode 1, Before a Word is Spoken*, and *critical episode 2, Introductions and Contracts*, we considered the *activity building* tasks going on and noted that within the main activity of 'watching a play' were present possibly contradictory *sub activities* such as signing contracts and considering violent behaviour (which will grow to become a central activity), with coherence in this Chaotically multivalent situation being created through Kirkham's *connection building*. Despite the incongruities of contracts and the *Information for Participants* document, the dominant cultural model is still 'theatre', as demonstrated by the inmates' observed adherence to theatre conventions of 'stage' and 'audience' space, discussed in Chapter 6.

In Chapter 6 we also considered the 'Conversation' formed by the intercourse between Discourses. *The Violent Illusion Part 1* is a very powerful opening statement in this Conversation between inmates and Geese, a powerful element of the Geese Discourse, because Geese have established a *socioculturally situated identity* as actors which the performance of *V1* then destabilises:

"... they're still going to be coming in thinking 'this is a theatre company coming in here' and they will have their own preconceptions I'm sure and then they get [V1] and it's like 'fucking hell!'" (Morris 2003)

As Watson identifies, "[V1] sets up the week up as something which is not going to be like any other week they've ever done before" (Watson 2003).

## **The Emotion Bomb: *The Violent Illusion Part 1* Chronicling Chaos**

In interviews with Geese company members several interlinked strands to what the performance of *VI1* may potentially be doing emerged and were referred to explicitly. The central themes may be summarised as follows:

1. Projective identification
2. Affective (emotional) engagement
3. The use of masks in the above

We will try to work through these themes, analysing Geese's collective and individual understanding of the issues, before turning to the inmate audience's reactions to the performance, the subject of *critical episode 4, Group feedback of reactions to VI1*, in Chapter 6.

### **1. Projective identification**

Supporting the model proposed in the literature survey, there is a uniform appreciation from members of Geese Theatre that *VI1* plays a crucial role in the Residency and that much of its effect depends on mechanisms of transference and projective identification. Transference is the psychological phenomenon of relating to others in the present, in ways that come from past experiences, a transferring of the 'blueprint' of psycho-emotional-behavioural reaction, and can be an entirely unconscious response (see Chapter 2).

*Projective identification* is a 'mix up' of 'self' with 'other', and is a normal part of the process of developing *inter-subjectivity* (Thomas 1996). Cox & Thielegaard (1994) note that like therapists, actors

".....serve as projective figures. The transference does not represent a real object relationship, but it is one in which the therapist/actor serves as a target upon which the patient/spectator transfers and projects important feelings stemming from important figures (objects) in the past." (p266).

Grainger (1990) argues that theatre can strengthen the self through aiding development of inter-subjectivity by 'imaginative involvement in others' lives'; in the case of *VI1*, because of the verisimilitude to the lived experience of the inmates, and thus to their unconscious material, *The Violent Illusion Part 1* (and by extension the Residency as a whole) aims to foster imaginative involvement in (for the inmates) *one's own* life, with a developmental aim of strengthening the self as Grainger suggests. Raynsford captures the essence of Geese comments when she states that:

"I think that [projective identification] its absolutely crucial to the process because that's essentially what we will be asking them to do for the rest of the week, to project their experience and thoughts onto our theatrical stimulus... therein lies putting in *VI1* very early... So its an absolutely crucial component....

that's what gets them to go with the process because they will just be projecting their own stuff, their own knowledge onto the piece" (Raynsford 2003, para. 84).

Such projections can occur wherever there is an interpersonal relationship, but are particularly *likely* to occur in a therapeutic setting where boundaries, power dynamics and relationships, trauma and traumatic experience, vulnerabilities and so on are deliberately brought into the arena. An interesting point is that while some approaches see the therapist's role as being to stay 'neutral' in order to serve as a vehicle for projections, and others encourage a warm supportive relationship where transferences can be worked through, *VI1* has, arguably, *no positive transferential figures* for the watching men to identify with. All the adult male characters (Granddad, Boyfriends 1 and 2) are brutal and abusive in varying degrees; Daughter is of course a woman; and the Child is an extremely disempowered and victimised figure.

This 'casting' is deliberate, as Heywood observes: "[*VI1*] ...gives them or gets them close to *the experience of a victim and a perpetrator so they're right in there at both ends immediately*" (Heywood 2003 para 75 my emphasis). This is of significance because within the understanding of this thesis, all the inmates are of course perpetrators of violence, but a significant number, if not all, are also victims; they thus hold a dual role, inhabiting two spaces at once in a reflection of both Boalian 'metaxis' and particle physics (Gleick 1987).

Linking to discussions in Chapter 2 on traumatic experience, Brookes states that

"I think *VI1* does tap into childhood, their own childhood trauma pretty damn quickly.... and even if they ... aren't really consciously aware of blame or blame factors within that, like 'a child didn't deserve it and nor did I', something very unconscious immediately kicks in for them, seeing a child beaten or hurt and a woman hurt and a man behaving very horribly" (Brookes 2003, para. 85).

Further evidence for the ability of the performance to promote projective identification comes literally from the other side of the stage space, in comments made to me made by Bruce F., one of the inmate participants who does not receive much focus in this thesis, during afternoon tea break on Tuesday, the day after *VI1* is shown. Bruce F. commented that the experience of watching *VI1* was "...like having someone having a video camera and seeing you do it [so you ended up watching yourself in the replay]" and that seeing the set "like a house" linked to his own intimate domestic experiences and made him "sit back and think" (Field Notes p41).

The live theatrical nature of the stimulus must be regarded as central, as the performance provides not an individual therapist upon which to project, but takes note of Bion's (1961) suggestion of a *group* psychodynamic process whereby social (role) identities within the work group are constructed according to similar psychodynamic principles for individual identification.

## 2. Affective (emotional) engagement

A key component of projective identification is emotional engagement; feeling (in the Damasian sense), to some degree, '*that's me*'. Again, members of Geese are clear about the affective power of *VI1*. Raynsford suggests that personal experience of victimisation is *not* necessary for *VI1* to have an effect:

"I think what it does is it generates affect and it will generate it even if you've never been abused in that way yourself, the sense is of feeling pain and the emotions.... which is very useful for the processes of the week. For some it will connect very very much with their own victimisation." (Raynsford 2003, para. 74).

Morris concurs: "What I observed of *VI1* ... was that it shocked them more than it did anything else ...." (Morris 2003 para 76).

Watson agrees with this understanding:

"I think *VI1* makes people very angry! It certainly creates a response, it makes people interested, raises affect, it *gets people emotionally engaged*" (Watson 2003 para 81), as does Brookes; "I think it *generates a very massive emotional response* in them.... that stays with them for the rest of the week, they don't lose it." (Brookes 2003 para 86).

Interestingly, given that the above comments show a lot of 'negative affect' or hostility is often generated by *VI1*, Brookes suggests that the performance also serves a *bonding* function in the Residency:

"I think there's quite a strong, sometimes a very strong attachment [between the inmates and Geese members], very quick and it's quite healthy ... because.... we're very boundaried around that, but I think it's pretty damn immediate. I think *VI1* makes that happen very quickly." (Brookes 2003 para 83).

This is an interesting point given earlier references to the effective facilitation of a developmental process such as the Residency is, being contingent upon "...certain qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner" (Rogers 1969, p105).

On the same theme, but in contrast, Kirkham notes the power of *VI1* to *damage* the relationship between members of Geese and the inmates: "I think it's really important that they are able to distinguish between us as the character [in *VI1*] and us as the people who are in that room because they see some pretty horrific stuff going on" (Kirkham 2003 para 117). These kinds of issues link to the cluster of concepts around theory node 5, concerning the therapeutic alliance or interpersonal style.

In the literature review we considered that the possible nomenclature for 'emotion' extended to 92 definitions over 11 categories, and accepted the definition offered by Damasio (1996, 2000):



- *Feelings* are somatovisceral changes originating in both the somatic and autonomic nervous systems that are perceived internally; the muscle tension, sweating etcetera that is the embodiment of emotional states. These feelings are continually present as 'background' data and can be represented non-consciously or become known to the reflexive organism, when cognitive labelling or attribution process may apply
- *Emotions* are part of the process of regulatory homeostasis for the dynamically changing organism and at least in part intended for outward social communication: they are evolutionally based in the sense of being response selections or 'action tendencies' (Fridja 1986, Lazarus 1991) providing a motivational incentive in goal directed behaviours (Bloom & Lazarson 1988).

Under these definitions, *VI1* is likely to produce both *feelings* and *emotions* in the audience. Brief mention was made above of the fleeting observations of the audience possible while I was on stage as Granddad. It may now be worth again briefly considering the comments from Field Notes:

#### **Scene 4: Use the Belt**

After Granddad has savagely beaten the Child with his belt Field Notes record: "I can see from behind my mask that the men in the audience are all either [bolt] upright and staring furiously at my character or sitting head downwards, seemingly not wanting to watch" (p15).

#### **Scene 5: Babysitting**

After sexually abusing the Child, Field Notes record "The audience is now radiating waves of hostility to the point where, even in a full-face mask, I dare not look towards them directly" (p15).

Within the model proposed therefore, the events represented in the performance of *VI1* can be argued to act as an 'as if' environmental activator of the embodied somato-visceral *feelings* (Damasio 2000) discussed in Chapter 2 and referred to previously as a core feature of trauma-based violent behaviour, acting to represent the 'skewed and distorted' internal world *externally on stage*. It is crucial to note that the presentation involves *physiological* and *emotional* involvement and arousal, because of its *dramaturgical* nature, rather than emphasising a cognitive involvement through dialogue.

As argued in Chapter 2, a key motivational theme to anger is a (culturally constructed) '*demeaning offence against me or mine*' - in this analysis, the events of *VI1* are a demeaning offence to the watching inmates, linked as they are through projective identification to their own trauma - based shame and guilt - their own 'internal world'. This activation can be operating on a conscious level of 'emotionally weighty' autobiographical memory (see Alan A.'s comments in

critical moment 4, *Group feedback of reactions to VI1*, in Chapter 6) and/or on a non-conscious level (Damasio 1996).

The body language noted above can be seen as *embodied expressions* of these action patterns and the action on stage can be seen as continuing the *connection building* task, linking the world on stage, the 'inner' world and the experiential 'life world' (Lakoff 1987) of the inmates: "I think however much they [may dismiss] it ... one of the reasons we get a big reaction from [VI1] is that *they do know that we know*. It's there, it's raw and it's in front of them" (Kirkham 2003 para 129 my emphasis).

It is also important to note that VI1 makes use of the Heathcoteian principle that if the dramatic experience is to be related to the spectators' own experience and thus achieve relevancy and saliency (see Chapter 2) "...it must be universalised to draw in the unique *experience of the group*." (Heathcote 1972 p35, my emphasis), so the portrayals in VI1 are *sufficiently* accurate to prompt identification without having to be an *exact* simulacrum of an individual experience.

The show embodies Geese's collective knowledge of the *likely* experiences of the watching inmates and utilises the ability of drama to present these 'savage memories' (see Jefferies 1991) so that "The emotional loading of the action [is] true to the context..." (Bolton 1976). Not for nothing is the casual terminology for the performance a 'show', as we literally show the inmates we know and strengthen our credentials as 'credible communicators'.

One Geese company member still agrees on the effect of VI1 while not entirely convinced of the purpose:

"I'm still not quite sure that I buy [generating emotion] being a legitimate reason for using VI1 at the start, but *I agree wholeheartedly that it creates a huge amount of it* ... I can't think of anything else that would do in that prison situation... and if that's what we want to bring into the room then the theatre does that" (Meakes 2003 para 128 my emphasis).

Similarly, Brookes expresses concerns around the power of VI1:

"I think it's quite a dangerous tool to use in the context that we're using it in, given that the back up that we need within the prisons....which we always said we wanted [is lacking]. [But] I think it is the perfect vehicle to start the week off...." (Brookes 2003 para 87).

Given these concerns, it is important to note arguments that VI1 as an *aesthetic experience* can function as a 'containing vessel' for subsequent projected psychic anxiety. Even though VI1 is a representation of transgression in all directions, "Art structures experience even when it is chronicling chaos..." (Casson 1997 p52), and Bolton (1982a) suggests the 'as if' quality of a play

provides protection for the liberation of emotional struggle. This is a literal acting out of internal conflicts 'at one remove': Representation of the past through observed external action instead of internally experienced memory, even though the one can stimulate the other.

Paradoxically, the aim of this structuring is *not* to provide a vision of unity and order but instead to provoke emotional disequilibrium rather than Aristotelian catharsis in the audience, which I have suggested in Chapter 2 should be defined as 'secondary' catharsis (Hodgson 1972, Moreno 1970): Watching the tragedy of *V11* should be a *destabilising* experience rather than a *cleansing* one, and it is this destabilisation which is a 'distinguishing mark' of the transaction with art (Peckham 1967).

### **3. The use of masks: 'A nightmare world of clarity'**

As mentioned, *The Violent Illusion Part 1* is played in full-face masks. In a full-face mask literally the whole of the face is covered, unlike a half-mask where only the upper portion of the face is hidden, leaving the lower jaw and chin free: This means that in a full mask you cannot speak while a half-mask is designed to allow verbal interaction. The *V11* masks are also derived from *character* masks (see Chapter 4, The Research Project).

This means that rather than being somewhat bland or 'neutral' of feature like mime masks (see Johnstone 1991), they are based in the concept of character mask taken from the Italian theatrical tradition of Commedia dell' Arte (Brookes 2004) and their features typify a character in the sense of *disposition*, or, arguably, *archetype*. Thus the Child mask has a wide eyed innocence about it, Daughter has a furrowed brow and perpetual anxiety within it, Granddad's mask is overweight with a cruel twist to the mouth, creased eyes and so on.

There is unanimity amongst the Geese about the power of the full masks in facilitating projective processes. As Raynsford notes

"[the masks] transport people into a ... nightmare world of clarity... there's something unreal about them in a slightly frightening way. Like the baby's mask is slightly larger than life and in some ways that is much like their power, their emotional power is almost larger than life. So when that little baby comes on with a huge face, his face is really pressed up against your face and you've got to take in what he's going through." (Raynsford 2003, para 80).

In a further link back to projective identification, Kirkham notes

"...because they're full masks they stop us from using language so that people are able to *project their own script* either... the thinking script or the feeling script or dialogue script onto what's going on..." (Kirkham 2003, para 117 my emphasis).

Heywood too comments on the 'heightening' effect of the masks: "I think they .... read huge amounts into [the masks] ....it's bigger but somehow I think it's more personal as well, because you haven't got any words, *they put all the words...*" (Heywood 2003 para 92 my emphasis), a theme which Watson picks up; "...the weirdness of [the masks] is part of it, they're full of reality.... they don't pretend to be real *but people project their own reality onto them*, that's what the distortedness of it all is" (Watson 2003 para 113 my emphasis). Kirkham concludes "everything has to be heightened because it's full mask so it's a very theatrical thing" (Kirkham 2003 para 117).

Paradoxically, while the full masks are identified as crucial to the facilitation of projective identification, which implies emotional *engagement* as discussed above, they are also seen as performing a *distancing* function, a 'making strange':

"... using the full masks ... adds weight ...in terms of the theatre explanation, so making something strange, creating something that's larger than life. The full mask... creates even more of a distance in some ways than the half-masks ... it gives the impression that they're watching something special, this is something different, *this is something out of the ordinary*" (Meakes 2003, para 156)

Such a distancing function is of course more usually associated with a Brechtian approach, where (allegedly) the aim is to suspend distracting emotional enjoyment in order to promote rational critical analysis. In *V11*, the full masks seem to operate at one and the same time both as a device for the promotion of emotional engagement and accessing of past personal experience and psychodynamic structures through projective identification and as a defamiliarising device to facilitate distancing in order to put a frame around the activities which will later be analysed rationally.

From the actor's perspective, the mask work is certainly Brechtian, in that its intention is entirely different to the type of mask work where the intention is for the actor to be 'possessed' in a trance state by the spirit of the Mask and the mask is understood to 'die' when controlled by the actor's will (Johnstone 1991. See De Panafieu 1982) Pollaczek 1954 and Saigre 1989 for further discussions).

Mention has been made above of the comment by Bruce F. that the action of *V11* reminded him of his home and own experiences; a comment which supports the Geese interpretation of what the masks specifically 'do' comes from James M. Field Notes record that on the Wednesday at tea break after the performance of the *Violent Illusion Part 2*, which is also performed in full mask, James M. commented along the lines of the following:

"Them masks though.... they're amazing aren't they? In that first play you did, I swear I [saw] the look on her face [Daughter] change when she burned him [the

Child], and the boy look scared when [Granddad] was at him with the belt... but they're solid aren't they?" (Field Notes p32).

James is of course correct that the features of the masks are actually rigid and immobile, yet so strongly do they facilitate projection that several audience members have the impression of actually seeing shifting expressions and context dependent variable emotions move across the 'face'.

In conclusion, it seems that

"...what the big masks [in VI1] do is very clearly clarify that *there is a whole world behind the masks, and some of the stuff is pretty darn huge and monumental*. So ... what it shows is there are parts of you that you don't show the world and there are parts of you as big as these head masks and as powerful as these face masks. They are the bits of you that we need to look at and do some work on" (Raynsford 2003, para 86)

Raynsford's image may be seen to function as a metaphor for the Residency process overall and for links to the psychodynamic influences proposed by this thesis.

As will be explored further in later sections involving mask work, the hidden and paradoxical logic of the use of Geese masks in the Residency is that of 'masking to unmask', (see Ives 1997) by attempting to help inmates to 'lift the mask' and enter into a more authentic and congruent relationship with the world. The removal of masks is a metaphor echoed in cross-cultural situations to symbolise the possibility of emerging into a "...full awareness and potentiality" (Braithwaite 1997). This chimes with a number of the theory nodes emerging from the literature review, including: Shamanic transformational practices (again linking to the 'magical' or 'alchemic' quality of the Residency); Freirian education aimed at increasing 'conscientisation' and dramaturgical conceptions of the multiple or fragmentary potential self.

To conclude with an overall summary of the aims or effects of VI1, I will again cite Cox and Theilgaard

"By experiencing dramatic material mirroring personal conflicts, thoughts, fantasies and feelings are projected onto fictive objects. Contact is therefore made between conscious and unconscious material, so that a higher degree of integration becomes possible. *This is one of the therapeutic benefits of witnessing the plays in live performance.*" (1994 pp266-267 my emphasis).

## Episode 4

### Group feedback of reactions to VI1

Other aspects of this episode that are considered 'critical' because of their relevance for the Discourse of the inmates on violence are considered in Chapter 6 under the episode of the same title. What follows here is material culled from the same episode but which, while not being 'critical' is of interest as an exemplar of the use of a communication style and 'spirit' codified in Motivational Interviewing (M.I.) (Miller & Rollnick 1991, 2002). It is not the 'ritualistic' or 'high register' language of Stanza 1 or Stanza 2 described in Chapter 6, but is a demonstration and further example/continuation of the authoritative Geese voice placed within a non-authoritarian Discourse of guided cooperation and collaboration.

In terms of the 'model of change' the assumption inherent in Geese practice is that most of the inmates will be in early 'Contemplation', the 'thinking about it' phase where ambivalence around their 'problem' behaviour (i.e. violence) is very strong; there is no clear acceptance of a 'problem'; and no decision to change has been taken. The focus of work with someone in this stage of change should be to:

- Elicit the pros and cons of the behaviour from their perspective
- Look at both the positive and negatives of changing and of remaining the same
- Attempt to develop any discrepancies which people present between how things are and how they would like them to be
- Consider the importance of change and their confidence in changing

The intention is that the other person, not the worker, should be the one who produces the arguments for change, rather than the worker producing 'resistance' and a defensive reaction where the other entrenches against a worker who is pressing for change (Miller & Rollnick 1991, 2002). Overall, the aim of the Residency can be seen as facilitating men in moving through Contemplation to decision and Action.

Briefly, the style is both *person centred* and *directive*. The former element reflects the humanistic values found, for example in Carl Rogers (1965) where the 'client' is treated with 'unconditional positive regard' and is seen as the 'expert in their own lives', while the latter 'directive' element to some extent predetermines the subject of the communication – in this case, violence or violent behaviour.

Although research demonstrates that in criminal justice settings in the UK, empathic communication with inmates was not, and probably remains, not generally culturally supported (Hogue & Mann 2000, Ginsburg, Mann, Rogers & Weekes 2002), the use of M.I. is now widely supported in accredited programmes (see for example McMurran 2004, Birgden & Vincent 2000). Such communication remains 'ghettoised' in treatment settings such as offending

behaviour programmes rather than reflecting a rehabilitative ethos throughout a prison institution overall (Farrall 2004).

When dealing with issue of offending behaviour where the 'client' has a vested interest in minimising the effects or consequences of their own behaviour, classical 'unconditional positive regard' may also be inappropriate. Instead, a position of 'respectful scepticism' (Jenkins 1990) still conveying a non-judgemental attitude towards and respect for the other, may be a preferable position.

Stanza 4 (below, repeated from Chapter 6) can be seen to illustrate an explicit use of *reflective listening* techniques from M.I. and constitutes part of the reason for selecting this feedback as a critical moment: The use of the techniques is part of the Geese Discourse and 'background' of the Residency.

This is of relevance because within the theoretical basis of M.I. is an understanding of power relationships and dynamics which is very specific and explicitly attempts to avoid the 'expert trap' of a professional questioning to gain information on the basis that *they* can then 'understand' the 'problem' and find an appropriate solution. Instead the emphasis is very much on a *joint construction of meaning* (linking to the work of Bruner discussed in Chapter 2 and to theory node 5 around meaning and narrative, and to theory node 7 on interpersonal style and theory node 8 on learning and change). The following brief exchange therefore warrants a closer textual analysis to indicate not just the *kind* of thing Geese are saying but *how* they say it.

#### **Stanza 4**

1 Kirkham        First off- reactions? Anything anybody has to say about what they've just seen//  
                         (pause)

Line 1 contains a general open question to begin the process, followed by an assumptive *statement*. The // symbol designates that the 'tone unit' in line 1 (a set of words said 'as if they go together') is said with the 'final contour' rising or falling in pitch to indicate 'finished', giving the sentence a sense of closure to encourage 'turn taking' in speech. The particular point here is that the last part of the line, though it uses the same words as a question, *falls* in pitch, making it a *reflection*.

A reflection can be defined as a 'giving back' of part of what someone has said. The theory is that only then does the individual really *hear* what they have *said*, summed up in the phrase 'I didn't know what I thought until I heard myself saying it'. A reflection (rather than question or interpretation) is part of avoiding the information gathering 'expert trap' and also links to Vygotsky and theory node 1 around cognition, in that it is a parallel to early experiences of internal cognition originating in external social dialogue (Vygotsky 2000).

- 1 Kirkham First off-reactions? Anything anybody has to say about what they've just seen//  
(pause)
- 2 Alan A.: It was sick//
- 3 Kirkham It was sick// Say a bit more about that//
- 4 Alan A.: ..Well .. it reminds me .. about .. it minds .. it remembers me of me .. why I'm in  
here//
- 5 Kirkham It reminds you of why you're in here//
- 6 Alan A.: Aye//
- 7 Kirkham OK//

Line 3 is a *content reflection* (a giving back of part of the *factual* content of what someone has said) followed by another statement to elicit information. Line 5 is another *content reflection*, clarifying what has been said and acting as a summary to which Alan A. agrees in line 6. Thus the performance of VI1 (and the Geese epistemology of violence within it) is being 'made relevant' (question 2) accepted as valid, meaningful and accurate without any claims on the part of Geese that it was so. The inmates will contest this relevance shortly, as a Discourse of 'acceptable' violence begins to be expressed by them (see below).

Interestingly, at the time of this research, Geese workers had not received explicit training in MI, yet the approach and skills appear to be an *emergent* quality of the Residency and reflected in Geese practice, chiming with the notion that (at least in Euro-American culture) they appear to reflect some sort of underlying universal principles of effective practice and that workers can 'find their own way there'.

*Resistance* is another key concept in Motivational Interviewing. It is characterised as an *interpersonal phenomenon* arising in the transaction. As discussed in the Literature Review, though one party (the client or offender for example) can come in with resistance originating in contextual considerations (i.e. being 'coerced' into a setting, such as occurs in criminal justice) the other party (the worker) can play a huge part in raising, lowering or maintaining such resistance, *by what they do*. Thus, within this framework, if Geese were telling the inmates what to think or imposing a meaning on the performance, resistance would be generated, and the effect would be for the Conversation to cease as the other 'side' 'digs in' to stabilise their threatened Discourse. By taking a primarily reflective stance, Kirkham is attempting to avoid generating such resistance and keep the dialogue flowing.

#### Stanza 4

- 8 Alan A.: Sheer ..sheer TORTURE in the family and stuff// It was WELL OUT OF  
ORDER// And er .. ABUSE towards the kid//
- 9 Kirkham: Uh huh//
- 10 Alan A.: and towards the woman// Way OUT OF ORDER // That's why I'm in here//



- 11 Kirkham: And the and the feelings around that//  
 12 Alan A.: huh//  
 13 Kirkham: The feelings are sick//  
 14 Alan A.: Aye.. Cos I grew up with that kind of shit //

In lines 8 and 10 Alan A. is now giving the 'arguments for change' himself, rather than Geese being the ones to provide the arguments, which (within the M.I. model) is most likely to generate resistance and a rehearsal of the arguments to *not* change.

Kirkham *reflects* further in lines 11 and 13, embodying an assumption that Alan A. does have feelings about the issue, enabling him to admit in line 14 that he has experienced the kind of things seen in VI1, rather than a disassociation from things which are "...well out of order." (line 8). This respectful humanistic ethos, combined with a firmness of directive purpose ("....this week is about violence, that's what we're here to look at") is core to the Geese Discourse and supported by concepts of motivation as a continuum where *intrinsic* motivation to change is seen as most likely to produce that change, rather than an *extrinsic*, coercive and imposed motivation (see also Ryan & Deci 2000). 'Change agents' such as Geese can facilitate the development of this intrinsic motivation through addressing

- 1) The need for personal autonomy. A key aspect of this is the element of "experiencing one's behaviour as determined by oneself....rather than the control of external forces" (Ginsburg et al, p336)
- 2) The creation of supportive caring group (the 'corrective recapitulation of the primary family group' in psychotherapeutic terms, Yalom 1985) where one's thoughts feelings and beliefs are valued though not necessarily accepted unquestioningly
- 3) The creating *or demonstration* that one's behaviour can produce the desired (different) outcome. This latter point also links to notions of *self-efficacy* in M.I. and will be of particular interest later in the week when we come to skills training through improvised drama.

These three elements are addressed both generically and specifically by the Geese practice in the Residency as will be demonstrated below, and the need to work in this manner within the wider context of the anti-humanitarian institution of HMP Blackwood is another parallel to the 'borderland' Discourse being developed. It is an approach which is fundamentally closer to notions of the 'good life' model of rehabilitation where offender are engaged in considering how they might live a 'virtuous life' (see Birgden 2004, Ward 2002, Ward & Stewart 2003) than the 'risk management' model currently dominant in the UK.

## Episode 5

### Accessing the mask of Boyfriend 1: Who is in my Shoes?

The 'accessing' of the mask of the boyfriend 1 character is a chord of the Heathcotian trajectory mentioned previously, moving from the universal to the particular, in that:

- It begins to introduce a specific understanding of a central Geese metaphor, the mask, building on the exposure thus far to full mask
- It begins to move beyond the 'at one remove' level utilising dramatic distance and projection, to a much closer approach to the 'personal level' of direct relevance to the individual

From the discussions under critical episode 4, *Group feedback of reactions to VI1*, above, it seems likely that at least some men (perhaps a majority) have experienced some degree of identification with one of the main *victims* of VI1, the boy Child. This is useful in establishing a destabilising emotional arousal, as discussed above, but the focus of the Residency is of course not on the role the inmates may hold as (child) *victim*, but as (adult) *perpetrator*.

In Chapter 6, critical episode 4, *Group feedback of reactions to VI1*, evidence is presented in stanzas 8. 9 and 10 of Kirkham working to set up this transition between victim and subsequent abuser roles, where she discusses whose responsibility was the violence of Boyfriend 1, and subsequently in stanza 11 where she then elicits admission of direct identification with him (line 171 "Anybody look at that character [Boyfriend 1] and say 'yeah that's been me'?").

As humans, our qualitative experience seems to be of 'my thinking' and of 'I' being located in our individual heads, leading us to believe that there is an 'internality' about *ourselves* - an 'inner world' or inner experience versus the outer embodied 'person' that people can see and to which they relate (Toates 1997, Mauss 1985). However, as will become more obvious later in the Residency when the inmates begin an examination of their own specific violent offences, there often appears to be a failure of *inter subjectivity* (a concept which was referred to above) in that the inmates fail to hypothesise an internal experience in the 'other' which may be different to their own: The behaviour and motivations attributed to others are reduced to a single possibility with only one (violence inducing) interpretation. From a cognitive perspective, this is often referred to as a failure of 'social cognition'.

Thus far, having seen him in the play, the Boyfriend 1 character has been referred to in his absence; now Nicholas, the Geese member who played Boyfriend 1, enters in full mask to provide a concrete, 'here and now' referent for the next part of the exercise:

#### Stanza A

34 Brookes: When he walks on watch the way he walks on// ...Just watch the way he walks on.. (pause) What do you see//

35 Unattributed: Think's he's a hard man//  
(Farrall 2001a)

The exercise is a clear continuation of the projective identification established above, but still using the safety of dramatic distance. With Boyfriend 1 as stimulus, it is attempting to begin an examination or construction of the inmate's understanding of inter subjectivity and 'theory of mind'; but this is an *intuitive* account based in praxis and a Wittgensteinian understanding of the embodied 'rules' of conduct and 'tacit presuppositions' (Bruner 1996) about how peoples' minds work in the experiential reality of the life world.

The exercise here is a precursor to critical episode 7, *Replay of the Mirror Scene*, after lunch, when the group will be invited to construct a collective 'Thinking Report' for the Boyfriend 1. Thus in response to Brookes's question the inmates feed back 'intimidating', 'a nutcase', 'aggression' (Farrall 2001 b). Davy J., who has hitherto been relatively quiet in the feedback offers "He thinks it makes him a man to be violent" (Farrall 2001b). As the feedback continues there is still some attempt to differentiate between 'acceptable' and 'not acceptable' violence, continuing the discourse initiated originally by Deek T. in the first feedback to the performance of V/1, as when Kirkham, linking back to the inmate's first comments on Boyfriend 1, queries:

#### Stanza 10

247 Kirkham: Are hard man on the street ever hard men in their own homes as well//  
248 Alan A. and Billy R. (very quickly) No//  
249 Bruce F.: No//  
250 Kirkham: Never//  
(Farrall 2001a)

This uniformity is weakened somewhat by the qualifications offered by James M. and Billy D., the latter being a man on whom not much data is available in this thesis.

251 James M.: Not usually//  
252 Billy D: Not in front of their wives and that//  
(Farrall 2001a)

Taking this opportunity, Brookes moves on to introduce the core Geese concept of 'mask' or 'front'. This is a notion which Geese are unanimous in praising, as for example Meakes:

"It's something that [people] really connect with, the notion of having a front and the thoughts and feelings beneath that front will have a bearing on the behaviour of that individual .... first and foremost ... it works with the men, it connects with them...and it seems to make sense. If an overall driving force of our work is to get more self-knowledge and having a fuller understanding of the way... people behave then I can't think of anything that could do it as well". (Meakes 2003 para 158).

## Stanza B

In the exercises, Brookes continues to explore the notion of the mask for Boyfriend 1.

299 Brookes: Looking that way// If we were to lift that up though, if we could peel this front off and we could see what he was thinking and and see what he was feeling .. what might be underneath there..

300 James M: Fear//

301 Brookes: Fear// Fear of what//

302 Billy D.: Fear of himself//

303 Brookes: Himself.. what might frighten him about himself//

304 Davy J.: The way he uses violence..

(Farrall 2001a)

Above, James M. is able to articulate a theme of vulnerability behind the 'hard man' image, which seems to resonate with several men. Line 304 is spoken by Davy J., who will go forward to the Corrida, and the impression given is that Davy J. is offering a comment with particular personal relevance: His face is deadly serious and intent (Field Notes p17), and developments in the week will reinforce that he indeed has a fear about the potential of his own violent behaviour. Brookes pursues the combined notion of fronts and vulnerability.

## Stanza C

320 Brookes: But what's underneath ..how does that work? ..what is it ..what is it that he wants to do .. Underneath this hard image. What does he WANT to do?

321 Davy J.: Change

322 Brookes: He wants to change?

323 Davy J.: mmm

324 Brookes: (pause) Maybe. Could be he wants to change.. how's he gonna do that? .. Hows he gonna do that in this situation?

(Farrall 2001a)

In line 324 Brookes backs off from reinforcing Davy's suggestion, which may seem counterintuitive given the aim of the Residency: But the struggle here is to open up (or reopen) possibilities, rather than already be attempting to coalesce into one possibility, choosing to change; it is too early in the Conversion. As part of this attempt to keep open possibility, without explicitly naming it as such, the notion of front also serves to introduce the concept of the 'self', the 'I' *not* as a finished item, but as a *role-based* or dramaturgical self with many potentialities that can be *enacted*.

This is another angle on the idea of the fragmented, multiple *post modern* self (Gergen 1991) and will be further explored on the Tuesday of the Residency though the exercise featuring the Fragment Masks (see Chapter 6, critical episode 11, *The Mimed Offence and related activity*, also Chapter 4, The Research Project and later in this Appendix under episode 11). It is also a

further example of the paradoxical nature of the Residency in that Geese are using the concept of mask or front to suggest a deeper 'truth' underneath yet the theme is also of 'many masks' being worn and of multiplicity rather than unity.

Brookes is also continuing the *connection building* task: Question 17 asks *what sorts of connections are made to previous or future interactions...* and Brookes' question can be seen as a reference to the 'future business' of the Residency, which is exactly to consider how a 'Boyfriend 1' can change; thus these connections are arguably helping contribute to the *coherence* of the situation as the theatre Discourse serves as a vehicle for the 'non theatre' work of examining violent offending behaviour.

By this latter point I mean, as will be seen below, that the feedback is part of a trajectory, moving from general responses to the performance and into a more focussed exploration of the Geese and inmate Discourses of violence, to the introduction of specific concepts of responsibility and choice, before arriving at the point of direct personal reference to the inmates, which is discussed in *critical episode 5, Accessing the Mask of Boyfriend 1*.

## **Episode 6**

### **Games after lunch on Monday**

The actual exercises used at this point are not themselves the subject of much analysis: They will be dealt with briefly at the end of the section. Instead, this point has been selected as because it introduces the notion of experiential games and exercises, which have not yet been encountered by the inmate participants or by the reader. For the benefit of the reader, a discussion of definitions around 'games' may be of use because:

- As the week progresses, there is an increasing fluidity in the use of drama based techniques and physical participation in games and/or exercises by the inmates
- Some 'games' also share some of the function of 'exercises'
- Members of Geese themselves often use the terms 'games' and 'exercises' interchangeably, when they can often be referring to different things, or even fail to make a clear distinction

With reference to the latter point, for example Watson states,

"In group work I very rarely use... exercises or games. It depends what you mean by exercises I guess, I get people up in pseudo situations and it could be an exercise or it could be them walking, asking them to walk from one end of the room to the other end, I wouldn't necessarily call it an exercise." (Watson 2003 para 27).

Readers should note that Watson is referring to offending behaviour group work contexts in general here, as distinct to the *Violent Illusion Trilogy* Residency specifically, within which a

group work approach is utilised. The use of games/exercises occurs throughout the Residency and it is possible to identify three areas of overlapping usage in Geese practice.

### **1) Games as games**

### **2) Games as metaphor**

### **3) Exercises**

Before touching on the specific games featuring at this point, after lunch on the Monday, we will work through these three usages in order, so as to provide a framework for future comprehension as each use becomes relevant in the thesis. Readers should note that Geese practice here is a good example of Derridan 'contamination' since there are few absolute boundaries between the three areas of practice identified. (Further detailed discussion of these issues can be found in Baim, Brookes and Mountford 2005.) Instead, I will again reiterate the point that, as with Geese use of language in the critical moments preceding, wherever the games are used, similar processes are likely to be at work.

#### **1) Games as games**

These can be defined for the purposes of this thesis as the use of what may be familiar to readers as 'ice breakers' or 'warm ups', often taking the exact form of 'party' or even children's games. Good examples of this type of usage would be *Touch Backs*, which features at this point, or *Wild West*, which occurs on Wednesday afternoon. The 'play' usage is very structured, often involving determined turns, sequences, procedures and so on to be learned, and so, while fitting Huizinga's definition: "[Play] proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner" (Huizinga 1955, p13), differs from the 'imaginative' play to which much of the 'play therapy' literature relates (see for example Landreth 2002, McMahon 1992, Wilson, Kendrick & Ryan 1992).

There is a uniform appreciation within Geese of the value to the Residency of such games for their 'ice breaker' function: "They can serve a very literal.... practical function of energising a group of people who traditionally or habitually have very low levels of energy and focus, so that's really useful" (Meakes 2003 para. 48). Linking to research on a sense of group cohesion as a predictor of positive outcomes (see Beech and Scot-Fordham 1997), Raynsford notes

"[Games are important] particularly with the VI week *because* we have a week... with the whole group forming, the pleasure and the fun that can be gained from [games] just working together and seeing that you can have some fun together" (Raynsford 2003 para.30).

Brookes and Robinson support this perspective also: "I think [the games] ... work as a vehicle for bringing the group together..." (Brookes 2003 para.26); ".... they get the group working together." (Robinson 2003).

### **Deeper functions of games as games**

Additionally, these 'games as games' also appear to have 'deeper' functions that are crucial to the Residency, beyond facilitating group formation, and which are intrinsic literally to the existential 'doing' of the games in the life world. In interview, Geese members seem to see these 'deep functions' in terms of 'being different to the usual' and as a 'preparation' for the stated focus of the Residency, it's 'work task' (Bion 1961) and linking to notions of the dramaturgical self considered in Chapter 2, in that such play can *per se* form a site of potentiality and a rehearsal for change,

As Brookes notes, in a continuation of her earlier comments in paragraph 26 above:

"....[The games] actually serve an incredibly important function in that they first of all ask people *to do something differently in a way that they haven't done before*, which is often very uncomfortable, and people get through that and often find that they enjoy that process, and that's a process that goes through [the Residency] with them" (Brookes 2003 para. 26, my emphasis).

Watson notes further: "[The games] get people playing... one of the reasons why people like us in Britain is because we allow guys the opportunity to play and I don't think they [get much chance] usually" (Watson 2003 para.35).

There is a clear theme of potentiality here, with 'fun games' as a medium for the inmates to experience not just others but *themselves* in a different way, as capable of being different: This links to theory node 4 concerning role and the self as social, performative and potential, and Meakes makes this link explicit: "[The games] being public matters [because] you find your own roles and *your roles are defined by other people as well, if someone else sees you in the role.*" (Meakes 2003 para. 76 my emphasis). Watkins (1983) notes that games today are seen as a 'time out' from life, but in fact they are a "...reflection of a complex social process" (p36)

Comments by several Geese members in interview support this interpretation of the playing of the games *per se* having potential to expand the role repertoire:

".... [The games are] very important because *they challenge self image* and a lot of the people that we are working with have a very set image about how they must be or they must behave and how men behave and what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and it is a joy to see men enjoy themselves doing those games and laughing a lot *and allowing themselves to look different for five minutes* that they're playing" (Brookes 2003 para 29, my emphasis).

Morris makes a similar point:

“...to get them running around doing something and being a bit silly and maybe making a fool of themselves in front of other people, as they would see it, could actually be quite a liberating experience in itself...” (Morris 2003 para. 13).

Meakes elaborates on the same theme:

“[Having] a sense of ‘bleeding Nora I’ve just done Captain’s Coming Aboard [a game involving the miming of various silly and nautically related actions] in front of my peer group’ and that could be an interesting change once you realise that you can be silly and childlike in front of men and you’re not going to get laughed at, and if you are it’s in a sense of sharing *rather than being humiliated* (Meakes 2003 para 56 my emphasis).

In terms of Discourse and socioculturally situated identities, the fun and spontaneity of the games is entirely at odds with the ‘frozen institution’ of the prison within which they are taking place, and with the ‘cultural conserve’ that the inmates ‘coalesced’ identities have become. For readers who are unfamiliar with the prison context and with violent offenders, it should perhaps be underlined that the potential power of asking the men attending the Residency ‘simply’ to play a game should not be underestimated: The games can even be a ‘critical moment’ in the sense of crucially affecting an inmate’s participation; Brookes recalls:

“I also know from one of the VI’s in [HMP] Parkhurst that a real change point for one of the men was when he was shouted at in one of the [games] by one of the Geese people. And it was not a serious exercise, it was a silly [game] that he wouldn’t do” (Brookes 2003 para. 31).

Yet, as with comments around VI1, Meakes introduces a note of ambiguity or ambivalence: “Yeah, there’s loads of reasons for doing [the games]. There’s also loads of reasons for not doing them”. (Meakes 2003 para. 48). Thus, while Geese members identify that the playing of the games can be seen as providing therapeutic opportunities in terms of having fun, expanding role repertoire, increasing spontaneity (see Blatner & Blatner 1988) and so on, they also recognise that the experience can potentially be destabilising: “...sometimes [playing the games] is a kind of ‘fucking hell!’ for some people...” (Raynsford 2003 para 30).

Meakes goes on to state the case even more strongly: “[A game] could potentially be a little mini Corrida for a lot of those men, doing an exercise like that” (Meakes 2003 para 56). Readers should note Meakes’s comment in the knowledge that the actual Corridas on Friday are the apogee of the Residency and constitute individually crafted challenges intended to test and consolidate the week’s experience and learning.



The double-edged sword that the games represent may be reason for their decline in current criminal justice practice as embodied in accredited programmes: Geese were always specialists in this 'applied drama'. It can be argued that the authors of the current generation of accredited programmes and thus the 'trained' group workers, lacking this theatre-based skills set or understanding, are simply not skilful or knowledgeable enough in such techniques to enable a high enough likelihood of their successful use.

## **Preparation**

A second 'deep function' of the 'games as games' has already been hinted at in the passage above: That of *preparation for further work*. Morris comments:

"...it's like stepping stones, it's kind of the preparatory work .... the games are just about a bit of fun, but with a view to preparing people for something else, something sort of more developed" (Morris 2003 para 13).

while Robinson also sees that:

"[The games] prepare them in lots of different ways... it prepares them for the cognitive work and prepares them for the fact that *the Corrida will be a very physical experience and their walk-throughs will be a very physical experience*" (Robinson 2003 para 64 – 66 my emphasis).

Raynsford too picks up on the foundational nature of the games; asked whether she thought the Residency would function without the games, she responds:

"No, because I think we are asking a huge amount of trust and respect from the men and if we have not attempted any kind of process that will generate that [such as the games do] then I think it would be a shambles" (Raynsford 2003, para 32).

This comment, with its mention of trust and respect, can be seen as linking back to core principles of play therapy, in that the *therapeutic relationship is central*. It is also an echo of the research mentioned above concerning a supportive and trusting group climate as a major indicator of positive outcomes

## **2) Games as metaphor**

Under this category come games the *content* or *form* of which can exactly mimic the game as game 'warm ups' under the category above, but which have an additional element. Examples of this would be *Grandmother's Footsteps* (which some readers may know from childhood as *Traffic Lights*) on Thursday morning. The additional element referred to is a *contextualising* or *framing* so that the experience of the (apparently unrelated) exercise is used to facilitate examination of issues of offending behaviour, which Geese members refer to as *processing*. It is this *processing* which is the key concept, as a game like *Zip Zap Bop* can function as a warm

up, but with the addition of processing the game opens up as a vehicle for analysing offending behaviour.

Just as with the preceding usage considered, of games as games, Geese members are almost unanimous in their appreciation of the usefulness of the games as *metaphors* for offending behaviour, or related aspects of experience:

"The [use of games as metaphors] I think are an integral part of our work and ...they are a way in to quite a deep level sometimes with men who have no way of articulating their emotions sometimes ... no vocabulary for how they really see things or how they really feel and by giving them something to latch on to which is a very basic metaphor, like a bomb or a shield or a piece of paper or whatever, then in that space you're giving them [a vocabulary] (Morris 2003 para. 14)

Here, Morris is touching on the arguments explored in Chapter 2, such as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that one's thought, and conceptual and literal vocabularies are constrained and shaped by one's material environment. He may also be seen to be paralleling the position of Wittgenstein in suggesting that concept-formation is a development from instinctive behaviour and responses, plus socialisation in a community (the Residency in this case) and that concepts do *not* have an underlying foundation, being instead (in another Chaotic similarity) an *emergent property* of interaction.

As discussed in Chapter 2, this also parallels Vygotsky on the social development of cognition, and arguments marshalled by Best that arts and languages *confer the possibility of feeling* and are creative emotionally: Thus, language and the arts (represented by the Residency) create the human being, not visa versa, offering a way to escape socially determined ways of thinking and feeling which restrict the possibilities of being: "The possibilities of changing oneself depend not only on inherent abilities, but also on the language and social practices which one has learnt." (Best 1992 p83). Following Best, Brookes identifies the importance (as with discussions on V/1, earlier) the importance of the *emotional* content of the games:

"[Games] also allow us to start looking at feelings, most people have very strong feelings in [games and exercises] and that's the same with the theatre and the stuff that we're showing as well, it produces affect...." Brookes 2003 para. 27).

Furthermore, and of direct relevance to the Residency as an example of the *performance arts*, Best also suggests a holistic unity of cognition and affect with *action* as the root - action in a social context. Heywood echoes Best:

"I think that people are less inclined to...intellectualise or [try to distance themselves] if they're doing something, their body's engaged as well, so I think their response can be more genuine because they're involved in it more

completely than if they were just talking about something". (Heywood 2003 para. 33).

Heywood is also touching on theories of education and 'learning styles' which would suggest three major 'domains' to learning: The cognitive, affective and sensori-motor (Bloom 1984 but see also Krathwohl 2002, Anderson, Krathwohl, Airasian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintrich, Raths & Wittrock, 2001), all of which should arguably be catered for, through the Geese use of experiential games. Meakes notes that "...in terms of the processing of exercises then it's a non-academic way into looking at issues which our particular client group ordinarily might find quite dry I think" (Meakes 2003 para 48).

Again, we will conclude with a perspective on the games offered by an inmate-participant and man who goes on to the Corrida, Davy J., and which seems to encapsulate the affective and cognitive dimensions, arising from the existential experience of 'doing' the game (*Equidistant* in this instance):

"The game we played on [Wednesday] the one where we were going round in circles I can identify with that because all I've been doing all my life is just going round in one big circle, it's always been a vicious circle I've been going round in" (Farrall 2001q para 76).

Clearly, Davy J. has seen quite a profound meaning in the game: This is a product of the processing and the way in which, linking back to Chapter 2, it facilitates the *construction of meaning*.

### **3) Exercises**

The final category of usage covers exercises such as the eponymous *Two Man Exercise* (occurring late on Monday) or, *Rules No Rules* on Thursday morning. In activities like these, the format may still fit that of a recognisable 'game' (for the latter) or utilise drama techniques or experiential methods in some other way (for the former); perhaps the distinguishing feature is that this usage is not overtly 'fun' while the above two categories are more obviously enjoyable. At this point I will distinguish further between 'exercises' and the use of dramatic presentations such as the replay of the Mirror scene from *V11*, examined in Chapter 6 under critical episode 7, *The Mirror Scene Replay*.

Raynsford identifies that the use of dramatic distance which we have seen above in the performance of and feedback to *V11* and accessing of the mask of Boyfriend 1 still applies in the use of exercises, as does the holistic nature of the undertaking, and particularly identifies the *bridging* function:

"In a one step removed way the exercises allow people to go through a process and connect with it, with their minds and their feelings and that in itself is a very

valuable process for people who say 'I didn't feel anything or I didn't think anything'.... what that allows us to do is say 'where else do you feel those in life?', so they allow us to build a bridge between identifying those thoughts and feelings and then between people's experiences outside in their doings... They are therefore crucial to the Geese process they are part of how we work" (Raynsford 2003 para. 28 - 30).

Specific attention will be given later in the thesis to critical moments rooted in these usages as they arise, and provide the most suitable exemplars.

### **The specific games of Monday afternoon: *Name Ball Game*, *Touch Backs***

In the specific instance here, it will suffice to state that the use of the exercises can be assumed to begin or embody the type of processes discussed above: Both exercises fall under the 'game as game' usage, with *Name Ball Game* simply being a device for group members to learn each other's names, and *Touch Backs* being a fast, physical exercise involving a limited degree of physical contact. More detailed instructions or explanations of these games are available in Baim, Brookes and Mountford 2002). A point to mention is that Field Notes (p12) record a change in Geese plans, taking out the intended game as metaphor of *The Knot* (which will be considered later) and replacing it with *Touch Backs*. The reason for this is that the company collectively felt *The Knot* to be 'too intimate' after the experience of watching *VI1*. This reflects the artistic nature of the Residency where such decisions can only be classed as based in aesthetics.

Watson also identifies a point of particular relevance after *VI1* and the level of emotion, transference and projection raised:

"I think that after a performance [of *VI1* the games] serve a different function, because ...there needs to be some bridge created whereby the actors are seen as participants as well, I think [the games] serve as a kind of rapport building function" (Watson 2003 para.35).

In critical moment 7, considered next, several key themes of the Residency begin to emerge, as the Mirror scene from *VI1* is replayed.

## Episode 7

### Replay of 'Mirror scene' from *V1* & construction of the group Thinking Report

As has been discussed, through the devices of dramatic representation, dramatic distance and projective identification Geese have been attempting to stimulate and elicit the inmates' (Damasian) somato-visceral feelings, their experiences, both conscious and unconscious, and their cognitions and emotions, thus encouraging the inmates to be talking about themselves without necessarily overtly doing so. This final step to the level of direct personal relevance will be taken by the end of Monday, with the work in small groups where the men will be asked to furnish an example of their own, actual, violent behaviour.

The *Mirror Scene* replay thus represents an intermediate stage in the move to personal relevance, still encouraging projective identification but taking a more structured and concrete form than the preceding feedback of reactions to the performance of *V1*. The process of the exercise is that the scene from the play with Boyfriend 1 and Daughter is replayed in full mask and stopped at critical points, 'frozen'. The inmates are then asked to supply a *thought* or *feeling* for Boyfriend 1, which is written up on flipchart as a Thinking Report (TR).

Readers will recall that within the terms of this thesis, 'thought and feeling' is a false dichotomy (Best 1992, Damasio 1996, 2000) but the split is a 'thinking tool' to help try and establish that thoughts and feelings BOTH exist and play a role in (violent) behaviour. Readers should also note terminology: In the TR a 'feeling' is generally referring to a cognitively mediated *emotion* but can also refer to the 'raw data' of embodied somato-visceral arousal. (This is itself a precursor to later work on 'Cues and Triggers' on Tuesday which will focus specifically on identifying and isolating these somato-visceral changes in order for an individual to gain an 'early warning' of arousal and thus intervene in the process of violence.)

As said, the inmates' suggestions of 'thoughts' and 'feelings' for Boyfriend 1 are noted up on a flip chart to produce the Thinking Report (TR). After the 'affect bomb' of *V1* in the morning, Robinson identifies the TR is the first sign of the 'cognitive thrust' of the Residency: "...cognitive therapy...is probably deemed the most successful therapy. So you use the theatre as the way to get in. What I believe is, that we should do that cognitive therapy within the use of theatre..." (Robinson 2003, para 15). Robinson's comments may be seen as particularly relevant to the material considered later in episode 20, *Skills modelling in the pub scene*, in Appendix A below, and for critical episode 28, Skills training work in the small groups, in Chapter 6.

### Themes of interest in the discourse

The themes identified in Chapter 6, Analysis as being of interest in this section were categorised as

- Discourse of violence against women
- Presence of the 'demeaning insult'

- Discourse of choice and decision making

The Thinking Report for Boyfriend 1 is given here in an adapted format to that found in Chapter 6: I have attempted to link the visible stage action with the discussions it stimulates and the specific lines of the TR which are produced from the discussions.

THOUGHT for *Boyfriend 1*

FEELING for *Boyfriend 1*

*(Daughter is standing posing before mirror as BF1 enters from bathroom, sees her, and stops)*

Stanza 11

435 (unattributed) What's she doing? She's gonna do something I don't like//

436 Brookes: She's getting ready for something..

437: Davy J: Aye, that he doesn't like//

438 Brookes: ..there is this real sense that she's getting this stuff on who's she doing it for//  
What's she doing//

439 Andy B: She's doing it for herself//

440 Deek T: She's got a fancy man//

441 Brookes: Could be// If he thought there was a fancy man what would the thought be//

442 Deek T: KILL her//

443 Alan A.: Whore//

444 Brookes: Whore// Maybe, yeah we've got whore and we've got.. and I know we've got bitch

TR1	What's she playing at?	jealous hatred
TR2	[I want to] make her feel small	head gets hot
TR3	Who's/what's she getting tarted up for?	frightened
TR4	You bitch! Whore!	resentment

Stanza 12

452 James M.: Frightened, he's frightened//

453 Brookes: He's frightened so there might be a feeling of fear here// What else// Are there any other..could there be ..any other feelings at this point//

454 Davy J.: Resentment//

455 Brookes: Resentment// OK//

456 Guy: What what is the fear// What is it he's scared of//

457 Alan A.: Other guys looking at her//

458 Davy J: In case she's away with somebody else//

(Farrall 2001a)

### Stanza 13

482 Davy J.: I'm gonna teach this bitch a lesson//

483 Brookes: I'm gonna teach this bitch a lesson//

484 Brookes: Feeling.. Give us a feeling//

(pause)

485 Davy J.: Bad tempered//

486: (unattributed) Annoyed//

487: (unattributed) Angry//

488 Brookes: Annoyed, angry//

489 Davy J.: Bad tempered//

490 Brookes: Bad tempered// Feeling of annoyance and bad temper//

*(BF1 snatches and throws away hat and magazine)*

TR 5 that's taught her a lesson

good

*(Boyfriend 1 posing before the mirror himself)*

TR 6 the mirror is mine

jealous

*(Boyfriend 1 sits on the Child's toy and leaps up)*

TR7 I'll teach this bitch a lesson

Annoyance

TR8 What the fuck's this doing there?

bad temper

*(Boyfriend 1 sweeps everything off table onto floor, grabs his jacket)*

*(Daughter grabs arm of Boyfriend 1)*

### Stanza 15

547 Davy J.: Well..she's got her hands on him..

548 Guy: Right//

549 Davy J: ..and then he kind of reacts//

550 (unattributed) He wants to get even//

551 Guy: She's got her hands on him so..that's enough to ..that would push it up for you//

(Davy J. nods)

552 Davy J.: That would provoke him into hitting back//

553 Guy : Uh huh. That's all he would need to..

554 Davy J.: That kind of provocation//

TR9 Get your hands off me

Annoyance

TR10 What do you think you're playing at

temper

TR11 I'm off

*(Daughter slaps face of Boyfriend 1)*

### Stanza 16

582 Davy J.: I'd say he [Boyfriend 1] was a bit shocked as well//  
583 Brookes: And a bit shocked..  
584 Davy J.: Aye, for the slap on the face//  
585 (unattributed) By a whore//  
586 Davy J.: Mmm aye//  
587 Brookes: On a scale of 1 to 10, in terms of his anger.. where is where is he now//  
588 (unattributed): Nine//  
589 (unattributed): Nine//  
590 Brookes: Nine//  
591 Davy J.: Ten//  
592 Brookes: Nine or ten// Very high anyway//

TR12 You little bitch!	Shock
TR 13 You're getting it	Anger <u>9 out of 10</u>
TR 14 I'll kill you	Anger at 10
TR 15 Who do you think you are?	[desire for] revenge
TR16 Big mistake!	Fuming

*(BF1 twists Daughter's arm up her back)*

### Stanza 17

610 Kirkham: What's he taking into account when he's thinking these things like where shall I punch her//  
611 Davy J.: She SLAPPED him//  
612 Kirkham: How hard shall I punch her//  
613 Davy J.: She SLAPPED him//  
616 Kirkham: What decision does he make about how hard to punch her then//  
617 (unattributed) Enough to teach her a lesson//  
618 Kirkham: Hard enough to teach her a lesson but..  
619 Davy J.: Not hard enough to kill her//  
620 Ian H: Hard enough to hurt her//  
621 Kirkham: Hard enough to hurt her but not hard enough to kill her//

TR17 How hard shall I punch?	Anger
TR18 Where shall I punch her?	
<i>(BF1 punches Daughter in the kidneys, she falls and he again turns to leave)</i>	

*(Daughter raises herself up and says something to Boyfriend 1)*



### Stanza 18

649: (unattributed) She's getting back up again//

650: (unattributed) You've not had enough you're still shouting//

651 Alan A.: She's probably said sorry, and he's said I'll give you something to be sorry about//

655 (unattributed) He's put her down she should stay down//

### Stanza 19

661 Davy J.: [She is] Probably laughing//

662 Brookes: She could be laughing// What do other people think// Do people think she's going to be laughing at this point//

663 Alan A.: She's probably said sorry, and he's said I'll give you something to be sorry about//

664 Brookes: She could be apologising, she might be saying sorry//

665 Davy J: She could be swearing at him//

TR19 She hasn't had enough if she's still shouting

Rage

TR20 Cow!

*(BF1 crosses back to Daughter, kicks her hard in the stomach walks to door again)*

TR 21 That'll do her

Easing off

TR22 That'll teach her

TR 23 That'll show her who's boss

4/5

*(Boyfriend 1 pauses to adjust his jacket, and leaves)*

*(Field Notes p24)*

### The cycle of violence: From insult to injury

The Geese paradigm presented in the *Mirror scene* and documented in the Thinking Report found above and in Chapter 6 is one of *process* (from insult to injury) rather than isolated incident with no antecedents. This is a Discourse and an epistemology that will be continually explored and reinforced over the week. Thus, in terms of pedagogy one 'educational' point remains to be elucidated: That of the *cyclical* nature of the process of arousal and enactment of violence, as understood from the Geese perspective:

### Stanza D

734 Brookes: OK// When he's outside the door, what will it take// He goes to the pub what will it take for it to go right back up to ten again//

735 Davy J.: Somebody to really annoy him//

736 Kirkham: What's the least thing somebody could do to annoy him//

737 Guy: Somebody just said ask him how's the wife//

738 Gerry G.: Somebody could nudge him in the pub//  
739 Davy J.: Looking at him in the wrong way//  
740 Brookes: ..and that goes right back up to ten again//  
(Farrall 2003b)

These linked concepts of process and cycle are central to facilitating the men in constructing an understanding of violence as repetitive and a *series of linked incidents* with common underlying causes rather than each being an island 'sufficient unto itself', and is analogous to increasing expertise in problem solving. The feature which distinguishes 'novices' from 'experts' in their solutions is an ability to see the 'deep structure' of problems, the common underlying principles which remain the same even when the 'surface features' are very different, and this is particularly important in the realm of ill-defined interpersonal 'fuzzy problems' as was explored in Chapter 2 (Green & Gilhooly 1992, Chi, Glaser & Rees 1983). This 'problem solving' aspect of violent behaviour is one which will be returned to throughout the Residency.

Stanza D is also a 'scaling' of provocation. It is establishing that violent retribution can proceed from incidents that the men - when not self-justifying or ragingly aroused - can see are almost infinitesimally small as a '*casus belli*' and which are thus illegitimate. Brookes moves on to explore consequences briefly:

#### **Stanza E**

749 Brookes: If it goes back up to ten what could happen//  
750 Davy J.: He could kill someone//  
751 Kirkham: Could kill somebody//  
752 (unattributed): Take it out on somebody else//  
753 Deek T.: End up in jail//  
754 Brookes: He's gonna end up in jail//

Several aspects of this exploration of consequences are relevant: It is the second time Davy J. has suggested the death of a victim as a possible outcome of violence, while also raised is the possibility of a 'somebody' simply attacked as a release for Boyfriend 1, and Deek T. offers the ultimate reality check applicable to the group: Serving a prison term. This is more 'change talk' where the men are serving up the arguments for change themselves, rather than being presented by the staff. Next, without using technical or jargon terms, the possibility of minimisation, denial and rationalisation as responses to one's behaviour is raised:

#### **Stanza F**

777 Brookes: If [Boyfriend 1 is] asked about this, about this incident ..how would he describe it//  
778 James M.: He'd try and blame it on her//

779 Brookes: Try and blame it on her, yeah// How else, how else might he try and describe it// (pause)

780 (unattributed): She deserved it//

781 Kirkham: How would he explain it//

782 Davy J.: Say it was self defence// She tried to go for him with a knife or something// He defended himself//

783 Brookes: Self defence, she slapped him first//

784 Davy J.: She provoked me//

(Farrall 2003a)

Line 782 may be suggesting the beginnings of a change in Davy J.'s discourse of 'provocation': His earlier analysis of provocation in line 552 above (stanza 15) is now being put forward by him with a different sense to it, arguably 'saying and doing' (Austin 1962) something rather different than the previous assertion: Reframing or reconstructing an understanding of 'genuine' provocation with only one consequent response into a more multivalent and potential thing. This ambiguity or multivalence, that rationally the violent behaviour of Boyfriend 1 towards Daughter is unacceptable, but that Boyfriend 1 (and by extension the inmates) may well construct a different meaning and see it as justified and acceptable, is demonstrated in the close of the exercise by Kirkham's question:

### **Stanza G**

790 Kirkham: What would he say about his own, his own behaviour//

791 (unattributed) Terrible//

792 (unattributed) He would think he'd done the right thing probably//

793 (unattributed) Out of order.. terrible//

(Farrall 2003a)

There are clear discrepancies in the discourse of the inmates at this point; development of such discrepancy is seen as a prime motivational tool in changing behaviour (Miller & Rollnick 1991, 2002).

### **The Group Thinking Report In Summary....**

A lot of attention has been paid to this roughly 40 minute section of Monday; it has been selected as a critical episode because it contains so many 'seeds' or themes or elements of the Geese Discourse on violence and demonstrates the beginnings of the full Geese contribution to the Conversation that is the residency, and which will be developed over the coming week. These include

- The notion of process and cyclicity to violence
- The existence of a *pattern* of thinking attached to emotions

- The possibility of choice and control

Additionally, the replay of the *Mirror scene* and construction of the group Thinking Report is taking account of claims that language, as affected by the physical/social environment within which it exists, strongly shapes thought. The relevance of this is that Best (1992) argues that the possibility of raising questions depends on having a vocabulary from which they can be formulated (see Plunkett & Sinha 1992, Das Gupta & Richardson 1995) and thus if the inmates are not equipped with the language to consider their behaviour, this need must be addressed.

Overall, the approach can be seen as a recapitulation of Vygotskian ideas of a socially based child developmental process of acquisition of language and conceptual thought where an (initially) external dialogue becomes internalised (Vygotsky 2000). This is also linked to social constructionist notions of 'social dialogue' as a crucial 'construction tool' of the self (Mead 1934).

Finally, it is a commonplace of therapy that patients will not disclose what they perceive a therapist cannot bear to hear (Taylor & Hawarth 2004). It is crucial therefore that Geese can demonstrate their ability to hear the 'worst' the inmates have to offer and not be shocked by explicitly misogynistic comments and actions such as kicking heavily pregnant women. One can argue that Geese have provided the actions and the men are merely projecting a script - but the point remains that Geese can hear, analyse and work with such discourse in a compassionate and respectful but also dispassionate way. The fact that this happens in a group setting is also working to establish the creation of the 'supportive caring group' crucial to motivation (McMurrin 2002).

The next critical moment to be considered is a very brief moment within the *Two Man Exercise*, concerning a particular challenge by a Geese member and what it may suggest for the growing relationship between Geese and inmates.

## **Episode 8:**

### **The *Two-Man Exercise* & Accepting Guy's challenge**

The structured, whole group input continues with the Two Man exercise. This is a stage exercise where two volunteers are slowly manoeuvred towards one another and the thoughts feelings and projections elicited from the audience throughout (see Baim, Brookes & Mountford 2003). Readers should note that chronologically, the following activity *precedes* the intervention by Guy, a member of the Geese team, which is examined in Chapter 6.

### **Reiteration of the Geese paradigm**

The first of these points occurs in the opening seconds of the exercise, as Mountford states:

810 Mountford: .... THOUGHTS and FEELINGS and then this thing which comes at the end of that.. what the thoughts and feelings do and which is BEHAVIOUR// (Farrall 2001b)

Mountford's comment here can be seen as linked to several elements of Gee's (1999) framework for Discourse analysis:

16) *What sorts of connections backwards/forwards are made within and across utterances and large stretches of the interaction?*

17) *What sorts of connections are made to previous or future interactions, to other people texts ideas?*

18) *How do these connections in 16 and 17 help contribute to 'coherence' in the situation?*

Line 810 represents a *connection* back to one of the first 'utterances' in the Geese discourse, when in stanza 3 on the presentation of the contracts prior to *VI1*, Kirkham stated "... this week is about violence, that's what we're here to look at". This was an explicit stating of the major Geese term of the Conversation, but the work of the Residency may be seen to then shift away from such a direct link, using dramatic distance in *VI1* and the device of character tangentially to explore issues of violence. As Raynsford identifies, "...we are going to talk about violence rather than macramé for the week. Whatever they try and do we are always going to bring it back to the issues" (Raynsford 2003 para 138)

Line 810 connects *back* to this core Geese term, and *forward* to future work in that the paradigm presented is *foundational*: It will provide the 'working model' for further analysis. This explicit connection between thought, feeling and behaviour and explicit process takes a position of 'assumed agreement' even though the inmates have not *explicitly* agreed that violence 'works' in the way Geese are presenting. From now on it will be the Geese baseline.

Line 810 thus represents a shift in the degree of explicitness of the Geese discourse from the hypothetical exploration using *Boyfriend 1* of the *possible* presence of thoughts and feelings or their potential connection to violent behaviour to an explicitly stated paradigm of process. This is a very specific position which will be expanded in an attempt to counter that utilised by the inmates in the small group work which we will examine shortly, where they attempt to use 'self discourse' to construct 'character and motive' in such a way as to be an act of mitigation for their violent behaviour (see Wetherall & Potter 1989).

### **Blurring the spectator-actor boundary**

As discussed in critical episode 1, one major way in which Geese Theatre have set out the terms of their Discourse and initiated the 'conversation' with the Discourse of the inmate group is through the definition of the Chapel as a performance space. Initially this established clearly defined 'audience' and 'performance' areas as the inmates accepted the dominance of the

theatre Discourse and their 'audience' role (see critical episode 1, *Prologue: Before a word is spoken*).

It has been considered above how, since the point at which the inmates entered the room at the beginning of the morning, various *activity building tasks* have been in process. The main activity (Q8) going on is 'theatre' but this has been used as a vehicle for the *sub activity* (Q9) of 'considering offending behaviour', with the *actions* comprising this (Q10) being the elicitation of the inmate's responses to the material they have seen, and their active part in the construction of meaning for the stage action such as in the feedback to VI1 (*critical episode 4*), the accessing of the mask of Boyfriend 1 (episode 5, see above in this Appendix) and the replay of the *Mirror Scene* (critical episode 7, see Chapter 6). They have also been engaged in actual physical games in the performance space (episode 6, *Games after lunch on Monday*, see above in this Appendix).

Since these activities have carried the thrust of 'hidden education' and an essentially Freirian pedagogy, the performance space has been established as an 'aesthetic space' (Boal 1995), possessing 'gnosological' properties which stimulate knowledge and discovery, cognition and re-cognition. The further properties of aesthetic space, those of *plasticity* and *dichotomy* will become more clearly emergent as the Residency continues.

In the doing of these activities though, the space has predominately been occupied physically by Geese personnel, although the spectator-actor boundary has already been presented as permeable through the requirement for involvement of the inmates in the sub activities: Thus their role as 'audience' has not been so passive as is usually associated with that term. However, to become a truly performative space with the potential to "...abolish the present state of things, transform totalities" (Holzman 2000, p83) the inmates must at some point enter fully into this aesthetic space, experiencing its gnosological and generative possibilities for themselves.

The process of breaking down the spectator-actor boundary and producing instead the much more active and empowered 'spect - actor' of Boal (1979) is facilitated by Mountford's invitation: 836 Mountford: "We're here for a week to do some theatre of US performing but also through you being involved in that in some way// So RIGHT NOW I'm going to ask for 2 volunteers// (Farrall 2001b)

to which Andy B. and Billy D., a man not seen much in this thesis, respond, entering into the space formerly held by Geese.

During the course of the exercise, the challenge by Guy that is considered in Chapter 6 occurs. Following this challenge, the *Two Man Exercise* concludes with Mountford introducing another crucial theme in the Geese Discourse:

1001 Mountford: There is something else here as well ..a question.. to think about for the rest of this afternoon and as we go through the week// what are the choices that anybody has in a given situation// What are the choices that people have// Sometimes it feels like I have no choice, I feel like I'm in a pub and this person's standing next to me, and he's staring at me, and I have no choice// [but to behave violently] (Farrall 2001b)

In terms of *connections*, this is another link *backwards* to the themes emerging from the Mirror scene replay considered in critical moment 7 that Boyfriend 1 *makes choices* over his actions and therefore *could have chosen differently* while accepting that in the existential life world, this may not be so apparent. This theme of *choice*, of existential responsibility is a key philosophic thread underpinning the entire Residency and the Geese Discourse and will feature prominently from now on.

## **Episode 9**

### **Small groups: The move to personal level work & expressions of Discourse on violence**

Geese Theatre make a clear distinction between work which is 'at one remove' using theatrical media of character or mask or performance, and 'personal' work which is directly about a given individual's lived experience (see Baim, Brookes & Mountford 2002). To this point in the Residency, the focus has been on 'distanced' or at one remove work even though the process has been to elicit from the men contributions informed by their personal experience and to encourage them to project directly onto the characters met.

Now the focus changes directly to personal level work, as the whole group splits down into sub-groups composed of two Geese workers, one or two staff members and three or four inmates. In each group, the Geese workers ask the men to volunteer a situation where violence occurred and which, in their own estimation, they initiated rather than occurring 'defensively'. The aim is then to use improvisational drama in a live three-dimensional 'walk through' of the event in order to generate material of exactly the sort that was used in the Thinking Report of *Boyfriend 1*, but to fill in a real Thinking Report for the actual individual inmate participant.

At this point in the Residency I am not attached to any specific group, but attempting to 'float' between the groups to gather data.

## **A last word from the inmate participants**

The final shared act of the day is a 'go-round' where all the participants come together in a circle and are invited to offer a word or phrase on the day. Davy J. offers "it's been an experience" (Field Notes p27) and this is a key point: The Residency is a lived, embodied, kinaesthetic *experience*, with the level of this experiential element rising as the week progresses. Davy J.'s statement also captures the Chaotic 'self similar' nature of the work: As it will be in the end so is it in the beginning in terms of what is being delivered and asked; the level of magnification changes, but the total *Violent Illusion Trilogy* Residency experience is encapsulated by day 1.

James M. offers "I might learn something" (Field Notes p27), a discourse of wary acceptance in opposition to the possible discourse of 'this can't teach me anything'. Geese have been accepted - even if only to a certain degree - as credible communicators, avoiding the generation of resistance by negotiating a shared construction of meaning.

After this comes only the setting of the assignments (to think further on an incident of violence for which the men were responsible and to fill in a Thinking Report for it), a requirement which extends the boundaries of the 'social space' of the Chapel overnight, to maintain the identity of the inmate group through being engaged in a special task as they go back to their separate wings. These two elements - the go-round and the homework - are part of the ritualistic nature of the Residency, part of its identity as a Discourse 'institution' (the site of repeated patterns).

## **Recap: By The End of The First Day**

All of the exchanges detailed here in Appendix A and in Chapter 6 have been working to develop the 'borderland' Discourse containing both the overall emergent territory of 'violence' or 'not violence', plus the development of a borderland status for inmate participants as engaged spect-actors developing the possibility of enlarging their role repertoire. During the day Geese have been engaged in all of Gee's building tasks: Semiotic; world; activity; socioculturally-situated identity and relationship; political and connection. The foundations have been laid for further work, and the opening statements of both sides in the Conversation heard.

If "The possibilities of changing oneself depend not only on inherent abilities, but also on the language and social practices which one has learnt" (Best 1992 p 83) then the inmates may be beginning to enlarge those possibilities as they begin the journey of 'conscientisation' (Freire 1990) towards a less oppressive and less oppressed worldview and self-concept, making their first tentative steps into the aesthetic space that will coalesce into 'surplus reality' as the week progresses.



## Tuesday

### Episode 10

#### Games in the morning

As noted in Chapter 6, the game here, *Anyone Who...* is a fast physical exercise where people must swap chairs if they share a similarity stated by a person in the middle of the circle, who does not have a chair. The point to note is that the game is an embodiment of the Residency Discourse of 'theatre', a continuation of efforts to promote group gelling and encourage a level of disclosure, and perhaps most importantly, an attempt to continue the processes of expanding the role repertoire or challenging a set self image as discussed above. Field Notes (p30) record that there is much laughter during the game and readers should be aware that this is genuine laughter *based in the experience of the game* rather than 'undermining' laughter as was experienced during the *Two Man Exercise* and the reference to gay bars.

Field Notes also record that Davy J. comes in scowling and then leaves before the warm up exercise starts; Officer Blue tells us that Davy J. was refused a phone call last night (meaning he was not allowed to make one) and wanted to punch the officer refusing him, but did not (Field Notes p30). The effects are still apparently with him though, causing him to withdraw.

### Episode 11

#### The Mimed Offence and related activity

Some elements of this episode, mainly concerning Davy J.'s discourse, are detailed in Chapter 6. The following material expands upon elements concerning the masks.

#### The Introduction of half-mask

After the warm up I lead a whole group exercise where I reintroduce the notion of mask, referring back to yesterday and the idea that the Boyfriend 1 character had a 'front', but this time extending the concept and bringing it closer to the personal level:

".....when you're in prison you've got a different front on to when you're at home with your families; when you walk out of your cell and you walk down the landing you might [present as] 'I'm alright, everything's fine, keep your distance', even if you're not feeling like that. So the idea is that a mask is just a front that can come down or be lifted" (2001d).

The following section on masks relates to *half-masks*: These are, as described above, masks where only the upper portion of the face is hidden, leaving the lower jaw and chin free; this means that unlike in the full masks of VI1 where the actor cannot speak, a half-mask is designed to allow verbal interaction. This is the case with, for example, Commedia del'Arte, where masked actors speak but the unique Geese usage is that of 'mask lifting' where the physical removal of the mask from the face as an integral part of the performance. In

performance, great subtlety of suggestion, intention and emotion can be achieved through sophisticated use of this technique.

The notion is that when the mask is lifted (literally and metaphorically) what emerges is a 'deeper truth' "...the hidden vulnerability, the concealed thoughts and feelings..." (Baim, Brookes & Mountford 2002, p183). Heywood suggests that it is this particular Geese usage of *lifting the mask* that provides the added value:

"...I think the metaphor works really well with half-masks because you can lift it up and you can hear ... and we can model... what the emotional stuff or the thinking might be underneath, so I think they're still an essential part of it" (Heywood 2003, para 94).

Meakes too supports the centrality of the half-masks in a nod to the holistic approach of Geese:

"... I just think it's our most, most important metaphor and so in terms of it being placed on the (Residency) week I just think it's crucial, I think underpins all of the work we do. (Meakes 2003 para 156) ...it's something that the men and women really connect with, the notion of having a front and the *thoughts and feelings beneath that front will have a bearing on the behaviour of that individual.*" (Meakes 2003 para 158 my emphasis).

This metaphor of 'lifting the mask' can be seen as an effort to follow Best (1992) and Wittgenstein (1958) in developing the conceptual resources of the men in order to promote new thinking, and links to the subsequent use of the Fragment Masks (see below) as an attempt to provide language and concepts to describe a set of common human behaviours which are assumptions so deeply set in cultural practices that they cease to have the appearance of 'assumptions' and become 'how people are'.

### **The Mimed Offence**

See Chapter 6, critical episode 11, for analysis of discourse arising from the mimed offence scene itself, which is then followed by the introduction of the Fragment masks.

### **The Introduction Of The Fragment Masks**

The Fragment masks are: Fist; Brick Wall; Mr. Cool; Good Guy; Mouth (or Bullshit); Joker and Poor Me (see Chapter 4, The Research Project, and Appendix H). As noted previously, each mask is a specialised half-mask, so the actor can still speak while wearing it and each "...symbolise[s] a prominent strategy - or fragment of behaviour - [they represent] key self-protective strategies..." (Baim, Brookes & Mountford 2002, p184).

The Fragment masks are also representative of the particular conceptions of role and self mentioned in Chapter 2: That each of the Fragments is not a complete role but, as its name

explicitly suggests, is a 'fragment' of the post modern or dramaturgical self. As the Residency progresses, the sense of trying to develop other 'fragmentary roles' as a basis for transformative change will increase, echoing the Morenian conception of self emerging from role and not the other way around (Moreno 1985). In Best's terms the Fragments represent the assumptions mentioned above, which have ceased to have the appearance of 'assumptions' and become 'how people are'.

"The fragment masks I think are just a very useful tool about giving a language to people, manipulation with all the different behaviours.... Fronts, rackets, it just gives a language. And it also tells them that we know that's what happens too" (Kirkham 2003 para 125).

In this assertion Kirkham is linking ideas discussed above around the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and Best's notions of an enhanced conceptual vocabulary, to earlier discussions of the collective entity of 'Geese Theatre Company' as a credible communicator, the Fragment masks acting as the performance of *V11* does, to let the inmates 'know that we know'. Brookes notes however that

"...in all our other work the Fragments really provide quite a big stimulus for work, [but] they really quite get lost in the [Residency] week. By the time they emerge it's almost like the men have gone to another place, it's gone sort of slightly beyond them in most cases ... Because I think [that's because] we've started off with full-face masks and I think that does something [extra]" (Brookes 2003 para 98).

Readers should also note that in contrast to the Geese usage described with the 'normal' half-masks where the mask is raised and lowered repeatedly, a 'truth' being obtained when it is lifted, this is *not* what happens in the Mimed Offence. In this, (and in the replay) there is no dialogue and the scene is a literal 'scene setting' to allow use of the Fragment masks. With the Fragment masks, whichever *specific* mask is in use is removed entirely only to be replaced *immediately* by another in rapid sequence, to illustrate someone using the masks either as a *deliberate strategy* or as an *unconscious coping mechanism* – an embodiment of the 'assumptions' mentioned above.

The inmates are now encouraged to question the Tony character about the scene they have just seen: Mountford responds using the Fragment masks, switching rapidly back and forth. Below are illustrative examples taken from the exercise.

### Stanza 31

95 Andy B: What were you thinking when you walked in the bar//

96 BULL: I wasn't thinking nothing you know.. I was just going in there for a drink// That's what I was doing.. That's what I wanted//

- 97 James M: Why did you go ahead// Why did you go ahead with the beer glass and the pool cue?
- 98 JOKER: They were TAKING THE PISS weren't they// (laughter from audience) You know I'm sitting there drinking and I put my money on the - on the - table - and they you know, they start to have a game with somebody else - what am I supposed to do, say I'm sorry, don't you worry about that// (laughter)
- 99 Farrall: Why didn't you just go up to them and say excuse me I think it's my go//
- 100 COOL: Listen pal the places I go to you can't do that can you// You don't.. you know.. ask someone politely not to stick a knife in you// You know.. YOU LIVE in a .. in a DIFFERENT WORLD.

(Farrall 2001d)

Field Notes (p30) record that while all the other men are attentive and focussed on Mountford and the masks, Gerry G. is leaning in but glancing around, appearing rather unconcerned and dismissive. Line 100 also illustrates how the live performance can incorporate material from the groups: This 'different world' theme belongs to James M. from Mountford's small group.

### Stanza H

- 108 Kirkham: Why haven't you talked about this while you've been here this week//
- 109 WALL: What do you mean//
- 110 Kirkham: I mean why haven't you spoken about this// (pause as Wall stares at her) Your offence// (long pause as Wall looks at ceiling) We did ask you..yeah//
- 111 WALL: I dunno//
- 112 Heywood: Would you say you were violent//
- 113 WALL: Am I violent//
- 114 Kirkham: Well then.. how would you describe yourself//
- 115 GOOD GUY: Ahh .. I only resort to violence..you know.. if somebody's started on me// You know.. in situations like that.. I'm not a VIOLENT MAN. These three [in the bar] they would have picked on someone who might get hurt//
- 116 Kirkham: You wanted a fight from the moment you walked in there// You were checking the bar out to look for a fight//
- 117 FIST: What you SAYING// I go.. I go LOOKING FOR TROUBLE is that what you're saying.. when I walk down the street// I walk in a pub and I LOOK FOR A FIGHT is that what you're saying//

(Farrall 2001d)

As the Fist mask appears there are smiles around the group and laughter from several men, but Gerry G. now looks bored and yawns obviously (Field Notes p30).

## Stanza I

131 FIST: it's BOLLOCKS that, what you're saying// What you saying I'm a FUCKING ANIMAL that just goes LOOKING FOR A FIGHT ..You know ..(swaps mask to Poor Me)

132 POOR ME (whiningly): If people just left me alone ..there'd be no trouble// You live where I live where there's fuck all.. you know what I'm saying// My girlfriend's left me now as well.. I can't get access to my kids..

(Farrall 2001d)

## Processing the Fragment Masks

Brookes now leads the processing, meaning that mask by mask she invites the men to clarify what the Fragment mask represents, what behaviours, thoughts, feelings, utterances might be associated with them. The aim is to equip the men with a pragmatic vocabulary to label familiar behaviours while widening the conceptual references available to them in order to facilitate a possible change in understanding around these same behaviours. This is again linked to Wittgenstein (1958) Best (1992) and Vygotsky (2000) in that behaviours for which the masks provide a concrete reference and which the inmates are presenting as 'natural' are being re-interpreted as socially constructed - a front - and thus subject to choice and to transformation.

389 Brookes: ... do these make sense// Yeah// Do you recognise them// Yea// What we want you to do is to think ..about ..the masks and if there's ONE in particular that you've used more than others.. and in what situations you've used it// Maybe there's a COMBINATION maybe there's two.. or three.. that you use a lot// When you get into a difficult situation.. And think about why you use it and when you use it// (Farrall 2001d)

The processing is also part of the general 'elaboration' of cognitive material – requiring people to 'think about it' - and represents the overall Freirian pedagogy of the Residency. We have seen the same process over Monday in the feedback to VI1 and the Mirror Scene, and this attempt to encourage 'active' thinking facilitates 'depth of processing' (see Craik & Lockhart 1972, Craik & Tulving 1975, Rogers, Kuipers & Kirker 1977, Bower & Gilligan 1979, Rose 1994) which in itself helps with subsequently greater recall, understanding, relevance and saliency, as meaning is constructed (Bruner 1990). Offenders in general are not at their most comfortable with abstract thinking (Blud 1999) and the hope is that the concrete referents and accessible language provided by the masks - such as the sight of a Fist peeping out but ready to spring from behind the Brick wall - make consideration of abstract concepts easier to grasp.

In aesthetic terms, there is also a Brechtian level to the Fragments as a device for the *verfremungseffekt* of 'de-familiarising' or creating a distance from the too-familiar in order to see it in a new way (Esslin 1959), an echoing of Boal's concern with the 'everyday' becoming too 'mechanical' and the need to subject it to scrutiny in order to notice it (Boal 1992). While this is

an artistic argument, there are clear parallels with the notion mentioned above of 'assumptions', the 'tacit presuppositions' (Bruner 1996) which have become so embedded as to require de-familiarisation to be *noticed* as assumptions, and therefore provisional (Best 1992, Wittgenstein 1958), and is another reminder that the theatre based nature of the Residency is not incidental, but is a key element in the process and its outcomes.

Leaping ahead slightly to the next lot of small group work Geese discuss individually with the men which of the Fragment masks or their combinations they would identify for themselves. Colin S. identifies Brick wall & Cool - I suggest the Fist exists behind the Wall - and Darren C. identifies Fist & Brick wall.

Chapter 6 next briefly considers events in the coffee break 'interlude' concerning a conversation with James M., before continuing with an analysis of 'discourse on violence' found in the Thinking Report of Darren C, in critical episode 12.

## **Episode 12**

### **Return to the small groups and discourse on violence – Darren C.'s Thinking Report**

Chapter 6 concentrates on an analysis of the Discourse of violence in Darren C.'s recollection of a fight in (or at least beginning in) a bar. The Thinking report is developed from a 'walk through' and the following material expands on some of the links to theory node 2, emotion and memory.

#### **Misty watercolour memories?**

Darren C. has not done his 'cellwork' assignment, a lapse that will become characteristic of his ambivalent engagement with the Residency. Darren's previous suggestion of an incident where he was responsible for the violence was of a football match where everyone was fighting and he was attacked, mitigating against his being able to take responsibility for his behaviour, as Heywood described (see recap by the end of Monday, in Chapter 6). Pursued now for another example Darren suggests: "There was these three guys in a bar. I was playing pool... an' a fight started. I bottled one of them and the others run. This guy says "...don't fucking call me mate you prick"" (Farrall 2001d)

The discourse involved in Darren C.'s statement is the focus in Chapter 6; here we will consider the offence reconstruction walk throughs in gaining a Thinking Report as providing an early instance of Boalian aesthetic space, used at the personal level of individual behaviour. As discussed in this Appendix above under episode 3, the gnosological properties of aesthetic space have already been utilised at the group level, with a particular emphasis on projective aspects, by the performance of *The Violent Illusion Part I*. What happens in the walk through is not Morenian surplus reality because the walk through deals with a reconstruction of past

events, not so that they can be (re)*experienced differently* in that surplus reality for purposes of catharsis, but 'merely' to aid recall through invoking a degree of Damasian *feelings* and enhanced cognition.

Thus, the walk throughs are concerned with eliciting recall of 'what happened'. As discussed in Chapter 2, Literature Review, 'memory' is a reconstructive process and not simply a recalling of neutral 'factual' information (Bartlett 1932). It can be conceptualised as a 'multiple store' with both long- and short-term repositories, but which, in general, faithfully records and 'encodes' memory traces or 'engrams' (the idealised 'unit' of memory, see Searleman & Herrmann 1994). The key issue for recall can therefore be understood as one of facilitating *retrieval* of encoded material (Eysenck & Keane 1995, Williams, Loftus & Deffenbacher 1992).

Engrams are considered to be an amalgam of discrete features such as 'size, shape and colour' (Gudjonsson 1992) and because memory is associative, engrams can be retrieved with the use of an appropriate 'cue' of which there may be several, as suggested by Multiple Trace Theory (MTT) (Bower 1967). The effectiveness of such cues is dependent on the extent to which the encoded material and the retrieval cue *overlap*, with 'context dependency' factors being important (i.e. materials encoded in one context may not be easily accessed in a different context, see Flexer & Tulving 1978, Godden & Baddely 1980).

Multiple Trace Theory also suggests that information not accessed in one way may be accessed in another (through a variety of retrieval cues, Tulving 1974) and finally the Encoding Specificity Hypothesis (ESH) states that reinstatement of the original context within which encoding took place should facilitate access to the encoded material (Tulving & Thomson 1973). There is strong laboratory support for the assertion that the more witnesses try to remember a specific event (the whole focus of the walk throughs), the more they will recall (Roediger & Thorpe 1978, Bower, Gilligan & Monteiro 1981), the process of the walk through enabling the inmate (Darren C. in this instance) to recover specific thoughts, feelings and chronological details.

In practical terms, this mean that a *dramatised* walk through is an augmented version of the 'context reinstatement' technique used in the police investigative 'cognitive' interview where the interviewee is requested to begin by recreating as full a mental picture as possible of the event being recalled: Colours, smells, sounds colours etcetera, smells, sounds etcetera (see Memon & Bull 1991, Memon 1998). Although using the same techniques as the cognitive interview, the walk through places them within a kinaesthetic framework, and thus offers a much wider variety of retrieval cues than a purely verbal interview or recounting because the recaller (Darren) is up and moving, with group members physically taking the place (literally and metaphorically) of the other characters in the incident.

This moving, kinaesthetic element aids recall through invoking 'body memory' of the kind suggested in Chapter 2, facilitating context reinstatement and enriching the range of 'recall cues' (cognitive, affective, physiological, movement etcetera) available to the recaller who is reconstructing the memory. This is a feature of offence analysis that is only available to the kind of experiential improvisational drama-based 'active' work the Residency embodies, or to other programmes utilising such an approach (Farrall 2007a, 2007b).

Additionally, the material being recalled is from Darren's 'autobiographical' memory. This type of memory is deemed to concern episodes or 'specific life-events which have self reference' (Cohen, Kiss & LeVoi 1993, p50) and 'particular sensory attributes' (Tulving 1972) usually with a spatio-temporal context. The importance of autobiographical memory is suggested by Cohen's (1989) comment that one's sense of personal identity depends on being able to recollect one's personal history, which is exactly what autobiographical memory is.

Thus, with Darren on his feet, we use the type of questions from the cognitive interview rapidly to (re)construct – verbally and physically - the approximate size of the room, the position of important characters, the smells and sounds and images of the scene and the lay out of the bar, using chairs to mark important features. We then 'bring the scene to life', walking Darren through events step by step, pausing frequently at specific points of behaviour in the narrative to establish what Darren is thinking and feeling. The criteria for choosing these points is an aesthetic choice about having the 'ear' to hear 'choice points' and so on, and such re-enactment where there is attention to 'detail, reflection and analysis' might be counted as Neeland's (1990) 'poetic activity'.

## **Episode 13**

### **The Victim Lazzi: Consideration of effects on one's own victims**

As stated in Chapter 6, a 'Lazzi' is a term taken from the Italian theatre form of Commedia dell'arte and in its original context denotes a short dramatic scene that is emblematic of a major theme or concern. The Victim Lazzi scene in the Residency is played in half-masks and features four 'characters'. Two are present on stage, an old man (signified by a walking stick); and a young man. A third 'character' (played by me) is not really 'present' but functions to give vocalisation to two 'voices' in the younger man's head, which Geese name to themselves as 'Father' and 'School bully'. In Boalian therapeutic terms these would be 'cops in the head' (Boal 1995).

The Lazzi and its associated work form an extended episode: There is the initial presentation of the short Lazzi scene, followed by processing and analysis, before moving into asking the participants to consider the people who have been victims of their violence. The sequence is included here because



- It represents a further level of explicitness in the Geese Discourse
- It is a the first point at which the *consequences to others* of violent behaviour have really come into focus
- It is a further step in the level of personal relevance for the men – who are *their* direct victims?
- It is a likely point of resistance
- It is a further refinement of the Geese Discourse, introducing notions of *proportionality* of response and not just *responsibility*

The Lazzi devised by Geese is a distillation of their 'field research' of hearing the offenders' expressions of motivations for assault, and thus independently recapitulates a central theme of this thesis. In the narrative of the Lazzi, an older man is waiting at a bus stop when a younger man comes up. From an innocuous inquiry by the young man about what time the bus comes and a bad tempered response by the old man springs a savage and violent assault of the older man by the younger. The key point is that while the old man behaves in an unreasonable way to the younger, the 'trigger' or flashpoint for the young man's serious violence is when the 'demeaning insult' of being touched/pushed trigger the internal voices (which in cinematic terms would be in flashback), and in reaction to which (or more accurately, in the terms of this thesis, *in reaction to the unbearable feelings they arouse,*) the young man behaves violently.

The scene is presented to the whole group, with no preface, after they have spent all morning working in the small groups. They are given no time to discuss it, but immediately taken to dinner. On their return the Lazzi is analysed and discussed in an attempt to create narrative sense and meaning for the witnessed events (Bruner 1990).

While from the Geese Theatre perspective, the Lazzi has a 'work function' to introduce the notion of past trauma affecting present behaviour without use of alienating jargonistic or technical words or 'psychobabble', the Lazzi and its processing are linked to all of the theory nodes identified in this thesis: Readers should remember that the notion of 'rhizomatic' connections mean any issue raised under any node could be connected to any other.

1. Unity of cognition & affect ('fethinkel' and a holistic approach to the human being)
2. Emotion and memory (interrelatedness)
3. Drama and theatre (communality, witnessing, ritual, emotion)
4. Role and the self (self as social, performative, potential, embodied)
5. Meaning/narrative/discourse (construction/performance of, change in)
6. Therapy/catharsis (primary & secondary)
7. Interpersonal style (therapeutic alliance, humanism)
8. Learning & change (behavioural, emotional, personal)

## Tuesday Afternoon

### Analysing the Victim Lazzi: Contemplation of one's own victims

As usual, the work begins with a phenomenological construction of the scene, aiding the men to make 'sense' and construct a narrative around what they have seen, eliciting from them the understanding that my character had not been physically present but represented something else. The inmates identify the two 'voices' as a school bully and a father (Field Notes p36). Examination of the script in Appendix K will illustrate that the words (and assumed associated behaviour) of the father character are distinctly abusive, e.g. "Stand up for yourself you little shit, you're no son of mine", but none of the men challenge the representation as unrealistic, which may in turn imply something about their experiences of being parented.

In terms of *connection building tasks*, a link is being made between past (traumatic) experience and present violent behaviour, hopefully adding to the growing 'coherence' of the (Residency) situation when Heywood asks where these 'voices' originate:

#### Stanza J

41 Billy D.: [the voice is] someone he knew.. he was being bullied or picked on or something and.. it was just the voice in his head telling him to strike back//  
54 Colin S.: He's getting flashbacks//  
56 (unattributed): Aye with the bullying//  
58 Colin S.: He's getting flashbacks with the bullying with his father.. and.. somebody else that was bullying him just (garbled) and he's just had enough//  
(Farrall 2001e)

Clearly, this is an explicit reference to the psychological experience often associated with trauma, of posttraumatic stress, again implying that such phenomena may be familiar to these men, or at least to Colin S. specifically. James M. then once again returns to his discourse of *vulnerability*: Violence and aggression are again being cast as originating in reactions to fear (see stanza 12 under critical episode 7, *Replay of the Mirror Scene*, in Chapter 6). This is a further move from the inmate's initial discourse of violence as justified action and part of the continuing *world building task* transforming or destabilising the inmates' 'cultural model' of violence.

#### Stanza K

45 James M.: Aye he was TERRIFIED  
46 Heywood: What was he scared of//  
47 James M.: This voice in his head  
48 Heywood: Right.. what had happened to make him scared of this voice.. these two voices//  
49 James M.: Violence (low pitch) (Field Note p34, JMD head down, looks 'regretful')

(Farrall 2001e, Field Notes p38)

Crucially, the distinction is drawn that the violence to which the young man character may be reacting *is not temporally present* - that his reaction is transferential in nature, relating to previous traumatic experience (although this is not the language used by the inmates) and the old man's behaviour is merely a trigger.

#### Stanza L

57 Heywood: He [the young man character] did get pushed over though didn't he//

58 James M.: Uh huh.. he's got memories of it - (garbled) these things that's in the past

59 Darren C.: Because he was being hurt//

60 Heywood: Because he was getting hurt// So he had the flashbacks of being hurt before//

61 Guy: Billy was saying because hes being picked on again//

(Farrall 2001e)

In stanza M below a further crucial point made is that the experience for the young man character is not simply potentially physically harmful but is *emotionally and psychologically aversive*, linking to Gilligan's suggestions on the aetiology of violence and the Lazarus's concept of the 'demeaning insult'.

#### Stanza M

70 Heywood: [did the character feel] anything else that's before angry//

71 James M.: Fear// (low tone)

72 Billy R.: Degraded//

73 Davy J.: Humiliated//

(Farrall 2001e)

Finally, Field Notes (p38) record that as Officer Blue now speaks from his own experience of being bullied at school, Gerry G. smirks through the telling, trying to draw another group member into conversation. Gerry still appears to be overtly resisting the Residency process, as though battling against it, yet in a different way to Deek T.: While the latter appears to be trying to *undermine* the whole Discourse, Gerry G. appears to be trying to somehow convey that the Discourse *does not apply* to him.

With the processing of the Victim Lazzi, there is a continuance of the *semiotic building task* where question 2 asks *what ways of knowing* are being made relevant or irrelevant? The Geese way of knowing violence continues to be put forward with a thought - feeling - behaviour and the possibility of unconscious motivation for violence originating in early trauma. The key theme of personal responsibility continues as Heywood elicits that while such experience may be an influence, the responsibility for behaviour remains with oneself. This is actually an empowering

theme, as the 'here and now' focus of the residency challenges offenders to deal with their present, whatever their past.

Often in fact, offenders will be resistant to the notion that their past experiences of victimisation in any way effect or are linked to their offending - they may genuinely be unaware of any link, requiring specifically therapeutic work to explore this (De Zulueta 1993, Soanes 2004).

### **Victims at one remove**

The Victim Lazzi moves on now, as Heywood begins to ask about possible effects on the old man character, the immediate victim in the piece. Even though this consideration remains 'at one remove' because the old man is a fictional character, there is still degree of risk for the inmates because the violent young man character is the vehicle for their projective identification and thus criticism of him is to some degree criticism of them, even with the safety of dramatic distance. Discussion with offenders of effects on victims is always a theme that is apt to raise resistance, and research with sex offenders shows that intruding notions of 'victim empathy' too early can have a counterproductive effect.

### **Blood on my hands: Contemplation of one's victimisation of others**

At this point, it feels a though the inmate group is 'going along' with the exercise through the passive resistance of acquiescence - there is little overt resistance, although Field Notes (p38) record the following: "Darren C. out, leaning back, staring to space sort of out it" and there is some laughter over a comment from James M. that the old man - if losing his pension in the attack - will feel 'ripped off.'

Heywood now follows the Heathcotian trajectory of 'from the universal to the particular' by directly focusing on the men's own victims, with no safety of dramatic distance. Here, having established a degree of therapeutic relationship or positive rapport with the group, Geese aim to explore this difficult subject of other human beings the men have injured through violence, in an attempt to reverse the dehumanisation of victims which is a precursor of violence (Bandura, Underwood& Fromerson 1975).

The Geese discourse is relying on the work done so far, spending some of the 'social capital' developed, to become more assertive in the degree of challenge:

843 Heywood: This week you're all here because you have said that you're violent..  
That you admit that you're violent.. and that you want to look at that. You  
want to do something about it. Maybe want to move on from that. Which  
... means not creating any more victims" (Farrall 2001e)

Line 364 is clearly *assumptive* in that it is (using Deek T.'s tactic from the previous day, see stanza 5 critical episode 4, *Group feedback to V11*, in Chapter 6) treating an *assertion* as a

*given*: The provisional status of the Borderland discourse is ignored and the plurality of *meaning* of the participants' presence coalesced into one definite statement. Heywood ask for volunteers to begin and Field Notes (p39) record there is a "silence" and Darren C.'s foot is tapping, while Gerry G. and another group member look at each other and laugh.

Darren C. also laughs quietly as the first man to speak describes severely scarring someone on the neck. Gerry G., who will be third in the circle to answer, is looking at his fingernails, his body language is very closed, with folded arms and crossed legs extended ahead of him (Field Notes p39). When the question comes to him he responds with "Dunno" and pursued for further details he states: "The last person was dead so... I don't know a lot" (Farrall 2001e)

This seeming resistance can be read as an expression of Gerry's ambiguous status on the Residency. The week is designed for serious violent offenders with three or more convictions; although Gerry is here because he was involved in a group assault in which a man died, it was a first offence for him and he received only a light sentence for a minor charge for his part in it. Thus, arguably, Gerry is not part of the inmates' discourse of violence and the Residency and Geese are in effect not talking to him. Gerry will soon decide to quit the Residency, not returning on the Wednesday morning.

#### **Stanza N**

Colin S. begins with:

445 Colin.: I'm not sure.. I think mine's along the lines of what Ian said//

446 Heywood: Right, you're not going to get away with saying 'I don't know and along the lines what other people say'.. I want to know what are the effects on your victim//

At this point Billy D., the first man to be asked, intervenes:

447 Billy D.: How is he supposed to answer that// It's not an easy question//  
(Farrall 2001e)

The question arises of why this question is difficult to answer? Partly it might be the failure of intersubjectivity discussed earlier – yet the men have demonstrated that they can make imaginative connections to the situations of (fictional) others, through projective identification with characters. In interview, Kirkham identifies that at the start of the Residency week (and readers should note the victim Lazzi occurs early in the process, on Tuesday) the participants are

"...doing a lot of victim blaming, or a lot of just placing responsibility for their violence outside of themselves... by the end of it they are saying I did this, their [lack of] ownership of [their violence] is completely broken [down]. And that for some of them is uncomfortable. And also because we are constantly reframing how they put things they're not talking in the 'you' and 'they' and 'everyone'

generalised terms, they're talking about themselves and saying 'I this', 'I that', which I think is important (Kirkham 2003 para. 155)

There is arguably an existential task here, that participants either take ownership of their behaviour and its effects, which empowers them (potentially) to do otherwise, or they choose not to take ownership – and thus place themselves in a Sartrean position of 'bad faith' (Sartre 1995) by pretending they are not responsible. On one level, the entire Residency can be seen as just such an existential challenge concerned with 'forcing people to be free' and accept their own autonomy. James M. admits as much at one point in the discussion:

James M.: You choose not to know// [about effects on victims]

Kirkham: Well we are requiring you now .. to look at that//

(Farrall 2001e)

To return to Colin S., initially he resists the 'request', stating: "I've never seen anyone since that I've hit" but finally is able to state that his own experience of being a victim of violence is that it is "Ego shattering.. It breaks your confidence down too" (Farrall 2001e)

Colin seems less able to distinguish the physical effects, describing the police officer he battered unconscious with a lump of wood (see his Thinking Report, in *critical episode 14*) as having been 'stunned'. By the time the circle reaches Andy B., Geese are beginning to press hard for specific itemisation and use of specific language:

### Stanza O

Guy: Yeah.. cos people are gonna say physically hurt and mentally hurt all round the circle and.. it stops them from actually saying what it is that they've done// It's an easy get-out if you say I've physically hurt someone I've mentally hurt someone// What.. exactly.. does that mean//

Andy B: You mean.. what did YOU DO to them?//

Guy: Yeah .. what did YOU DO to them//

Andy B: Lashed out with my anger//

Heywood: What did YOU DO.. did you stab someone did you smack them over the head with a baseball bat,..did you kick them // (Farrall 2001e)

The purpose of striving for this linguistic exactitude and explicitness is the opposite of Brechtian distanciation: The technical jargon of criminal justice serves to desensitise and disguise the 'life world' effects of a 'malicious wounding', a 'section 18', a 'GBH'. The aim is continually to bring the focus back to the specific, the particular, so that the inmates are faced with the existential reality of their actions: Broken teeth, shed blood, pain, fear, humiliation and degradation, so that the language makes 'human sense' (Donaldson 1992). As Raynsford notes above, "...we are going to talk about violence ... Whatever they try and do we are always going to bring it back to the issues..." (Raynsford 2003 para. 138)

On reaching Davy J., the emotional temper seems to alter. Previous speakers have seemed uncomfortable and evasive, or simply confused, but Davy J. seems to be genuinely contemplating his actions and their effects with a grim honesty:

**Stanza P**

- 497 Davy J.: [My victim is] distraught.. well it's.. like he's got a permanent reminder of what's happened to him.. he's never going to forget.. he'll see his scar on his face every day//
- 498 Guy: Right//
- 499 Davy J.: He'll never be able to work again// He's.. I should say he's disabled.. cos of his face//
- 500: Guy: Why's that//
- 501 Davy J.: Well.. (garbled) if you see a face with a scar like that about the place.. (garbled)
- 502 Heywood: OK.. and how would that make him feel//
- 503 Davy J.: Depressed// Probably suicidal// (low tone)
- (Farrall 2001e)

Davy J. himself, as has been noted above, is the bearer of a large and disfiguring livid red facial scar, inflicted with a knife or broken bottle.

The circle moves on and Ian H. speaks about a death with which he has been involved, describing how the family were crying because they had "just lost their son" as a result of Ian's violence. Field Notes (p38) record that Deek T. & Darren C. are sitting next to one another and are next in line to answer to answer - they exchange looks at Ian's comment. Deek T. laughs, but when it come to his turn to speak, initially offers an insightful and sensitive outlining of the effects on a man he stabbed and scarred:

- 552 Deek T.: "Well... [he's] scarred for life// Scarred so he would be recognised by anybody in the streets.// Could be discriminated against... because of it// People might have different thoughts... they might think he's a thug.. and it's never been his fault... how he got it in the first place.. Apart from that....he could be paranoid... regarding it happening again... might live in fear// (Farrall 2001e)

Deek's narrative then becomes a sniggering story about the effect on the victim being that he is now 'scared of strangers' and again illustrates the crucial information gathered in the live setting: Deek T. could be making a genuine and thoughtful comment with the same words, but his embodiment and tone are working to undercut the 'seriousness' of the exercise (Field Notes p39). Deek is challenged strongly by me and laughs when released from scrutiny (Field Notes p39). Gerry G. seem to keep watching me (or perhaps has observed my observation of him) as we move on.

Darren C. cites another incident of facially scarring a victim with a knife and similarly to Deek T. can offer an insightful comment before undercutting his own words:

613 Darren C.: Not everybody's walking about with a scar so.. you see a scar on his face... its something different isn't// Frightening [for] his kid.. you'd look at it differently//

616 Darren C.: He wouldn't be happy about it.. you know what I mean// (Farrall 2001e)

Again, the tapes and Field Notes show that Darren's words are dismissive rather than genuine, and Deek, sitting next to Darren, whispers audibly that Darren's victim would be feeling 'depressed' as if prompting, and both he and Darren snigger (Field Notes p40). Toward the end of his turn, Darren rallies and again shows himself capable of a more honest assessment:

621 Darren C.: [He'd] Be shattered// Disgusted with the other person y'know what I mean// What they done// (Farrall 2001e)

At the end of this exercise, which has taken almost an hour, the body language of the inmate group is generally down: Field Notes (p40) record men are mostly looking at the floor, or have a thoughtful expression, seeming to be focussed 'internally' and individually. If Geese have been attempting with this exercise to reconstruct or renegotiate the meaning of the violence the inmates have enacted in their pasts, reconstruing it from a valid, natural response to external environmental events, to make human sense in terms of damaged human beings, then this discourse is still being resisted: When Mountford begins an impromptu address on the serious possibility that the men could kill, as an effect on victims, Deek T. yawns and Gerry G. looks 'sneery' and contemptuous. By contrast Davy J. looks thoughtful, as do most of the men. (Field Notes p30). There are no casual smiles except when people explicitly try humour. We break for coffee.

### **The Victim Lazzi in conclusion**

This exercise has been the first major challenge to the men to 'de-centre' (a Piagetian concept) from their own perspective – a developmental task identified as a life long effort - and some have turned aside from or found it difficult to accept, the challenge. This is not unexpected if one accepts the notion that these men are actually shamed and in fact traumatised by their own violent behaviour.

As explored in Chapter 2 under the 'Defensive Self', such denial and minimisation as demonstrated are entirely comprehensible as natural defence mechanisms working to reduce the 'psychological pain of experienced external reality' and to reduce the objective and signal anxiety that are both likely to be raised by the exercise, forming a threat to the sense of self of the participants. Kirkham identifies that "... it's really important to keep the victim present in what we're doing and not to let the group forget that we're here because they've created victims" (Kirkham 2003 para 133) but that "...they get very defensive because people don't like thinking about their victims anyway and find it hard" (Kirkham 2003 para 134).



Within the frame of this thesis, it is also possible that the participants need to 'back off' from acknowledging the effects of their behaviour on their victims, because the men have themselves suffered similar trauma to that which they have enacted on their victims, and (in a circular, self-referential process) to acknowledge the *victim's* victimhood because of what *you* have done to *them* would also mean acknowledging one's *own* victimisation (because *others* have done *the same to you*), and the pain and hurt and powerlessness associated with that role.

The exercise is not intended to traumatise the inmates or be a 'naming and shaming' in a 'toxic' sense, i.e. invoking only guilt, anger and a defensive reaction. But feeling appropriate shame over one's oppressive behaviour can be a powerful emotionally based driver for change, and within the frame of this thesis forms part of a Freirian drive towards 'conscientisation', which is not seen here as a purely 'rational' cognitive undertaking. The exercise is also about heightening possible discomfort with and discrepancy between *role concepts* (already expressed in claims such as James M.'s "I'm not a hard man") and the existential consequences of the violent roles currently embodied by the participants.

In attempting to pursue these multiple aims however, Kirkham also identifies a possible problem with the exercise in that

"I'm not sure [asking for effects on their victims] is the best way to [keep the victim present] because I think they don't find useful what's being asked of them. I think they experience it as a bit of a slap in the face... there's an element that they don't quite know why that's being done. I don't think we always make the connection clear about why we're... seemingly suddenly hauling this notion of victim in" (Kirkham 2003 para 134).

Thus, the exercise is a site of ambiguity: Clearly, Geese feel that 'keeping the victim present' is extremely important to the work of the Residency; yet as Kirkham expresses, the way this is done may actually be in tension with the otherwise person-centred thrust of the week which Watson defines as follows:

"...the way Geese works... is the opposite of [telling people] 'this is how it should be'... it's more of trying to talk with people on a level which is open... on a level of questioning but never ... you go off and be a good person from now on". (Watson 2003 para 49).

This ambiguity is shared with other elements of the Residency, for example the presentation of the 'affect bomb' of *the Violent Illusion Part 1*, where Meakes stated: "I'm still not quite sure that I buy [generating emotion] being a legitimate reason for using *VI1* at the start" (Meakes 2003 para 128). These uncertainties and ambiguities may be seen as a reflection of the heuristic, aesthetic nature of the Residency, and readers should consider whether it is actually necessary to pin them down (or collapse the waveform) into a definite 'yes' or 'no'.

## **Critical episode 14**

### **Small groups: Colin S. & Davy J. - Return to the Thinking Reports**

The next critical episode considers material from the small groups and analyses the Thinking Reports generated by Davy J. and Colin S., as one of the most direct routes of access to the violence Discourse of the inmates, and also as examples of (somewhat) disconfirmatory evidence for the analysis put forward in this thesis. Please see Chapter 6 for details.

## **Episode 15**

### **Finishing Tuesday: The Wheel and Inner Man**

The afternoon closes with the introduction of two more concepts: The Inner Man and the Thought Wheel. The Wheel has been considered in analysis already and introduced in the small groups, but is presented *en masse* to the group for the first time at the end of Tuesday afternoon. As a way of 'over teaching' the Thought Wheel model, the exercise builds on previous material and returns to the Thinking Report obtained yesterday for the Boyfriend 1 character in the Mirror scene. In a parallel process to that which they have been asked to do for themselves, the group is then asked to consider how the thoughts and feelings from the Thinking Report illustrate the way in which the proposed cycle of the Wheel turns for Boyfriend 1 in this incident.

Kirkham is leading the exercise of introducing the Wheel and when she introduces the notion of the 'victim stance' section there are nods of understanding or recognition around the group (Field Notes p33). I interpret this as a sign that

- There is a generalised accuracy or representativeness to the model
- The inmates are now at a point where they feel safe enough to recognise their own vulnerability - and can admit it
- The Geese discourse of process and cycle has gained sufficient ground to be accepted as a possible analysis of the aetiology of violent behaviour

This communication of shared models, matters, since (as described in Chapter 2) how one understands a problem influences how one perceives the solution and a crucial factor in positive outcomes for rehabilitative work (in the broadest sense) is a shared case formulation - a shared understanding of the issue or problem.

### **The Inner Man**

The Inner Man is a smaller than life size solid hard board flat figure of a human male. Affixed to his head is a disc on an axis and affixed to this is the paper form of the Thought Wheel. The inmates are supplied with a blank paper version of Inner Man and this is to be filled in as the days progress, with specific information.

- On one arm should go a list of all the victims an inmate can recall; on the other a list of all the injuries they have inflicted

- On the legs will go the skills which it is hoped the inmates will develop over the coming days
- On the midriff go feelings and emotions
- The neck will be filled in with 'interventions' to be developed - the idea being that these will stop the wheel above from spinning

Through the exercise the group seems attentive but tired, with no yawns or dismissing; though Gerry G. still has an odd expression (Field Notes p33). Afterwards, as the men are dismissed for the day and the Chapel is unlocked for them to be taken back to the wings, Colin S. queries with me: "Do we have to write all this down do we?" and is told "Who you [have] hurt, the real people, not ABH, GBH, - that's just words. We want the people" (Field Note p33).

This exchange can be seen as a reiteration of the work from the Victim Lazzi – 'requiring' (in Kirkham's word) the men to consider their victims and re-familiarise themselves with the existential realities of their actions - the consequences of what they have done. Colin goes on to clarify about confidentiality (Field Note p33), again indicating that such a listing would be uncomfortable for him.

### **Some more ambiguity**

As mentioned, there is some variation of opinion within Geese over methodology. Watson comments that

"[Inner Man and The Wheel] stand out like bits that are not very Geese-like, if there was a way that we could do them which was more integrated in to the theatre I'd be more comfortable.... to me they do seem to be outside what Geese do..." (Watson 2003 para 77 – 79).

This is an interesting recasting of Robinson's comment that: "...you use the theatre as the way to get in but it could be the cognitive work that can be measurably the most effective but theatre is a really good way of getting in there" (Robinson 2003 para 15)

Meakes too feels that "...the things for me that worked best in the teaching bits was when we always had a theatrical reference point... I don't much like inner man myself..." (Meakes 2003 para 118) while Raynsford goes even further: "No, I don't [think Inner Man and the Wheel are needed] ... I think ... we over intellectualise things, which I believe that this inner man can do a little bit" (Raynsford 2003 para 64).

On a more pragmatic note Heywood comments:

"...sometimes I think when we're doing the Wheel for some men I think it's really useful and they fit in beautifully and they go 'oh yeah I really see that'. And for others I think well it might not be so useful. I'm not sure about Inner Man

actually...but I think we do need something, some kind of image to put things around" (Heywood 2003 para 73-74).

In a comment which links to discussions in Chapter 2 on memory and retrieval cues, she goes on to add:

"But somebody else will go 'oh that little bit of the play' or the masks or 'the bit where he talked about the cues [and triggers]' and I think they'll take the bits that really work for them. .... I think at the end it just depends on the men. Some of them will like it and some of them will like something else better" (Heywood 2003 para74).

Again, it may not be necessary to pin down this question, taking Heywood's comment as evidence for a Vygotskian acceptance of 'processes in motion and change', but it may be of use to consider comments from non-Geese members. After all, Geese are professional actors with high standards and a drive always to 'find the theatre' – thus they may be easily dissatisfied with elements with which others are satisfied.

In interview after the end of the Residency, Davy J. comments on the question of the more 'cognitive' materials:

"Yeah it will stay with me because I've got all the information... the inner man, the wheel and I've kept a hold of that... I've got on my file for whenever I feel angry I'll always read them. I was angry last night and I just sat down in my cell and just read it, just read the whole stuff through...." (Farrall 2001q para 80).

Also, Kate, a member of staff with experience of extremely cognitively orientated programmes comments that:

"[The Residency] is completely different - it's everything at once. It's not flat, it's like three dimensional and it's everything it's got all the senses there together, whereas I'm sitting here reading the flat stuff - of Anger Management – [and thinking] 'oh shit', you know..." (Farrall 2001f).

Later, in interview, Colin S. also comments on the difference between the Residency and other less active anger management methodologies: "It was just talk really, it was nothing. There was no breaking the ice and that, it just didn't work" (Farrall 2001t, para 104).

To add a further note of complexity, Officer Blue – who readers should remember has seen and taken part in three incarnations of *The Violent Illusion Trilogy* at HMP Blackwood – offers the following:

"If the whole thing was... about cognitive skills, which a lot of the work through the week is, ... all that's valid, all that is vital and that's the key to it. But the thing that

makes it memorable, the think that makes it work... I don't think you can afford to forget the emotional side of the Corrida" (Farrall 2001s para 27-29).

## Wednesday

### Big Jack's Farewell

It was mentioned 'yesterday' that Big Jack T., who held a position in the prison cookhouse, had left the Residency ("because he could see what was coming" – Officer Blue, Field Notes p32). There is an interesting coda attached to this departure. As the morning begins, the coda arrives in the form of hot donuts from the kitchens, courtesy of Big Jack (Field Notes p49). What is interesting about this is the question of why he has done it? It may be taken as a nice gesture of thanks, or possibly of reparation for leaving, but indicates some degree of positive feeling for and entry into the Geese Discourse by Big Jack.

Officer Blue, charged with checking with Jack his reasons for leaving, later reports back that "...[Jack said] "it's nothing personal, just "it wasn't for me" – he saw he was going to have to speak about his own victims and got out" (Field Notes p49). Certainly it does not indicate that his withdrawal is a dismissal of the Residency as irrelevant, or that he holds negative feelings toward the event. This is in contrast to the expressed reasons of the next withdrawer: Gerry G.

### That joke isn't funny anymore<sup>1</sup>: The leaving of Gerry G.

Officer Blue has gone look for Gerry G. whom Blue reports has gone to his job in the prison workshops, ostensibly because last night he was refused a weekend pass from the prison. On his return Officer Blue states that Gerry is refusing to come back, quoting him as saying "It (the Residency) won't change me" and "I won't change". (Field Notes p33).

These are interesting statements, given the nature of Gerry's offence. Other participants in other *Violent Illusion* residencies have reached a similar conclusion, and in this one, of our men receiving focus, James M., Darren C. and Deek T. seems to be edging toward a similar decision. But the possible *motivations* for Gerry to state this may differ from the more 'normal run'. As said, Gerry is in prison for a serious event resulting in a death, but was given a minor charge and sentenced to only three years for his part in it. With remission, he has served just over 18 months, and is due for release (Farrall 2001f).

As discussed, all week, it has felt that there is something 'odd' about Gerry's presentation and Guy, one of the Geese workers leading Gerry's group has expressed the oddness as being to do with Gerry's 'inauthentic' status as a violent offender. Guy expresses it in a musical analogy:

"[Gerry G.'s is like] someone off Pop Idol, he's just been propelled to fame, and ...the rest of them who are like the Rolling Stones they're the Kaiser Chiefs, they've really worked up to it they've done the pub circuits they've done the cabarets they've done the big clubs - and they've made it. They're real" (Farrall 2001g).

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<sup>1</sup>The Smiths (1985) *Meat Is Murder*. WEA Records.

The sense is that all week Gerry has been experiencing a role discrepancy of an unintentional kind: While an aim of the Residency is to help the inmates explore their *potentiality* and the possibility of taking or developing a role that is *not* 'violent offender' – in the way Davy J. seems to be doing – Gerry seems to have been experiencing a discrepancy in that he has been treated as a 'real' violent offender – in the sense of a history of repeated, violent behaviour – and he is not: He is not really a 'hard man' at the level or in the way of the other inmates.

Gee (1999) writes of how, in Discourse terms, being accepted as a 'real Indian' in Native American culture rests on the successful accomplishment and embodiment of numerous 'real Indian' acts in the reciprocal 'dance' of assertion and recognition. By contrast, amid the 'real hard men' on the week, as their activities, values and discourses have been scrutinised and revealed, Gerry has risked being revealed as a 'plastic gangster' – the inmate term for an offender who is inauthentic or presenting a false role or front. Similarly, Goffman (1959) describes how in the dramatic performance of self a person may be playing a role and believe his own performance, or know he is 'acting' the role and therefore not believe.

Gerry would seem to fall into the latter category, and therefore his denial of the efficacy of the Residency may not be based in a lack of belief that change can work, or self belief in change (the sense sometimes gained from other participants) but because in a sense, *Gerry has nothing to change*. Rather than this being a positive thing though – he is not a violent offender – Gerry seems to *want* to be able to maintain his 'hard man' role, but it is not robust enough to face the challenge of the week.

Officer Blue also states that Gerry is due to leave prison soon and has said "I don't want to remember" [about the offence] (Field Notes p47). In the model of this thesis, violent men are traumatised by the violent acts they commit and Gerry's refusal may also indicate that Gerry, while ashamed and guilty over what he has done, has construed the traumatic event in a way which leaves him comfortable, with limited responsibility. Additionally, because this offence was a one-off event and because he was sentenced so lightly, Gerry also has not experienced the negative consequences to his behaviour that other men have for theirs; such aversive experience is often an important motivational factor.

It is therefore likely that the Residency has simply been too much for Gerry: He has been caught in the trap of needing to look like a hard man to legitimate his presence on the Residency and his role, but not wanting to face his violence in the way that the Residency necessitates. Officer Blue supports the idea that Gerry has chosen to leave because 'he doesn't want to look at it' (the offence) (Field Notes p45). In the continuation of *The Smiths* lyric above, despite his grinning and smirking over the last few days, and apparent attempts to treat the Residency as a joke, "It's too close to home and it's too near the bone".

## Episode 16

### **Chronicling Change: The Performance of *The Violent Illusion Part II***

Wednesday begins with a performance of *The Violent Illusion Part II*. When the inmates enter the Chapel space, it has again been transformed by the construction of the *VI2* set, morphing once again from a more communally used space of 'spect-actors' where the small group work has taken place to a space where the theatre Discourse again holds: As with Monday and *VI1*, the inmates immediately adopt the 'theatre goer' role and quietly file in to their seats, observing the delineation of 'stage' and audience' space, and the re-establishment of the actor-spectator divide (Field Notes p33).

The presence of the *VI2* set can be seen as continuing the preposition of potentiality and transformation in opposition to the prison Discourse as established by the *VI1* set on Monday (see critical episode 1, *Prologue*), and as a restatement of the 'sides' in the Conversation; as noted above, while acknowledging that *VI2* is very 'practical' it also offers another level of challenge to the inmates around the realities of attempting to make change. It is thus part of the *connection* and *world* building tasks that have been underway all week.

By contrast to *VI1*, the time period covered in *VI2* is only a few days, following the return of the Dad to his family after release from prison for a violent offence. Equally contrastingly to Part I, the family involved (the Blairs) display what may be considered only a 'normal' range of dysfunction, i.e. cheeky children, rebellious teenagers, underage drinking and substance use, marital disharmony, as opposed to the full blown violence, abuse and horror of the family in *VI1*.

The show is set in a family house, again using the device of revolving backdrops with wallpaper on one side and evocative images on the other. The show is played in full character masks that cover the whole face, but the masks' expressions are much less worried, harried or sinister than the *VI1* character masks. The show also has dialogue in the form of taped Thinking Reports, mainly for the Dad, but also on one occasion for the Mum. During these taped monologues, the stage convention is generally (but not always) adopted that action freezes while Dad enacts a 'fantasy' of violent behaviour. (Images of the masks used and the wallpaper images can be found in Appendix I and J).

### **The Purpose of *The Violent Illusion Part II***

Although Geese Theatre obviously strive for certain standards of artistic presentation in their performance work, Geese work is always 'rough theatre' and the aesthetic value of the theatre productions as 'art' are always subordinated to the more pressing rehabilitative purpose of the work: 'Drama as therapy, theatre as living' (Jones 1996). In this sense, the theatre performances of the Residency conform to the 'type C' theatre identified by Bolton (1979) as 'geared towards an end product', (in this case, behavioural change in violent offenders) and often with a sense of an event (though this is far more obvious in the theatre event of Friday, the



Corrida). Following Raynsford (2003) Brookes emphasises the 'didactic' nature of V/2 "[V/2] is actually very much about interventions ... V/2 is a much more functional piece than V/1..." (Brookes 2003 para 93), as does Watson: "I think the way we use V/2 is quite good because we do use it to be maintained... we can look at that character's [physical] cues, that character's triggers ... I think that's useful" (Watson 2003 para 91).

However, Geese are also clear that V/2 does not simply show 'how to do it' but takes a Boalian trajectory by problematising the situation, even if a decision to change has been made:

"...they can think 'yes I'm going to change' but haven't really thought about what it means in real practical terms.... that it isn't going to happen overnight..." (Heywood 2003 para 91). "[V/2 considers] the fact that ...old behaviours ... will remain part of you until you look at strategies to deal with them" (Raynsford 2003 para 76).

Additionally, in relation to the Borderland Discourse, another 'term' has entered the Conversation: That of 'family', and consequently the 'size' of the Borderland has expanded: "[V/2] looks at the idea that violence isn't just about punching people, it's about the way you are, the way you treat your family" (Heywood 2003 para 93), an idea Kirkham supports:

"it's ...the most difficult relationships that they deal with, it's their families, it's their wives and children that we're looking at and it's the stuff that they've been away from for a long time ... it's something that they can really closely relate to and it raises a lot of their fears and insecurities. But it's the optimistic point, the real moment of hope about it being possible but not easy that somebody can translate this stuff into real life" (Kirkham 2003 para 105).

Thus an attempt is being made to build a *connection* forward through V/2, to a time outside prison.

As said, the Residency has previously offered only negative or abusive adult roles for the inmates to identify with projectively - now Dad, the central character of V/2, presents a more hopeful aspect with whom they will (hopefully) identify - a man struggling with same urges or drives to violence which they share, but who *is* struggling and attempting to change. As Kirkham notes, the use of drama to exemplify Dad's struggles allows the manifold modelling and learning processes involved in social learning theory to operate (Bandura 1977, 1986).

"I think it gives them an opportunity to look at somebody trying to put into practice in a real life situation, some of the stuff they've been working on and learning about controlling their aggression and violence." (Kirkham 2003 para 106).

## **The action of V/2**

The performance features a number of 'taped thinking reports' for the Mum and Dad characters: Written scripts for these TRs are currently unavailable.

### **Scene 1**

This shows a familiar evening family scene with the kids playing and Mum making dinner. Dad enters and a happy reunion immediately begins to go off-course, with the 12 year old Son acting out, being bribed by Dad to Mum's displeasure, and Dad immediately behaving in an entitled manner exemplifying male privilege as though he had never been away. The 15-year-old teenage Daughter offers Dad a cigarette, revealing to Mum that she smokes. An argument ensues, and Mum tries to engage Dad in discussion, which he resists by watching TV. Eventually Mum turns off the television and demands they speak.

#### **Taped Thinking Report 1**

During the first taped Thinking Report at this point all the other characters are frozen, while Dad is enraged, begins to leave and eventually returns to sit in front of Mum.

Dad now tries to apologise to Mum, but this contact becomes him requiring sex. Mum makes clear he will be sleeping on the sofa for a while. As Dad again goes to leave, disgruntled, he encounters Son coming back and smoking. Dad frisks son to discover he has bought cigarettes and drink with the money Dad gave him and Son runs to his bedroom. Dad follows, belt in hand (an echo of V/1) and is stopped by Mum.

#### **Taped Thinking Report 2**

During this Report Dad finds a bottle of spirits and falls asleep drunkenly. A dream sequence then follows in which Mum sexually teases and refuses Dad while Son taunts and humiliates him. In response Dad again takes off his belt, driving away these phantoms with it until collapsing on the sofa again and going back to sleep.

### **Scene 2**

Morning. A breakfast time scene of playful chaos ensues while Dad sleeps. Daughter takes a phone call and her reaction indicates it is bad news - Mum comforts her while Son, jealous of the attention to Daughter, steals money from Dad's jacket. Dad awakes, goes to hit Son and is stopped this time by Daughter, who then recovers the money from Son.

Son and Daughter leave for school, and Mum and Dad are left alone for the first time. Dad again initiates sexual contact, to be interrupted by a knock at the door. This is a male adult education teacher who begins a lesson with Mum, until Dad, overcome with jealousy at their easy intimacy, throws the Teacher out. Mum then leaves the house.

### **Taped Thinking Report 3**

Dad again rages, then watches as another fantasy figure emerges, a Judge who passes sentence on Dad. The Judge is joined by the Teacher who is then adored by daughter, giving her gifts. Son and Daughter join Mum with the Teacher, making a family unit sneering towards Dad. Finally teacher drinks champagne with Mum before being led to the bedroom by her. Dad again rages around the house, then, crucially, "...sits on the table and talks himself down" (VI2 script).

### **Scene 3**

Some time later. The house is seemingly empty. Daughter enters from outside and begins to roll a spliff. Dad enters from upstairs, removing money from the bills tin, spots the dope and challenges Daughter, who challenges him in return over the taking of the money from the bills tin. They reach a deal of mutual silence.

Daughter's older teens Boyfriend now enters. Boyfriend sees Dad and assumes the role of 'man of the world' aping prison body language and gestures. He coerces Daughter into handing over a bottle of spirits from her bag, pours drinks for himself and Dad and ignores her protests that she does not want any. Dad and Boyfriend confront one another. Mum enters and Boyfriend drags Daughter to the sofa, turning on the TV. Dad makes clear his wish for Boyfriend to leave, who does so, while Mum prevents Daughter accompanying him.

Mum then confronts Dad, who shows her the spirit bottle from Daughter's bag. Mum sides with Daughter and Dad rages, throws items around, takes his jacket and storms out.

### **Taped Thinking Report 4**

This report plays in the absence of Dad, over a scene of Mum and Daughter tidying up and making up.

### **Scene 4**

The next day. Auntie Beryl is visiting and looking at clothes catalogues with Mum. Son plays nearby. Dad returns with flowers for Mum and a toy gun, which he gives to Son. Auntie Beryl diplomatically takes Son away to play. Mum and Dad 'talk'. She makes clear her displeasure at his expectations that all is mended by the gift of flowers. Dad leaves and Auntie Beryl comforts Mum.

### **Taped Thinking Report 5**

This TR is of Mum's interior monologue as opposed to Dad, over a scene of her tidying.

## **Scene 5**

Some time later. Son and Daughter sit watching Neighbours on TV. Dad enters with a card for Mum, Son joins in a shooting game with dad, and Daughter leaves. Son and Dad engage in a drawing game and Dad mediates in a quarrel between the children. Dad then leaves to fetch a fish and chip supper, returning quickly as another quarrel between the children is about to escalate.

The three eat and Dad accidentally spills his food into his lap, but reacts as to a joke, initiating a tomato sauce fight. Mum returns and sees the mess, reads Dad's card and hands him his jacket, indicating the door. Mum then tries to comfort Son and Daughter while Dad struggles with whether to leave or stay. He stays and Son and Daughter leave the room.

Dad then tries to make amends and a 'sauce bottle dialogue' follows, using the items to convey the conversation, ending in irresolution. Daughter then enters and shows Mum the empty bills money tin. Dad retaliates by showing Mum Daughter's dope stash. Mum questions Daughter then asks Dad who is responsible for the missing money.

### **Thinking Report 6: The *Silent Rage* TR**

There is no taped monologue provided for this sequence, but the family remain frozen as Dad enacts a fantasy of violent behaviour toward Mum and Daughter, but is not so certain about Son. Gradually he draws himself in, moving back to the scenery as image 1 the 'Man In a Can' revolves into view. Slowly, Dad reaches out towards Mum.

The freeze breaks as Son tries to make contact with Dad. Dad places Son with Mum and Daughter at the other end of the table. There is a frozen tableau moment as Dad reaches out to Mum and the gesture is reciprocated. The children kiss both parents good night and leave the room. Mum and Dad achieve a slight rapprochement and Mum leaves for bed.

Dad restrains himself from following her to the bedroom, replaces the missing bills money, then donates his whole wallet, finally sitting lost in thought, alone at the kitchen table. All the backdrop panels revolve to reveal their images and the lights fade.

Field Notes taken from behind the backdrop record that the body language of the men is very different to that of Monday's performance: They are upright, looking relaxed, engaged, and there is frequent laughter and smiles, particularly at the antics of the Son. In the final tableaux, where Mum and Dad are seeking some kind of accommodation, the body language and expression on faces appears more 'sombre' and thoughtful (Field Notes p35).

## Episode 17

### Group feedback of reactions to *The Violent Illusion Part II*

The following material, while not considered critical:

- Enables continued analysis of the Discourse expressed by the inmate participants
- Illustrates new aspects of the developing Geese Discourse
- Foreshadows the major theme of the Residency from now on – the developing of skills to intervene in the process of violent behaviour

As observed from behind the backdrops, during the performance there have been signs of recognition of the on-stage action, but recognition of a far more positive kind than in *V/1* - plenty of laughs and smiles, especially during the chaotic breakfast scene and around Son's cheeky behaviour (Field Notes p37). At coffee time a conversation I am involved in attests to the accuracy of the depiction for the men: Alan A. states "That was just like being at home" and Darren C. concurs that "Aye My kids are just like that - it's chaos" (Field Notes p39).

Now Brookes asks for general reactions and the inmates explicitly further endorse the 'reality' or their recognition of what has been depicted. Comments include "You've been round my house"; "My daughter was wild..like the girl there" and "The little boy.. yes.. it's just like that" (Farrall 2001g)

This thesis has previously referred to the notion of Geese establishing themselves as 'credible communicators' because the action of *V/1* shows that "we know" what might be considered the dark side of the offender's experiences – *V/2* clearly functions to show that the Geese perspective is holistic and that the men have other roles than simply 'violent offender'.

### She's not being fair

As the processing continues, a slight theme of Mum-blaming emerges:

#### Stanza Q

- James M.: The mother.. .his wife is it// She was harsh//
- Brookes: She was harsh// How was that//
- Ian H.: When he come in..she give him the sleeping bag..she didn't want him at all//
- Andy B: Aye.. he was.. really trying and she give him no credit at all.. He asked for forgiveness..AT THE END there.. and she just wouldn't even look at him//
- Deek T.: Took the side of the daughter against him and his boy//
- Andy B: She should have give him another chance//
- (unattributed) She doesn't want him back//
- Andy B: Just rejected him// (Farrall 2001f).

A strand of discourse seems to be emerging that Mum's behaviour can only be construed as 'rejecting', particularly from Andy B, who was able to show quite a lot of empathy with the

Daughter in VI1 (see critical episode 4). It may be important to note that the Mum character in VI2 is deliberately not 'scripted' as being particularly obstructive, but is represented as strong figure with her own mind: Thus line 15 refers to her presenting Dad with a sleeping bag (after he has already disrupted the household) for his first night at home, rather than 'welcoming' him into the bed. Line 18 refers to the final scene where Dad appeals to Mum but is not unconditionally accepted.

While to an outside eye Mum's actions may seem reasonable, Brookes identifies that showing this reaction on the part of Mum

"...[after the challenge of VI1 and then the victim work] it's like re-challenging, re-challenging all over again, it's just cranking it up... and going yep, 'yep well this is what it's about lets just re-remind ourselves', .... it's about how entitled are you actually to go and do this stuff to other people" (Brookes 2003, interview para 91).

Heywood identifies the men do not seem to have realised

"... that you won't be able to just walk back in and ... people won't necessarily ... trust you [just] because you said 'I'm going to change... I think that's quite often why we have resistance [at this point] because it suddenly becomes real and the idea that this woman, his wife, is not suddenly going to think he's the best person in the Universe is a bit of a shock" (Heywood 2003, para 81 -83).

Mum's actions therefore can be seen as representing another narcissistic insult to the men, possibly even more strongly related to abandonment, and as evidence for a continuing lack of intersubjectivity. The Discourse from the inmates continues to suggest a theme of entitlement, that because one is attempting to change, one can legitimately expect all others to forget immediately one's past behaviour and be totally supportive and Brookes uses the discussion to introduce a 'reality check' that this may not be the case, or reasonable to expect.

### Stanza R

Brookes:            So if she's not seen him for years and she has her way of running the house .. and suddenly he comes back and he's giving the boy cigarettes and he's stealing money and drinking..even though he's trying [to change]..should she just totally believe him or does he have to prove it//

(unattributed):   He's trying

Brookes:            He is trying//

James M.:        Aye it's fair enough I suppose//

(unattributed):   She's probably heard it before//

(Farrall 2001f)

James M. seems able to 'see the point' but still not able to conclude that a change in actual behaviour is necessary – he remains within the Borderland, still not (at this stage) appearing to move any closer to a resolution. Interestingly, Davy J. and Colin S. do not make any comments supporting the feeling that Mum is being unfair or rejecting, and both look somewhat thoughtful (Field Notes p37).

It is also possible to suggest that VI2 links to theory nodes 1 (unity of cognition and affect) and 5 (meaning/narrative/discourse) as the issues in VI2 are concerned with the solving of the 'fuzzy' problems that typify human interactions (see Chapter 2). There is no absolute and clear 'right' or 'wrong' to the situation portrayed in VI2, only ambiguity or multiplicity, and this is a foreshadowing of much of the work that will occur in the Corridas.

### **'Is she shagging the teacher?'**

Briefly, one other point of note is reactions or perceptions of the teacher character. In the 'back story' narrative, Mum has undertaken some sort of adult education course – the action in scene 2 clearly involves files, notes etcetera. Teacher is deliberately played as a rather bumbling, shambolic figure in order to show that Dad's jealousy and throwing him out is unreasonable, yet the inmates are clearly with Dad, again possibly demonstrating the sense of entitlement over women or fear of abandonment seen above in *critical episode 7*, the *Mirror Scene* replay.

#### **Stanza S**

Davy J.:           Is she shagging the teacher//  
(attributed)       The mum.. she was laughing with him and that//  
(attributed)       They was awful close//  
(attributed)       Well..it's reasonable [to suspect sex] cos he's [Dad] been away//  
(Farrall 2001f).

This can be seen as an example of 'real world' paranoia, or objective anxiety in that sexual infidelity is probably a very real concern for men incarcerated, and the 'Dear John' letter is an icon of both humour and terror in prison culture; yet the presentation of Teacher and Mum's relationship is so clearly scripted as non sexual, that it is indicative that the inmates have not whole heartedly shifted to accepting the Geese Discourse of rationality and generation of alternative possibilities, or that they are experiencing signal anxiety linked to distorted inner worlds: Here, they are still determinedly collapsing all the potentialities of the relationship into only one answer; 'She is shagging him'.

Linked to the feedback focussing on Mum's 'rejection' there is a clearly gendered theme suggesting that (unsurprisingly) these men often have difficult and untrusting relationships with women. As Kirkham comments "They always, always give Mum – and daughter - a hard time...

they have such a fear about [relationships] and yet they treat women like dirt and still expect them to be totally accepting" (Kirkham 2003, para 136).

## Episode 18

### Replay of Silent Rage Scene & construction of group Thinking Report

Following the model established with *V11* and the *Mirror scene* replay, Geese now replay one of the scenes from the performance in order to generate a Thinking Report for Dad. The material is covered in Chapter 6.

## Episode 19

### Developing awareness: Physical Cues and Triggers

This thesis has asserted that physiological sensations act as 'conduits' to a re-arousal of previous traumatic experience and the 'putting right' of a 'grievous insult' that is essentially transference, though violent behaviour. For this to be possible, the men must actually experience such physiological arousal (or pre-potent arousal as Bandura describes it, 1986)

The following has been selected as a critical moment therefore

- The response of the inmates provide data on the central theme of embodied 'Damasian' sensations
- The session illustrates the further building on notions of 'self talk' previously introduced

### Physical Cues and Triggers

Field Notes (p36) record that as the exercise is introduced, there is no dispute from the inmates that such cues and triggers exist; this may be seen as further support for the idea that the men have accepted Geese as 'credible communicators', allowing Geese to be more and more explicit and didactic in the outlining of their interpretation and analysis of violent behaviour. Now the inmates are able to list a plethora of physical signs of their arousal, with Darren C. taking a lead:

#### Stanza T

32 Darren C.: You get tension in your head//

33 Alan A.: Tension in the head..your arms.. my stomach//

34 Darren C.: You feel hot headed//

35 Billy D.: Your heartbeat goes up// (general nods of agreement, Field Notes p36)

36 Darren C.: Other people see it before you do//

(Farrall 2001g)

Although many of the men on whom this thesis focuses are joining in, and Darren C. seems to be engaging more with the process, more willing to share his personal experience rather than 'keep his cards close to his chest' Colin S. has been noticeably very quiet so far today (Field



Notes p36); yesterday, readers will remember, after the work on victims and the requirement to begin filling in the Inner Man with the effects on victims, he seemed anxious and sought clarification and reassurance around confidentiality.

To digress for a moment, on a previous Residency at HMP Blackwood, Donny, one of the men in my small group, had related an incident where, purely on the *suspicion* of having seen his girlfriend having sex in a car with another man, he had forced his way into his girlfriend's flat, smashed it up, and thrown her through a closed second story window, hospitalising her for six weeks. At about this stage in the Residency he had come to me and in all sincerity said something along the lines of the following:

Donny: "You know that story I told you about (name of girlfriend)?"

Me: "Yes".

Donny: "Well, I've been thinking - I didn't have to do that to her".

This was seemingly the first time in twenty years that Donny had thought about that particular incident and not felt totally justified, and the revelation was disturbing to him. I was reminded of this previous incident by Colin's preoccupied 'look' wondered if a similar process were occurring with him (Field Notes p36).

Returning to the Residency, Deek T. seems to have reverted to his 'joker' role: As Brookes asks for physical cues, with a grin he mutters something to Darren C., sitting next to him (Field Notes p36). Brookes picks it up:

#### Stanza U

52 Brookes: ERECTION// Is that what you said Deek//

53 Deek: Aye..er.. (laughing) (inaudible)

54 Brookes: Yes, some people get an ERECTION when there's the possibility that things are going to kick off //(it is added to the list) Anything else//

(Farrall 2001g)

This is an interesting aside to illuminate the intensely physical *embodied* element of violent behaviour and the possibly *pleasurable* or even potentially addictive aspects that aggressive arousal can contain: Elevation of the neurotransmitter endorphin is quite common following stressful or even traumatic situations (van der Kolk & Greenberg 1987) depending to some degree on the meaning of the event for the individual.

Having examined the idea of physiological cues which the men all recognise, Kirkham is now leading the discussion of what specific environmental triggers the men are aware of for them. She asks what is usually a very evocative and revealing question:

## Stanza V

307 Kirkham: What's the smallest thing that someone could do.. to set you off//  
308 Davy J.: Getting a wrong look//  
309 Deek T.: Being at the [football] stadium//  
310 Colin S.: Police//  
311 Davy J.: Screws// [prison officers]  
312 Deek T.: Bus drivers, social workers, bailiffs//  
313 Davy J.: SEX OFFENDERS//  
314 James M.: Someone restraining you//  
315 Davy J.: Lots of things//  
316 James M.: Being had a go at in front of others//  
317 Davy J.: Families is a big no- no .. if someone is raping my girl// Or if someone says  
something about my family I'm at them there and then//  
(Farrall 2001g)

As stanza V above demonstrates, the inmates live in world littered with potential triggers. In line 312 Deek T. shows the degree of hypersensitivity possible ("Bus drivers, social workers, bailiffs"). For Davy J., "Getting a wrong look" (line 308) seems to sum up his experience previously because the looks he gets are all 'wrong' in that he gives them only one meaning. His struggle to think through the possibility of multiple interpretations and reciprocity during the *Two Man Exercise* set in the bar, on Monday, is striking in this regard.

In terms of changes in discourse, stanza V suggests that the inmates are accepting the Geese analysis, or that the Geese discourse is gaining currency: They can now be 'set off' by 'small things', even a "wrong look". While such a 'look' can be considered consonant with the idea of a 'demeaning insult', it is a shift from the previously expressed positions as exemplified in stanza 5 In Chapter 6 where Deek describes the type of violence "you can't have" (thus legitimating the kind of violence you *can* have) and Darren C.'s Thinking Report in critical episode 12 (Chapter 6) where violence is a 'justified' 'natural response' and a response to a clear and disproportionate 'wrong'.

Davy J.'s final comment in line 317 is also typical of the discourse often offered by violent offenders in that he describes an extremely unlikely and extremely provocative event ("...someone is *raping my girl*") as though it were an everyday event on a par with someone saying something rude about one's brother ("...if someone says something about my family..."). Interestingly, Davy J. does *not* seem to be using this line as it is often used, as a justification for inevitable violence. He does however state clearly that of someone *does* speak ill of is family "*I'm at them* there and then".

Thus James M.'s lines ("Someone restraining you" and "Being had a go at in front of others") also recall Lazarus's (1991) argument for a culturally constructed 'demeaning [humiliating] offence against me or mine' as a key motivational theme to anger, possibly linked to shame and guilt received or perceived on a non-conscious level (Damasio 1996). In the light of the extremely 'hair triggered' self Davy J. presents here, his being one of the men to enter the Corrida on Friday is noteworthy.

### **Talking the talk: Identifying anger reducers**

It has long been demonstrated (Mallick & McCandless 1966) that anger reduction via cognition reduces anger as much if not more than aggressive behaviour, with its attendant risks of behavioural reinforcement. The concept of 'self talk' has been introduced through the Dad character in *V/2* and Kirkham briefly leads a brainstorm of 'intervention' techniques which the men could use when highly aroused and their violent potential is about to be 'actualised'. They are easily able to list several 'in the moment' techniques which fall into behavioural – such as such as taking deep breaths, counting from 1 to 10, avoiding eye contact, walking away – and cognitive, such as using a 'positive self talk' of anti-inflammatory phrases like 'It's not worth it' (Field Notes p37).

The noteworthy point here is that the men do not need to be 'taught' these things – the techniques are easily elicited. The difficulty is that *doing* them in a situation of arousal is far more difficult than 'calmly' describing them when unaroused, and, as will be suggested later in the consideration of the small group skills training (on Thursday) and the Corridas (on Friday) it is the Residency's unique (drama based) ability to create 'hot' situations in a safe way – recreating a manageable degree of arousal through Boalian metaxis where the intervention techniques can be tried out in the 'as if' of aesthetic space and *feel realistic* – that plays a major part in its efficacy.

## **Episode 20**

### **Skills modelling in the pub scene – and a failure to connect**

The pub scene is an attempt by Geese to model the use of the kind of techniques which have been elicited from the inmates: What makes the moment of interest is that it actually *fails in its purpose*, and so can provide negative data for the thesis.

As Bolton (1982c) identifies, "Not all learning is necessarily preceded by attempts to learn" (p158). Thus, the pub scene exercise (and the Residency as a whole) is attempting to make use of the strengths of observational learning. As discussed in the literature review, Social Learning Theory (Bandura 1977a, 1977b) suggests that 'observational learning' is an extremely important mechanism: This is of direct relevance to the dramatic, three dimensional nature of much of the Residency's pedagogic approach and also links to the literature on the importance of pro social modelling. In this session, having elicited from the inmates their understanding and

examples of both cognitive 'self talk' and behavioural intervention techniques, Geese aim to combine the possibilities of observational learning with the proposed advantages of projective identification, discussed earlier. As Bandura (1977a) notes "Observers whose conceptual and verbal skills are underdeveloped are likely to benefit more from behavioural demonstrations than from verbal modelling." (p40)

The intention is to show a scene set in a pub, where a violent offender (played by me) is out with his girlfriend. Two Geese members play men laughing at the bar nearby: This laughter is intended to represent the type of 'demeaning insult' which, because the men are 'hypersensitive' to such perceived slights, can occur virtually anywhere (see stanza V). The men and the laughter are deliberately played as 'neutral' in the sense that the script for Geese is that the conversation and laughter is unconnected with my character.

Another Geese actor provides an *ex tempore* spoken inner monologue for my character (a kind of real time living Thinking Report), as with the 'past voices' in the Victim Lazzi: The audience thus gets to hear my character's 'thoughts' and his attempts at cognitive self-regulation. The acting task is for me and the Geese actor providing the monologue to be sufficiently 'in synch' that we feed off one another seamlessly in a cognition/affect - behaviour unit. The hope is that the audience will see, though the improvised drama, the efficacy or otherwise of my character's attempts, as shown through his behaviour, and via projective identification will feel that this to some degree can be 'them'. The scene is played with no masks.

The scene shows an improvised sequence:

- Firstly, without intervention, resulting in violence,
- Then several attempts as my character (by now named Carl) attempts to control his behaviour and 'do something different'

Bandura (1977a) notes that when attempting to establish 'self regulatory functions', as is the intention of the Pub Scene, then "Behavioral standards for determining self reinforcing responses can be established either by tuition or by modelling." (p133). The work over the preceding days, such as the Mirror Scene Replay and the establishment on 'inner dialogues' and 'self talk' via the Thinking Reports, plus the performance of VI2 can be seen as 'tuition' (at least in the sense of 'hidden education') and with the Pub Scene we move into explicit modelling where observational learning is better achieved by "...informing observers in advance about the benefits of adopting modelled behaviour..." (p37).

### **Debriefing the Pub Scene**

As said, this has been chosen as a critical moment because the scene represents a *failure*. Field Notes (p36) written immediately afterwards note: "Scene not work. No [laughter] of recog[nition]". This is actually a reference to an *absence* of response which would only be

apparent if one had witnessed a 'usual' response, as I have in previous Residencies – thus for the purposes of illuminating the specific Residency at HMP Blackwood we must deal for a moment with data originating *outside* of this specific instance. My sense that the scene failed is shared by other Geese members:

### Stanza W

- 26 Farrall: ...usually there's a laugh at that point [on the second or third run of the scene.. where the offender character.. Karl in this instance attempts to 'intervene' in his behaviour but ultimately still fails and hits the victim] and there wasn't [this time]// What do you think that was about//
- 27 Mountford The laugh.. I know what you mean.. that laugh, it's engagement.. it's a recognition of yes this is hard, I know how that feels.. when I've tried to keep my temper and it still kicks off and [the laughter] wasn't there because they didn't own// [the behaviour displayed in the scene]
- 28 Brookes ... we need to show to demonstrate failure.. [Karl needs] to fail to show how difficult it is .. so we get the laugh.. Today.. we've shown something unreal.. he [the Carl character] just does it.. instead of building it up.. failing.. using several options//
- 29 Kirkham I think the time pressure.. without their input it's not theirs.. it's us modelling what we can do and that's not enough if it's not real//

(Farrall 2001t)

The 'laugh of recognition' referred to seems to be recognised by Geese as a crucial indicator of having achieved an emotional verisimilitude - of offenders seeing their own behaviour on stage and *recognising it*. In educational terms this means stating from 'known territory' - i.e. the violent or aggressive behaviour - before using this 'known space' as a jumping-off point for the journey into the unknown. Taking a Vygotskian analogy, we must begin within the inmates current 'zone of proximal development', and this means showing failure in terms of failure to control antisocial behaviour.

It is also worth noting that the Pub Scene represents something closer to a 'standard' model of Geese performance practice: As described in the Introduction, in the full-scale improvisational shows of Geese, such as *Lifting The Weight*, the audience is required and requested to advise the characters on stage as to what to do. By the time a genuine 'change point' is reached - the point at which the advice given by the inmate audience to their on-stage avatars switches from anti - to pro-social - the audience have fully engaged and identified with the characters and had time to build up an affective 'head of steam'.

The Pub Scene parallels this model in that the *intention* is for Geese to elicit suggestions from the audience so they can advise Karl as to his conduct: Two points arise. Firstly, this is the first

time in the Residency that the inmates have been asked to *advise* an on-stage character, rather than 'simply' analyse his behaviour (as in the Thinking Reports). Secondly, Kirkham's comment about 'time pressure' (line 108) is pertinent because *in this specific example* Geese minimised the degree of eliciting suggestions from the audience and truncated the process of *trying and failing*. Thus Mountford and Brookes's comments on the lack of engagement obtained, because

- In Boalian terms the balance in the scene slipped from a role of active engagement to a more passive spectator role for the inmates
- The stage space lost its 'gnosological' properties because of a failure of 'metaxis' – it was not 'two spaces in one' but simple one of (theatrical) actors acting and therefore 'false'
- In Morenian terms this loss of metaxis would be seen as too much 'surplus reality' – the stage space became too fictional rather than occupying a 'borderland' or 'real and unreal' or 'real enough'

To be absolutely explicit, the difficulty here is not that the Carl character - vehicle of projective identification for the audience - *fails* to achieve the desired behaviour in the first two attempts, but that *he achieves it too easily* in the third, (in this instance) 'talking himself down' with a very positive self talk, keeping calm and walking away from the possible confrontation. 'Pro social behaviour' is thus modelled but is not effective because the inmates did not 'own' the behaviour - paradoxically, this ease in turn undermines the credibility of the scene, losing the essential verisimilitude - only by showing that the desired change is *difficult* can it be convincingly portrayed as *possible*. Officer Blue, who has seen several residencies and is familiar with the form, concurs that the scene was "too easy": Davy J. for example, has "*never* walked away from a fight" (Field Notes p42).

In conclusion, the failure of the Pub Scene is a reminder of the provisional, artistic nature of the Residency: In this instance, Geese's aesthetic decisions about the scene were wrong, which is always a possibility with this kind of improvised, heuristic approach, and the Borderland discourse which has been in development has suffered a set back, with Geese's role as 'credible communicators' presumably also somewhat damaged. However, the next critical moment suggests that all is not lost.

## **Critical Episode 21**

### **Not rushing off to dinner**

See Chapter 6 for discussion of this episode.

## **Critical Episode 22**

### **Games after dinner**

See Chapter 6 for discussion of this episode.

## Episode 23

### The end of the day: Check out and the Corrida Talk

Work continues in the small groups for the rest of the afternoon and Field Notes record that all the groups have been up and on their feet working and there is a “good buzz” in the room (Field Notes p41). The moment selected here covers the end of the third day, after the small group work has finished. It therefore covers:

- The ‘check out’ to end the session
- The ‘Corrida talk’ where the notion of the Corrida is formally introduced
- Observations of the group dynamic at this point

### The check out

The group gathers together and Mountford gives what may be considered an explicit statement of the Geese Discourse: “This [the Residency] is for you..its about us working with you” (Farrall 2001h). The point to note is that this statement has only the provisional status of an assertion, *unless there is reciprocity*. Without *acceptance* the ‘offer’ made is meaningless, and James M. and Davy J. explicitly return just such acceptance. James M: “Aye it is.. this is something we’ve needed a long time”; Davy J.: “I’ve done anger management and that before too.. this is .. you’re not telling us what to think.. I can see the benefit” (Farrall 2001h)

It may be worth pausing for a moment to consider the *building task* concerned with *socioculturally situated identities*. Question 11 asks *what relationships and identities, with their concomitant knowledges and beliefs, seem to be relevant?* Question 12 asks *how are they stabilised or transformed?* And question 13 inquires *In terms of activities, identities and relationships what Discourse are relevant and in what ways?* Both James M. and Davy J. have strong and to some extent opposite ‘prison identities’: As stated by Officer Blue, Davy J. is widely perceived as an ‘arsehole’ who does not share James M.s’ preference that things be ‘civil’, yet both of them also have a ‘hard man’ image. Equally, both of them are expressing similar sentiments that are supportive of the Geese Discourse.

We have earlier mentioned the concept of being a ‘real Indian’ in the context of Gerry G. and his arguable inauthenticity: Both Davy J. and James M. must be regarded as ‘real Indians’, yet a part of so being is to be ‘in synch’ with other ‘real Indians’, i.e. the rest of the group. A question therefore arises about what effect there may be in two ‘real Indians’ in effect coming over to the Geese side of the ‘Conversation’. James M. and Davy J.’s identity as ‘hard men’ and their relationship to the Geese Discourse are arguably being ‘made relevant’ exactly by the implicit challenge to those identities expressed in their comments. Similarly, the ‘concomitant knowledges and beliefs’ associated with being a ‘hard man’ are also thrown into relief and through the process, become, if not transformed, at least fluid. Ultimately, Davy J. will carry on

the process of transformation while James M. will not – but the latter point does not detract from the potential significance of their comments at this point.

## The Corrida Talk

The Corridas have been an immanent presence on the Residency since its opening words from Kirkham:

### Stanza 1

- 1 :      On the final day  
1b:      there will be a test..  
2a:      We will talk  
2b:      more of this  
2c :      later in the week//  
(Farrall 2001a)

The notion of ritual was discussed in Chapter 2, and here I will refer briefly back to the ideas raised by Firth (1951) and Schechner (2003). I have suggested earlier that Kirkham's language in lines 2a to 2c, analysed in *critical episode 2, Introductions and Contracts* is, through its 'G2' grammar, a presentiment of the ritualistic elements of the Residency (connected to theory node 3) which create "*a sort of expectancy and a sense of importance that something important is going to happen...*" (Heywood 2003, para. 61 my emphasis).

Kirkham's speech can be seen as an initial example of the *patterned activity*; the 'pattern of doing' (Schechner 2003) of the ritual of the Residency and so too can my specific role (instanced here for the first time) as 'Corrida Master'. This role, which will be reappear at the end of Thursday when the announcement of who will enter the Corrida is made, and throughout Friday, is mainly a master of ceremonies function, though, as will be suggested, there are shamanic or priestly connotations. Its fullest incarnation on the Friday is deliberately presaged through the Discourse of the introduction to the Corrida.

While the group is assembling I have very specifically taken a chair in front of the group, and sit holding a black file which (semiotically) will function as a 'badge of office' and reappear on the Friday. Only when there is absolute silence will I speak. This behaviour is part of the Discourse, the 'dance', and is intended to mark a liminality, a distinction, between my embodiment in this role and the Geese role I have held so far in the rest of the week, which is a more friendly, relaxed, warm persona (or at least attempts to be so). The script for the introduction is deliberately written to incorporate 'special' language and we will briefly consider a few phrases here:



"During the week so far you have looked at your violence, and considered changing that violence"

"A maximum of five men will enter the Corrida"

"Each man will face a challenge specially designed for the man who undertakes it"

"The time may not be right for you, now, to face this challenge. The decision will be made at the end of tomorrow"

(Farrall 1996)

These brief lines can be seen as incorporating the qualities of *control of human affairs*, being *symbolic in character*, having a *non-empirical referent* and being *socially sanctioned* (at least within the terms of the Conversation) which Firth (1951) offers as characteristic of ritual. In addition, there is a *connection building task* underway: This language is linked to Kirkham's early utterance on Monday morning and the current time, continuing a trajectory that will conclude in the Corrida and re-asserting that all the work of the week is but a preparation for the Friday. This is intimately linked to a *political building task* where questions 14) and 15) ask *what 'social goods' (status, power gender etc) are relevant and irrelevant in this situation and how are they made?* and *how are these social goods connected to the cultural models and Discourses operative in the situation?*

Briefly, Geese are again demonstrating their *social goods* of power by determining how many men will enter the Corrida and thus making the Corrida and what it represents relevant (because access to it is controlled and worthiness for it will be judged). This is a reoccurrence of their making the entire Residency Discourse relevant by demonstrating the transformative power to create the sets etcetera within the prison institution, as we have considered earlier. A connection to the *cultural models and Discourses operative* is that the Corrida introduction is a continuing assertion by Geese of their Discourse, which by its assertion continues to challenge the inmate Discourse and the 'cultural model' of violence which I have suggested has been presented by them as a group.

## **Critical Episode 24**

### **Not rushing off to tea**

See Chapter 6 for details of this critical episode.

# Thursday

## Episode 25

### A Problem of Equality: Group meeting *re* visits

Thursday immediately opens with a problem. Deek T. announces that he has a visit arranged for later. To a prisoner, a visit is a precious commodity, which may occur only once a month, last only 15 minutes in some cases, and must be formally requested by the issuing of a Visiting Order. However, a condition of the Residency is that men do not arrange visits during the week. In Geese terms, this is a 'Fool Factor' - a phrase taken from the improvisational show *Lifting the Weight* and signifying an unexpected event that upsets the applecart.

Officer Blue is of the opinion that Deek requested his visit only this week (Field Notes p43) - another indication of Deek's lack of engagement with the Residency. Given that a core theme of the Geese Discourse is personal responsibility and personal agency, the correct response seems clear: Deek is briefly taken aside by Brookes and the situation explained that he must choose to attend the Residency or his visit. Deek leaves for his visit and that is the last we see of him.

However, the Fool Factor has not run its course: Davy J. now chimes in that he too has a visit scheduled, for Friday. This is a more serious test of the Geese Discourse. The loss of Deek, while regrettable, does not affect the Corridas: Barring a change of huge proportions today, Deek was not a Corrida candidate. Davy J. however, who has hitherto demonstrated great commitment to the week, and who appears to be a likely Corrida candidate in small field of possibilities, is a different question.

The Geese problem is, what message do we give if we allow Davy J. to have his visit and return - especially on the Friday - when Deek T. was given a straight choice? It is a test for us to show whether we really believe the things we have been saying about personal responsibility, whether we really believe the Residency is due respect even at the cost of the loss of a good contributor, or whether we are prepared to 'bend the rules' and show favouritism.

Geese huddle to discuss the issue: Officer Blue notices a mirroring huddle of inmates discussing things and the atmosphere is tense, with a lack of eye contact and low mutterings. (Field Notes p43). The comments in stanza X below encapsulate the Geese debate around the question:

#### Stanza X

- 32 Mountford: It's not fair..however much we want him (Davy J.) to stay.. he's got to make a choice//
- 33 Nicholas: Otherwise it's all bullshit ...what we've been saying//
- 34 Kirkham: It's a trust issue// (Farrall 2001j)

Within these brief lines lie considerations of the therapeutic alliance. Geese have been quite clear in their opinion that the Residency asks a great deal of the men attending and that "...unless they trusted you.... I think they would just shut down and wouldn't be bothered really" (Raynsford 2003 para 34 my emphasis). In order for the trust developed so far to remain, (or be sustained) the Geese discourse to become Discourse, it must be *embodied*, be more than mere words: The company must 'walk the talk' and to be 'real Indians' must demonstrate authenticity not just in what we say, but in what we do.

Field Notes (p44) record that the decision is that Davy J. must be given the choice to cancel the visit or leave the week. He is taken outside the Chapel to discuss this while we put the issue to the others inmates with the intention of demonstrating respect and inclusivity.

49 Brookes: ...so we've asked Davy J. to think about, about what he really wants to do and... it's his choice... we'll respect that decision//Obviously we really hope he comes back.. but.. it's up to him//

James M. appears to take on group spokes man or 'elder statesman' role with the comment "That's fair enough". (Farrall 2001j, Field Notes p44). Field Notes also record a definite 'lightening' of the atmosphere as we begin to form up for the introductory games which are the focus of the next critical moment.

## **Episode 26**

### **More fun and games in the morning**

The morning games provide more observational data on several of the men, since, in the frame of this thesis, playing the games is part of the Geese Discourse in opposition to the inmate's discourse, as discussed above under *episodes 6 and 10* and *critical episode 22*. Thus, rather than concentrate on the *functions* of the games, we will focus on *how the men play them*.

First is *Cat & Mouse*. This exercise involves a Cat who must chase a Mouse through a maze formed by people sanding in a grid shape and holding arms out to form walls, which on a signal suddenly change orientation. If the Cat catches the Mouse, the roles reverse and the former prey become the hunter. Sound effects of meows and squeaks are obligatory. Field Notes (p44) show Colin S. hurls himself around as the Cat or the Mouse, falling several times; great laughter - genuine, enjoying laughter - bursts out when Andy B. as Cat, catches his Mouse, and with impeccable comic timing realises *he* is now the Mouse and emits a fantastic squeak.

As has been suggested above, the way the men play the games is a crucial diagnostic indicator, and Davy and Colin's conduct connotes a degree of spontaneity and willingness to play, to enter into potential states, which is of great relevance to considering change and to the idea of the dramaturgical self.

I'm now running *Grandmother's Footsteps* – also known as *Traffic Lights* and exactly the same game as children play where the group must sneak up on the person at the front while that person's back is turned, and the group must freeze when that person turns, being sent back to the start if they are seen to move. Andy B. volunteers to be Grandma – his first 'stepping forward' in this way, although he has joined in all the games (Field Notes p44).

*Grandmother's Footsteps* falls under the *game as metaphor* category described under *episode 6* above in the Appendix, in that as a behavioural illustration of who is impulsive and lacking caution, which can plan and exhibit self-control in attainment of a goal, it is hard to beat. Colin S. plays at great speed, running forward and screeching to an unsteady halt throughout, clearly wobbling and on the point of falling. Interestingly Andy B. does not send him back and in fact seems to find it difficult to make anyone start again (Field Notes p44) – not wishing to 'spoil' the fun perhaps?

James M. for once has cast aside his low energy 'old lag' role and is playing with a large grin as are Colin S. and Davy J., while Darren C. and two other men, Billy D. and Billy R., hang back, not really trying to enter into it, paralleling the distance they have maintained from the week although even Darren C. begins to grin at points (Field Notes p44). From these observations it can be suggested that there is a parallel to the degree of engagement the men have shown – for the two Billys these games illustrate their 'stuckness', while Darren C. shows his partial and fluctuating engagement.

This episode represents the last time we will consider the use of games within the Residency (although they do appear again) and the following quote from play therapy neatly encapsulates many of the arguments and claims we have covered:

"[Play allows] ...unconscious, suppressed, or non-dominant aspects of the self to emerge without censure from the super-ego, internal critic, or social mores. The emergence of buried aspects of self allows individuals to resume their personal growth through the integration and transformation of these parts with the rest of the developing self or identity" (Dintino & Read Johnson (1997 p206).

Hopefully, the reader will see the connections between this statement and the theoretical model of the thesis, particularly concerning the dramaturgical self and psychodynamic aspects of the embodied being.

As a final word on the 'games as games' and in the light of preceding comments on the part of Geese of the importance of the games; the power attributed to them by quotes such as the above; and arguments made immediately following regarding fragmentary roles, we should note the available inmate data on the usefulness or otherwise of the games is divided:

- 68 Colin S.: "I liked [the games] they were... some of them were a bit hard, it was a bit harsh, you felt silly, you felt silly .... but it broke the ice"
- 69 Farrall: "And do you reckon the week would have been the same without all those, if we'd just done all the other stuff?"
- 70 Colin S.: "I don't think it would have worked, you had to do the games to have a laugh at each other alright... nobody feels like they're being stupid because everybody's being stupid. That's alright, that's acceptable. And it was a laugh."
- (Farrall 2001r, paras.68-70)

This is versus Davy J.'s more ambivalent appreciation:

- 66 Farrall: "I remember when we played grandmother's footsteps and you were granny, your face lit up when I said come on be granny and there was this huge grin and everybody clapped"
- 67 Davy J.: "I found that a wee bit embarrassing like, you be granny come on"
- 68 Farrall: "Do you think the week would have worked as well or have been the same without those games then?"
- 69 Davy J.: "I wouldn't have seen any difference ... of the games I enjoyed them but there was a couple I was like fuck!"
- 70 Farrall: "You wouldn't have seen any difference?"
- 71 Davy J.: "It wouldn't have changed the outcome to me"
- (Farrall 2001q)

However, Davy does also note:

- 73 Davy J.: I think the thing about the games is to warm people up and to relax and get them going

Further, as noted in episode 6 above, Davy concludes that:

- 75 Davy J.: "The game we played [on Wednesday] the one where we were going round in circles I can identify with that because all I've been doing all my life is just going round in one big circle, it's always been a vicious circle I've been going round in" (Farrall 2001q).

Thus, both Davy and Colin seem to appreciate some of the 'game as game' aspects of the games, as well as seeing some of the value of the 'deeper function' of a game as preparation to 'do different', and Davy J. has explicitly made meaningful connections to his own behaviour through the processing of a game as 'metaphor'.

## Episode 27

### Skills training work in the small groups: Darren C. talks to the Fragment masks

As noted in Chapter 6, the work considered in this episode can be considered as representative and emblematic of the kind of work going on in the other small groups.

#### Talk to the Fragments part 1: The Wall

Darren C. goes first. Because of his apparent continuing ambivalence about the week and its subject, we have decided that Davy should literally have to 'give voice' to the discourse that he is resisting, by arguing against the Wall Fragment mask to make a commitment to changing his violent behaviour, and arguing against the Fist Fragment mask about why he should leave behind what that mask represents.

This will not be 'skills teaching' or 'skills development' in the way that, for example, Colin S.'s work (see below) will be: This reflects Darren's differing position on the 'cycle of change' (Prochaska & DiClementi 1986). He is still seemingly in 'Contemplation', the 'thinking about it' phase where ambivalence is very strong and no decision to change has been taken. This means that to do work which prepares him to take action would be premature, as he has not made that commitment.

Instead, the focus of work with someone in this stage of change should be to

- Elicit the pros and cons of the behaviour
- Look at both the positive and negatives of changing and of remaining the same
- Attempt to develop any discrepancies which people present between how things are and how they would like them to be
- Consider the importance of change and their confidence in changing

As has been discussed earlier, the intention is that the other person, not the worker, should be the one who produces the arguments for change, rather than the worker producing 'resistance' and a defensive reaction where the other entrenches against a worker who is pressing for change (Miller & Rollick 1991, 2002). If the Wall and Fist (masks which Darren picked for himself following the Fragment Mask exercise) can be seen as *representative* of aspects of Darren's cognition or 'inner world', then he is in fact being asked to argue *against himself*. The test will be to see whether he can generate such dialogue.

#### Useful terminology

Before discussing Darren C.s' work here and the subsequent work undertaken by Colin S. and Andy. B. and the Corridas, it will be useful to acquaint readers with some specific terminology. We have briefly introduced the terms *Protagonist* and *Auxiliary* earlier, but before reading the following material, a little more explanation may be useful. The terms used are taken from

Psychodrama, which, as noted in the literature review, influences or prefigures much Geese practice in the Residency without being explicitly incorporated.

### **Concretisation**

*Concretisation* is a common technique of Psychodrama. Bradshaw Tauvon (1998) notes that "...the self is not one figure but several, existing in... a system of aspects of the self" (P33), a statement clearly linking to conceptions of the dramaturgical self, and that these 'aspects' can be *concretised* (i.e. the abstract made actual) through "...converting the concept of a role, a figure, a metaphor .... into a concrete image on the psychodrama stage." (p33). In voicing the Wall and Fist what they represent symbolically has been *concretised* and I have taken on a role as an *auxiliary*.

### **The Auxiliary**

Another central psychodramatic technique, Moreno originally denoted this role as the 'Auxiliary Ego' and described it as "the representation of absentees, individuals, delusions, symbols, animals, ideas and objects. They make the protagonist's [phenomenological] world real, concrete and tangible" (Holmes 1998 p130). Kellerman (1992) notes that the use of the word 'Ego' may be too limiting for the wide ranging nature of the Auxiliary function and that "the Auxiliary is an aid, not only to the "ego" [of the Protagonist, see below] but also to inner and outer "objects" and to the "symbolic inner world" at large" (p106). This conceptualisation too links to discussions in the Literature Review on the dramaturgical self. Essentially, an auxiliary role is one, which is in some way related to the protagonists' inner or experiential world and which is necessary or useful in facilitating some sort of exploration of that world.

### **Protagonist**

Quite simply, the *protagonist* is the person whose 'real life' issue or experience is under focus: Here, Darren. C is the protagonist. He remains the protagonist even if in *role reversal* with an auxiliary role. This distinction will be explored further under Andy B.'s work. Having explained to Darren that I will play the Wall and Fist masks, the exercise commences.

### **Stanza Y**

61 Heywood... You've said you want to change your violence// What we want you to do is talk  
to the Wall about that//  
WALL: (gazing around blankly)  
62 Darren C.: (15 seconds pause) What what are you doing here//  
63 WALL: What//  
64 Darren C.: What what are you doing here//  
65 WALL: Dunno// (pause nine seconds)  
66 Andy B.: Ask him to admit there's something needs to change//  
67 Colin S.: Ask him what he's scared of, he wont talk about it//  
68 Darren C.: You you've got a problem//

69 WALL:       What's that then//  
 70 Darren C.:   You're.. you're fighting and that..  
 71 WALL:       (bored) Oh// (pause) Look.. I come here.. listen to these people.. do their stuff..  
                   what else am I supposed to do//  
 (Farrall 2001j)

Darren's initial hesitancy can be interpreted as due to the unfamiliarity of the task, but even when prompted by Heywood and the other group members about what to say to the WALL he still struggles. Line 71 represents my attempt (as WALL) to a) reflect back to Darren what he is apparently doing himself, and b) present an opportunity for him to at least 'talk the talk' about what is needed. He responds in a limited fashion:

### Stanza Z

76 Darren C.:   You need to..to join in//  
 77 WALL:       How's that then// I'm here, aren't I// That's enough isn't it//  
 78 Darren C.:   (looking at floor) (pause)  
 Farrall 2001j)

As the exercise continues and Heywood draws it to an end, Darren C. does not articulate any effective or clear responses to the Wall. This may be because

- a) He *genuinely* does not have any answer to the Wall's position
- b) He *does* know what the response should be, but is unwilling to say it

In discussing the exercise, Field Notes (p72) record that Darren seems as if he is *unwilling* rather than *unable* to provide an analysis of why he did not respond effectively to the Wall. In the debrief on Thursday evening Heywood's analysis too is that point b) above is a more accurate description of what is occurring for Darren:

"I think it [the exercise concretising the Fist and Wall masks] was real for him, what was said, but... he got stuck answering... He couldn't argue past the Wall, I think he thought it would be easy, but, he'd just blagg it, but it sort of shut him up... With the Wall he does know what to say I think, but he just can't make himself because then *he'd have to join in properly if he listened to himself* and that, the, its still too risky" (Farrall 2001l my emphasis)

### Talk to the Fragments part 2: The Fist

The second part of the exercise is for Darren C. to answer the rather more direct accusations of the Fist mask, as articulated by me. Again, even with prompting and support from his peers, Darren struggles to articulate a response.



### Stanza AA

- 87 Heywood: Tell *him* [the Fist] why he should give up violence//
- 88 FIST: We don't want to stop mate do we// You know what it's like.. down the foot:y..  
see those boys from the other side.. got your la:ds with you – see those other  
twats running away .. brilliant//
- 89 Darren C.: You've got to... that's why you're here... You can walk away//
- 90 FIST: Come off it// You're telling me someone fronts you and you're going to walk  
away//
- 91 Darren C.: (does not answer)
- 92 FIST: This stuff [the Residency] isn't gonna stop us .. we like it//
- Farrall 2001j)

Line 88 is a reference to Darren's first Thinking Report where he prepared an account featuring football-related violence which in Heywood's words "... he was volunteering something about when somebody else tried to stab *him* and he had to get the knife off him and kill him, or you know, football grounds where somebody else started it" (Farrall 2001c). Heywood encourages Andy B. and Colin S. to support Darren:

### Stanza BB

- 101 Andy B.: It's hard but.. tell him fighting is shite// It just makes it worse for you// He's [the  
Fist] getting one over on you//
- 102 Colin S.: I couldn't walk away but he's saying you're buzzing off it// [the violence]
- 103 Heywood: Try again//
- 104 Darren C.: Down the football..aye.. sometimes you can't miss it.. but it's not every time//
- 105 FIST: You tell me you want to stop then// (Darren pauses and looks at floor) See//  
You can't// We're the same mate ..we like the feel we like the buzz.. we like the  
action// That's it// End of//
- 106 Darren C.: (looking around) I'm not a violent man (low tone)
- 107 FIST: You tell me straight you don't want to do it anymore and I'll believe you// Go on  
then//
- 108 Darren: (does not answer)
- Farrall 2001j)

In line 104 Darren C. appears to return to his earlier assertions of violence as an unavoidable 'environmental event' (see critical moment 13) but in the face of the Fist's direct challenge and assertion of enjoying violence (line 105), is unable to respond other than with the counter assertion that he is "not a violent man" (line 106). Readers may remember that James M. has made a similar assertion ("I'm not a hard man") and may be taken as indicating that Darren is

experiencing some 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger 1957) or role discrepancy in that accepting he enjoys the activities described *would* make him a 'violent man' but there is something about being 'a violent man' which is ego-dystonic and unacceptable. Such incongruence may be a driver for the construction of meaning around violent behaviour to make it something other than 'violence'.

Again, attention must be drawn to the fact that the above dialogue is only 'trace evidence' of the interaction: In the moment, Darren's embodiment provides critical information; he cannot meet the eyes of the Fist and frequently drops his head, seeming at a loss for words (Field Notes p72).

### **Darren C: Still behind the mask**

So the question arises: What has been gained in this incarnation of the 'aesthetic space'? It might be argued to have 'stimulated knowledge & discovery, cognition and recognition', while not necessarily transforming experience in the sense Kolb implies, or exhibiting much in the way of plasticity or metaxis. Darren C.'s own embodied experience does not seem to have been a central focus, although the 'internal' discourses associated with the Fist and Wall masks as psychological defence mechanisms have been *embodied* or *externalised* through the process of *concretisation*. Had Davy been able to generate a dialogue *against* the Wall and Fist, these might (in Vygotskian terms) have been the first step in creating and internalising new cognition.

Overall, in motivational terms, Darren's comments would seem to indicate that Darren has not resolved his ambivalence about change: The feeling seems to be that he *can* see the 'point' of the Geese discourse and may actually be engaging with it, but that he has not entered the Borderland sufficiently to be able to be willing to admit openly to others that there is a 'problem'. He may be moving through Contemplation, towards such an admission.

In Geese terms he is still wearing the Brickwall mask, though some cracks seem to be appearing: The fact that Darren does not simply 'talk the talk' might also seem to indicate some degree both of disequilibrium and engagement – that he is not comfortable to simply 'tell us what we want to hear' in an inauthentic way, because he does not care, but is currently unable to 'come over' to Geese. Equally he appears sufficiently engaged and uncertain to not be confident enough to simply articulate a discourse of violence and not care: Thus he remains a site of struggle. As Heywood notes in the debrief:

"...because he couldn't, he couldn't answer what the Fist said what the Fist said about violence, he still agrees with the Fist about, not, not doing violence. He still can't see the reason to do something different, but I think it made him think, 'shit, I agree with him [the Fist] and what does that mean?' (Farrall 2001).

Finally, a point to note is that through the use of the masks, and the dramatic distance they create, as Auxiliary I have been able to articulate views which were I to put them 'person to person' to Darren would be likely to generate extreme levels of resistance and defensiveness. Instead, because of previous work with Darren and the spontaneous improvisational nature of the Residency, I have been able to cite back to him the flavour of his own words and thinking from earlier on in the week, thus (arguably) increasing the verisimilitude and enhancing the idea of Davy 'arguing with himself' to generate the arguments for change.

## **Critical Episode 28**

### **Skills training work in the small groups: Colin S. - "Turn out your pockets please"**

In Chapter 6 in this critical episode we will consider work with Colin S. that exemplifies further the qualities of aesthetic space and returns to central assertions of this thesis regarding the aetiology of violent behaviour.

## **Episode 29**

### **Skills training work in the small groups: Andy B. – The empty chairs**

Andy B.'s work offers another perspective on the type of work which 'skills practice' can include, focussing as it does not so much on the explicit teaching of coping strategies in a situation of potential offending, as with Colin S. above, but focussing more on emotional expression and communication, or catharsis.

Andy B.'s violent history has mostly been associated with his drug taking. His Thinking Report in the other small group detailed his beating of a drug dealer who had (allegedly) raped a 15-year-old girl as payment when she had no money (Field Notes p75). This is (arguably) another example of the discourse of violence occurring only as 'natural (and inevitable) response' to 'something you cannot have', articulated previously by Deek T. in the feedback to the performance of *V11* (stanza 5, critical episode 4, in Chapter 6) and Davy J. during the 'cues and triggers' (in stanza V, line 317), and also from Davy C. in his Thinking Report about the bar fight (critical episode 12, Chapter 6).

Yet Andy B. further claimed that he had subsequently apologised to this man, which is an interesting note in terms of the inmate discourse of 'justified violence', suggesting that Andy B. is less entrenched within that Discourse. Officer Blue has previously confirmed that Andy B. is slightly out of the ordinary run of 'average' violent offenders in that his violence is mostly drug-related and that 'inside' (prison) Andy B. is very much the 'clown', in contrast, for example, to Davy J. or someone like James M. (Field Notes p5). In Geese terms, Andy B. would habitually wear the Joker mask and Davy J. the Fist.

Officer Blue has given his opinion that, by contrast to Darren C. for example, Andy B. has been clinging desperately to the notion of change; that he *is* going to change and everything will be all

right. On the Sunday previous to the Residency, in discussion with Officer Blue while I was present on the Segregation Unit (the Block), Andy B. clarified that it is only six weeks since he has 'given up' drugs and that "I used to bottle my anger up, and to release it y'know, I used to explode. Now I understand its not a shame to cry and talk about your feelings" (Farrall 2001aa). Andy B. further identified that "I wasn't happy cos I didn't like myself" but also with regard to his anger and other negative feelings "...now they've been dealt with and it's good' [nods in satisfaction] (Farrall 2001aa, Field Notes p4).

Andy B. is dead set on the idea of a life without drugs and that he will find a new girlfriend, who is not involved with drugs, and that this will be his passport to a changed life (Field Notes p6). This is clearly a high risk strategy and also risks the responsibility for success or failure of change being placed with someone else: The 'locus of control' remains external rather than internal, and links to reduced perceptions of self efficacy, which has previously been suggested as a critical factor in terms of positive outcomes of change. In Officer Blue's opinion, Andy B. is "hanging on by his fingernails" and is "totally unrealistic about how easily he's going to change" (Field Notes p6). This 'idée fixe' seems a clear place to start for Andy B.'s skills practice.

**Empty chairs and full emotion**

Although often associated with Gestalt therapy, the 'empty chair' originated with Psychodrama. It is a technique where, instead of an Auxiliary playing a role (as Darren did as police officer, for Colin. S) an empty chair represents that position or person. Lippitt (1958) suggests that this 'absence of other' can allow for a more spontaneous expression of feeling on the part of the Protagonist; however, remembering the properties of 'aesthetic space' (and another echo of indeterminacy and contamination), the chair can be regarded as at once both *empty and not empty* as it is the focus of the Protagonist's projections.

We place three chairs in front of Andy B. and give him the instruction to "...put the people who are most important to you in the chairs" (Farrall 2001k). Andy B, chooses:

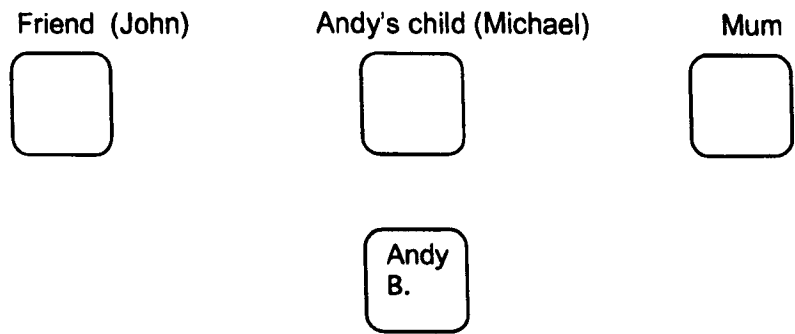


Figure (i) Andy B.'s empty chairs

## **Role Reversal**

In a basic empty chair exercise, the Protagonist will often speak to or interact with the chair 'as if' the person it represents were present. The task we see for Andy B. however is to talk to these significant others through *role reversal*. Moreno described this process as 'the engine of Psychodrama' and it involves a Protagonist initiating a conversation with an 'empty chair' before, at appropriate points – particularly when a direct question is asked – being directed to 'reverse roles', so that, in effect, they are answering their own question and in dialogue with themselves, as was the intention with Darren C. conversing with the Fragment masks.

Kellerman (1994) identifies that role reversal is (from a psychotherapeutic perspective) an important tool

- In facilitating interpersonal socialisation with others
- For personal self-integration
- As a partial re-enactment of the processes of separation and individuation that, in the person undergoing therapy, have often been derailed or only partially completed

More pertinently to the following example, Baim, Brookes & Mountford (2002) identify that role reversal "...allows for direct experience of one's own behaviour from the other's point of view" (p45) as do many writers (see for example Baim 2000, Bannister 2000, Blatner & Blatner 1988). Robson (2000) is clear that role reversal is a complex skill requiring a clear perception of and ability to imitate the other, (thus requiring an advanced degree of intersubjectivity) while Kellerman (1994) argues that 'complete' role reversal is impossible: The aim therefore is always to try and generate some degree of insight or empathic connection in the Protagonist with the role with which one is reversing, to help the Protagonist move beyond the "habitual limitations of egocentricity" (Blatner 2000, p175).

The thinking behind the task set for Andy B. is that he is clinging desperately to a one-sided vision of what will happen and what he needs to do; in Piagetian terms he has not 'decentred'. Karp (2000) argues that through role reversal it is possible to gain a perspective one did not have before, even where this is strongly at odds with what one feels one 'should' do or have done.

## **Hello Mum**

Andy B.'s first task is to tell his mother – whom he has represented as somewhat over protective (Field Notes p74) – that he 'needs space'. Baim, Brookes & Mountford (2002) note that a common difficulty with role reversal work is the individual 'falling out of role' which is usually a sign of the participant being 'defended against empathy' for the role with which he is attempting to reverse.

Andy B.'s dialogue with his mother's role demonstrates no such lack: He is able to state clearly and assertively his own needs while responding in what seems intuitively a likely way from the mother role (Field Notes p74). This is of interest in that during the performance of *VI1* Andy B. was one of the few men who seemed able to identify openly with the Child (stanza 6, critical episode 4 in Chapter 6) and the Daughter (stanza 11, critical episode 4, Chapter 6), while in *VI2* he was very negative towards the Mum character and her lack of immediate acceptance of the Dad character's attempts at change (*episode 17, Group feedback of reactions to VI2*, see above in this Appendix). This may be of significance given Andy's insistence on the need to find a girlfriend who does not take drugs. Judging that this element of the task is fulfilled and no time need be spent on exploring or clarifying a distorted or unlikely role taking, we move on to the second chair, which Andy B. has designated as his son, Michael's.

### **Hello Son**

Andy B. begins in his own role talking to Michael, his son:

#### **Stanza CC**

419 Andy B: Hiyer Michael.. It's yer dad//

The 'human sense' of the situation indicates that Andy is behaving as if this were a telephone call, where the other person is actually distant. One of the properties of the aesthetic space and the psychodramatic stage however is the 'telemicroscopic' ability of the stage to bring far away time, space and emotion, closer. Thus Heywood interrupts:

420 Heywood: Talk to him as if Michael was sitting in that chair in front of you//

Andy tries again.

421 Andy B. How's school//

Since this is a direct question we ask Andy to 'reverse roles', move physically to Michael's chair and take on the role of Michael:

422 Andy B.

(as Michael) It's alright// (low tone)

(Farrall 2001k)

In the role, Andy B.'s embodiment is visibly different to his own role: His eyes are down cast; he seems physically smaller and more vulnerable (Field Notes p74). It is possible to argue that such a perception may be a projection on my part, or it may mean that Andy B. is in really 'in the role'. Subsequent events suggest the latter as Andy-as-Michael suddenly, literally, bursts into tears and begins a soliloquy of loss and absence:

430 Andy as Michael: I want you here – [I] want to do all the things you promised//

(Farrall 2001k)

The emotional atmosphere – a completely intangible quality, impossible to adequately convey here on paper – has completely changed. Andy, when in the role of his mother, remained adult, assertive, calm: As Michael he is raw, lost, grief stricken and lonely. It is important to note that Andy is not 'acting' here in the sense of a constructed artistic performance, although there may be connections to Stanislavskian emotional verisimilitude: Instead, through surplus reality, he is able to have a conversation with his son in a way that has not yet happened, and through the role reversal actually *experience* to some degree the emotional pain of his son, due to Andy's own absence. Both Darren C. & Colin S. also have tears in their eyes (Field Notes p78) suggesting that whatever is happening is not merely a solipsistic projection on my part, but a genuine social experience of empathy.

Field Notes also record that I turned off the tape at this point: A sign of the 'observer' going 'native' as is always considered a risk with participant observation, or of a deepening respect for the feelings Andy B. is experiencing? Our group is positioned by the door from the Chapel to the wing and during Andy's work, prison officers are walking in and out: There is no sense of the Chapel as a privileged space deserving of privacy, as there would be in other 'therapeutic' contexts (see Williams Saunders 2001). The dialogue between Andy and Michael in role reversal movingly continues, and concludes with Andy B. in his own role hugging the empty air of Michael's chair. This seems to support Lippitt's (1958) suggestion that the technique can allow for a more spontaneous expression of feeling.

However, this could be seen as a failure of the type Boal warns against, where the oeneiric qualities of the aesthetic space have become too strong and Andy. B has 'penetrated into his own projections', losing the metatic awareness of 'two places at once'. Yet it can also be judged a success of the type Boal celebrates where the 'encrustation of the mechanical upon the organic', in the sense of the familiar becoming once again 'un-familiar' has been achieved: Those who are absent have been 'noticed' as absent, with the key difference that role reversal has allowed Andy the experience of missing his son *and of being the son missing his father*.

### **Collin S. and the empty chair: Talking to Pamela**

We offer Darren and Colin the chance to try the empty chair exercise: Darren refuses but Colin brings his sister Pamela to the aesthetic space. His dialogue is about her having written to him, he having not answered and his guilt and shame about spurning her loving attempt to make contact (Field Notes p75). As with Andy B.'s work, Colin appears to be entering fully into surplus reality, and the conversation is punctuated by what seem pauses for real thought (Field Notes p75). Again, we will not pause to analyse the *content* of the session in detail but turn to its possible *meaning*.

## **An element of catharsis**

Colin and Andy's work with the empty chair do not appear to have been about accessing or restimulating traumatic memories which are a precursor to violence, in order to 'do something different' when restimulated, as was the case with Colin's skills practice of walking past the police officer - at least it does not seem to have been. Instead, we must recall what was discussed in the Literature Review on *primary* and *secondary catharsis*.

*Primary* catharsis may occur in the 'active' individual such as Andy B. and in this instance we may be closer to the Aristotelian 'purification through tragedy' identified by Hodgson (1972), but achieved here by *enactment* or 'action catharsis' (Moreno 1923) using performance and role identification. Since Andy B. was released from HMP Blackwood on the Saturday morning immediately after the Residency, we do not have formal interview data from him concerning the empty chair exercise, and must rely instead on the words of Colin S. from interview:

Farrall: "What kind of changes have you seen in anybody else....?"

Colin S.: "... Andy B. I think Andy's changed in the week [and he has] come off the drugs and stuff... it's usually a lot of stress and stuff that gets him down, he has had a stressful life I think"

Farrall: "Did you talk about the exercise with the chairs?"

Colin S.: "Oh aye. He was he was, Andy says that shook him, with Michael and that... but he felt better after, like he'd... got the chance... said what he wanted to say"

(Farrall 2001r)

This would seem to indicate the type of catharsis Langley (1998) suggests, of a means to an end "...[clarifying] the here-and-now feelings in order for the protagonist to move forward" (p264).

## **Secondary catharsis**

But as readers will recall there can also be *secondary* catharsis in the 'passive' audience member (in quotes because this thesis has spent considerable time examining the fluidity of the actor-spectator boundary) through *projective identification*, such as has been discussed at length in connection with the performances of VI1 and VI2.

The *secondary* catharsis experience of watching the open expression of emotion by Andy B. in the role of Michael seemed to serve as a cathartic 'warm up' (in the psychodramatic sense of enabling someone to be more 'spontaneous' or 'authentic' and move onto the psychodramatic stage as Protagonist) for Colin S. to have the surplus reality conversation with his sister Pamela and achieve his own *primary* catharsis; a not uncommon effect in psychodrama, and arising from the establishment of a successful therapeutic alliance (see Blatner 1997, Rogers 1959) which Taylor (1998) sees as existing *in the group context* between group (audience) members, Protagonist(s) and facilitator. This is a re-reminder of the interpersonal 'Geese style' that has been discussed earlier. As Protagonist speaking to Pamela in the empty chair, Colin thus opens



himself up to primary catharsis, having been stimulated by secondary. In interview Colin later says of this exercise:

Colin S.: "Yeah there was, a lot of emotion I didn't show it but I did feel emotional, especially when we were talking about my sister and that, I got a bit choked up then"

Farrall: "And is that part of what you think will make it memorable?"

Colin S.: "It really did work, before I blocked them out, just didn't think about them, I brought them out and I thought about them instead of ... just pushing them away"

Farrall: [Heywood] mentioned although I didn't hear you say it that you were actually thinking about contacting your sister"

Colin S.: "Aye, I will, I'll probably risk it, eh? I got a Christmas card yesterday from her"

Farrall: "Excellent"

Colin S.: "She says give us a phone and that, so I'll go and see her. It says from [sister's name], mum and dad, it says give us a phone and we'll meet up".

(Farrall 2001r)

Colin's comments above would seem to support an interpretation of a cathartic experience acting as a 'means to an end' for the Protagonist to move forward. In another reversal of roles, Andy B. is of course 'audience' while Colin undertakes the exercise described above, and so open to further learning and possible secondary catharsis in the aesthetic space. At break, after witnessing Colin's work, Andy expresses identification with Colin's theme of not responding to people who reach out to you, or accepting the offered help: He describes himself as 'brick wall y'know for years' (Field Notes p77). Andy B. now seems increasingly to be coming out from behind that mask.

## **Motivation**

Aside from any possible cathartic value to the experience of the empty chair, there may be motivational gains involved. In motivational terms, readiness to change is composed of two major factors that are themselves composed of many sub-factors (see Miller and Rollnick 1991 2002):

- A perception of the importance of change
- Confidence that change is possible

As noted, Andy B. has previously expressed the importance of change in a desperate sort of way, but through role reversal can be judged to have established an empathic connection (the 'left hand of knowing') to a figure (Michael) that has been and will be severely affected by Andy's behaviour. Role reversal with significant others often functions to provide a more 'grounded' motivation in terms of understanding the importance of your change not just for oneself, but what it *really* means for or to those significant others also; this can lead one to

reconceptualise the change or how to go about it. As such, Andy's experience may be motivational in 'developing discrepancy' between where Andy B. is now, and where he wants to be.

Returning to Colin S. in interview he continues his discussion of the empty chair exercise and its effects on him, though *secondary catharsis*:

Farrall: "Do you feel better prepared to deal with [meeting your family] now then?"

Colin S.: "Mmm. I feel I've got something to show them and prove to them after doing this ..."

Farrall: "So you think doing this week has really proved that you're making an attempt to change."

Colin S.: "Yes because I feel I can do it."

(Farrall 2001r)

This exchange, admittedly taking place after Colin has also been through the Corrida, would seem to indicate a real motivational 'boost' concerned with enhanced perceptions of self-efficacy, which will be examined further when we come to analyse his work in the Corrida.

#### **And in the 'audience'....**

Readers will recall that Darren refused the chance to bring anyone to the empty chair, but appeared quite shaken and emotionally 'upset' by the work of Colin and Andy (Field Notes p78). Yalom (1975) suggests that the 'audience' in group therapy can experience catharsis from the work of another, even where the degree of 'activity' is limited to sharing *or witnessing* a discussion or disclosure – as it has been here with Darren. As discussed in the literature review, this would be *secondary catharsis*, as from a psychodramatic perspective the unconscious group process Moreno calls '*Tele*' means that whichever Protagonist is chosen, they are in some way 'doing the work of the group' in terms of group concerns or themes. Darren's tearful reaction would certainly seem to indicate a considerable degree of identification and emotional involvement with Andy and Colin's work, and a marked reduction in the wary 'keeping his cards close to his chest' that has characterised him thus far on the Residency.

While seeming rather destabilised by what he has witnessed, Darren does not appear in any way dismissive of the others' emotions (which can happen if a person is 'defended against empathy' and against recognising a common vulnerability) as described above, and the experience actually seems, even at this late stage, to deepen his involvement. Darren remains within the Borderland, but after this point, seems to accord the Geese Discourse more respect, and as has been previously noted, right at the end of the process will avow his commitment. Thus, this 'power of witnessing' (which may be linked to Schechner's (2003) idea of 'public dreaming') is an important aspect of the work to come in the Corrida (and will be discussed at greater length below, in the analysis of activities on Friday).

## Episode 30

### The Corrida Announcement

Geese members and staff huddle for the final discussion on progress of the afternoon and who will go forward to Corridas. There is a clear consensus that it will be:

- Davy J.
- Andy B.
- Colin S.

As Corrida Master for the following day, it is my role to announce the names. This is always prefaced by a reaffirmation that *not* going into the Corrida does not imply failure, and that many men may have faced their own challenge already in their work, or simply that the time is not right. The intention is both to support those who may be feeling disappointment or failure and keep the responsibility for change firmly with those men who have not demonstrated their readiness. Andy B. says 'Yes!!' loudly on hearing his name, Davy J.'s scarred face splits into a enormous grin and Colin S. looks pleased but confused (Field Notes p75).

The language of the announcement is a return to the public use of G2 grammar (the *rules* by which 'normal' syntactic grammar [G1] is used to create..."*patterns* which signal or indicate 'whos-doing-whats-within-Discourses...' Gee 1999, p29) which has been considered in detail in critical moment 2, around the introductions and Contracts preceding *The Violent Illusion Part I*. In terms of the six 'building tasks' of discourse analysis, the use of G2 here is part of the *semiotic*, *world-* and *connection-building* tasks, in that the *sign systems* (q1) and *ways of knowing* (q2) of drama and theatre and the Geese Discourse are again being *made relevant* in the situation by the 'setting out' of the next day's focus: It *will* be the Corridas, and they *will* be an 'intense challenge' using the methodologies already exhibited.

There is also a further example of the *political* building task in that the multi voiced numinous collective entity of 'Geese Theatre Company' have arrogated to themselves the social goods (q14) of the power to set such a challenge. This social good is connected to the 'cultural models and Discourses operative' because, as the reactions of the men entering the Corrida show, the chance to take the test has (at least for them) become something with *meaning*: There is no point in setting a test that no one cares enough about to attempt. Thus, to answer question 15, *the social goods connected to the cultural models and Discourses* have been made operative in the situation through the entire work of the week to this point.

Finally, there is a *connection* made both backwards and forwards. On the Monday Kirkham said:

#### Stanza 1

- 1 :      On the final day  
1b:      there will be a test.

2a: We will talk  
2b: more of this  
2c : later in the week//  
(Farrall 2001a)

and also:

### Stanza 3

1: Yes it does say 'I will not hit anyone'..  
2: that's because this week is about violence,  
3: that's what we're here to look at  
(Farrall 2001a)

Both of the assertions in these statements are connected to the current Corrida announcement:  
it has come to pass, and will be actualised tomorrow.

### What is The Wasteland?

The final 'cell work' assignment is set for all group members:

"You must write a Declaration, which will be read out tomorrow, and which must consider two questions:

- What is your Wasteland?
- What do you want to leave behind?"

(Farrall 1996)

This is another example of G2 - as in Stanza 2 there is an imperative in the G1:

- 1 You must write a Declaration
- 2 Which will be read out

This formulation however lacks the 'mutuality' found in Stanza 2, where it was suggested the G2 worked to make the signing of contracts a mutual act which the men had the power to decide not to do. Here, there is no choice; another enforcement of the Geese social goods of power. The use of the word 'Declaration' is also deliberate: Consider how the meaning of the command is changed if the word such as 'statement' is substituted. Declaration contains within itself the suggestion of an action potential, and echoes of phrases such as 'Declaration of Independence'; it has a sense of 'standing up to be counted'. Thus, the time for potentiality, for plurality of discourse and the construction of the Borderland is now past: To 'declare' means to join. The imperative states that the Declaration is to answer two questions:

What is your Wasteland?

What do you want to leave behind?

Clearly, the first question is metaphoric and existential, since as Kirkham identifies:

"It's a hard question to answer I think because there's all sorts of levels to it. Because 'why are you here?' can be 'what did you do to get yourself here?'... 'why have you put yourself here?' and 'what's your purpose for being alive'; basically, it's huge" (Kirkham 2003 para 167).

In answering such a question the process of thinking about it may be worth more than the 'answer' achieved: It is a question which asks the men to climb out of the comfort of the 'rabbit's fur' (Gaardner 1991) and consider the larger questions of their existence.

The second question is both *closed* in that it assumes there *is* something which the answerer wishes to leave behind (again, note the absence of the plurality which has hitherto characterised the Geese Discourse, and the collapsing of possibility into only one actuality), and *pragmatic* in that can act as a motivational summary of some of the reasons for change. Kirkham identifies the difficulty and the forward dynamic inherent in the Declarations:

"I don't think they find it easy, often... you hear stories of people saying 'I was up until 4 o'clock trying to do this', they're really worrying about it. And I think that's good because it really is about the concentration and then moving into action" (Kirkham 2003 para 65).

Brookes also notes a *connection* between the spoken Declaration which all the men must make and the subsequent *embodiment in action* undertaken by the men who will actually enter the Corrida: "... I think the Corrida ... provides an arena for somebody to make a very public declaration or to go through some sort of public rite of passage" (Brookes 2003, para 55, my emphasis). This theme of the importance of the *public* nature of the Corrida and the *witnessing* of the activity therein is a major element in the analysis of the Corridas on the final day, Friday of the Residency.

# Friday

## Episode 31

### Prologue to the Corridas: Before a Word is Spoken

I have suggested previously (in *critical episodes 1*, see Chapter 6 and *episode 16*, see above) that the Geese Discourse of potentiality and transformation has been embodied in the appearance and disappearance of the sets for the performances of *Violent Illusion Part 1* and *Part 2*, and that this ability to transform space has been an example of the Geese *social goods* of *power* to so do, literally creating the environment and working against the “procedures of domination characteristic of a particular type of power” identified by Foucault (1991) and countering the ‘frozen’ cultural conserve (Moreno 1986) of the prison institution.

These sets have formed specific examples of the *semiotic* and *world-building* tasks, forming part of a specific Geese sign system that is entirely relevant for the week: The Discourse of theatre and performance which is *made relevant* simply by its presence and the ‘magical’ requirement to believe in the ritual.<sup>2</sup> These elements are again present on the Friday morning as the Chapel space now holds within it the Corrida set.

### Reshaping space (again)

In earlier analysis of *critical moment 1* around the set for the *Violent Illusion Part 1* specifically, I suggested that it communicated, “... in a prefiguring of a phrase from the Corridas...‘something [different to the norm] is about to happen’”. That ‘prefiguring’ has now been actualised: Although the Residency all the way through has attempted to provide a space in which ‘something different’ can happen, the Corrida set is the crystallisation of this dynamic; Meakes’ phrase with regard to VI1 applies equally here “[VI1 is] about creating a sense of occasion an expectation and the notion that something is going to happen...” (Meakes 2003 para 32 my emphasis).

If the earlier analysis and suggestions put forward around the ‘function’ of the presence of the physical sets of VI1 and VI2 in terms of *world building tasks* and so on are accepted, then in the moment of entering the prison Chapel on the Friday morning the settled identity/role of inmate continues to be under pressure to transform by the continuing transformation of the physical space.

Now however, the transformational role is not ‘theatre goer’ as it was for VI1 and VI2: it is something which I will suggest that, if still potential at this stage, can be invested with far more significance; the role of ‘witness’ to the Corrida. We will spend more time on considering the role of ‘witness’ later, but for now readers should note that this is a role which can apply to all of the

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<sup>2</sup> In one incarnation of the *Violent Illusion Trilogy* where the Discourse was rejected by the majority of participants, this rejection was specifically demonstrated by a minor disrespect of the fabric of the Corrida set: the participants did not believe, and so the ritual was empty.

inmate participants, while the role of 'man who enters the Corrida' will be experienced by only three of them.

As cited earlier, in *critical episode 1*, Field Notes (p13) recorded that on entering the Chapel for VI1 on Monday inmates were creating or maintaining an identity of 'prison inmates', symbolised by their prison clothing, their 'rolly' cigarettes, their overt joking among themselves and that several of them were unshaven, denoting a 'normal day'. By contrast, Field Notes for Friday morning (p79) record that the men seem noticeably 'tidy' and are all shaved. The three men to enter the Corrida look particularly neat.

Field Notes from Monday (p13) show that on entering the space with the VI1 set the men immediately accepted a 'liminality' between 'audience' and stage space and adopted (with some exceptions) a serious demeanour of the aforementioned 'theatre goer' role, dropping their joking talk. Now, on the Friday, Field Notes (p79) record that the reaction of the inmates to the Corrida set is very noticeable: They are silent even as the door to the Chapel is opened by Officer Blue to give them access and they seem cowed by its physical imposition.

The set entirely dominates the Chapel space and has virtually eliminated the liminality available for the opening of the Residency and VI1: There are chairs in sight, around the curve of the Corridor wall, but no clearly perceived linear separation of 'looking at a set' as in previous performances. This can be seen as a further elimination of the actor-spectator divide, and an extension of gnosological space: Its physical manifestation is taking up almost the whole space. The Corrida set is a concrete metaphor for the focus of the Residency, a 'building task' in itself and the culmination of the Conversation (Gee 1999) that began at the start of the week.

As noted in Chapter 6, Woolland & Lacey (1992) assert that the conventions at the start of a performance event "...present us with the terms in which we are to understand..." the performance (p7). Previously, the sets of VI1 and VI2, with their recognisable backdrops and an easily established liminality of 'audience' and 'stage space' presented a familiar Discourse of Western theatre, which as noted, under *critical moment 1*, the inmate participants observed. But now, the changed space and Corrida set are arguably moving along Schechner's (2003) continuum of efficacy-entertainment closer to the 'efficacy' end where the performance has functions that are fundamentally magical and ritualistic (see Courtney 1968, Schechner 2003).

Schechner identifies that this continuum is the 'fundamental divide and that the 'ritual – theatre' continuum is a 'subset' of the larger dynamic of efficacy – entertainment (p93) and quotes Moreno (1970): "...theatre and therapy...are closely interwoven. There will be a theatre that is pure therapy, there will be a theatre which is free from therapeutic objectives, and then there will be many intermediary forms." This statement also clearly links to notions of 'para- therapeutic

theatre' (see Mitchell 1992 and Feldhandler 1994) and 'theatre as therapy' (see Jones 1996) discussed in the literature review.

Thus, within such an understanding, the Corrida set can be seen as akin or analogous to a temple or holy space (a transformative crucible) in that it possesses numinous qualities and signifies activities associated with such: it is a 'sign' of the type Bolton (1992) argues is needed to 'build belief' and a concrete manifestation of the Boalian (1979) 'imperative tension' – the feeling that something must happen because *the group* has elected it to. With reference to the function of witness, Schechner (1988) identifies that the architecture of the ancient Athenian 'public theatre' (with which the Corrida shares some similarities) was symbolic of a 'nest of solidarity'; this notion of 'solidarity' is of relevance to later discussions on witnessing.

## **Episode 32**

### **Final Warm-up Games**

We have defined and discussed the various functions of the 'games' and exercises used by Geese. One of these was 'game as game' and the notion was presented of such activities holding 'deeper functions' in terms of being a preparation to 'do different', an opportunity to actualise fragmentary roles and so on. Now, before the Corrida, Geese run a warm up game, not used as a metaphor for offending behaviour, the usage of which may have 'deep functions' not yet discussed.

Because the set is so large, the men are literally crowded into a corner of the Chapel as Guy begins a game of *Pass The Pulse*. This is a quiet, focussed game intended to build concentration and a contained energy (see Baim, Brookes & Mountford 2002) and to serve to rebuild the group as a group for the start of the day. From my place out of sight I hear the game is very quiet at first, then Heywood reassures the inmates that they are playing well, some laughter begins and Geese are leading the atmosphere, using verbal encouragement to bring a sense of fun into the space cowed by the set (Field Notes p79). The game finishes with spontaneous applause (which can be seen as the emblem of the Residency) and I hear a snatch of conversation that illustrates the atmosphere:

Guy: "Oooh what a happy game"

Heywood: "I've never known it so –"

Guy: "'- the concentration –"

Heywood: "So quiet"

(Field Notes p79)

## **Episode 33**

### **The Declarations in small groups**

After the exercise it is time to return to small groups for the Declarations of the men who will not be entering the Corrida. As noted in Chapter 6, earlier practice in the Residency was for all the



men to be asked to write a Declaration, but only the men who entered the Corrida were given the chance to read out theirs. This has been changed for the following reasons:

#### 1) Furthering Contemplation

As the Residency is coming to its close, the consideration of the existential questions needed for the Declaration may work as a motivational enhancer for those men who have not fully engaged, possibly aiding their process of contemplation and requiring them to – literally – find words to describe the aspiration to a life without (or with less) violence. In philosophical terms, even if the men do not mean what they write and undertake it as a purely cynical exercise, they will be doing so in 'bad faith' (Sartre 1995) and will know they are doing so.

James M. and one of the non case study men but a close friend of James, Billy D., who supported James's discourse of 'civility' earlier in the week, have not done their Declarations. Field Notes record that I overhear them talking (p79): "I didn't know we all had to do it" and "I didn't have any paper". This is interesting, in that everybody else appears to have understood the requirement, and might be taken as diagnostic of James's and Billy's continuing ambivalent position towards the Residency Discourse.

As has been said, James M. seems to have embraced the 'old lag' role for so long that a major problem for him seems to be an inability to envisage the uncertainty of any other role or make the 'quantum leap' to that changed energy state. Beginning the week with his discourse of a preference for 'civil' behaviour between prison officers and inmates he is ending it by restating to himself his inability to change: "If I was to tell my Missus she'd say 'what's the matter with you, you doing this at your time of life?'" (Field Notes p80). During a break in the Corridas he will state:

"This week is educational – it's taught you the difference between right and wrong - ah well, I was learning that anyway, the past few year. But out there (nods) [toward wing] it's a different place, it's not safe like it is in here" (Field Notes p80)

This can be seen as being

- An existential discourse of situated freedom and contextually appropriate roles
- An acceptance that the Geese Discourse has actually been efficacious in creating a 'special space' outside of the prison institution
- A suggestion that in Chaotic terms, James has stabilised a configuration around the particular 'strange attractor' (Gleick 1987) of the old lag role.

Interestingly, and similarly to episode 27 where Darren C. was asked to argue against the Fragment masks, while James has not 'done the work' or 'found the words' he has also not simply 'talked the talk'. This might be seen as evidence that he continues to remain in the Borderland, not able to advance but not withdrawing entirely. In his conversation with Billy D.,

James seems to be continuing to try to convince himself: "There's a level of violence you need - you call it defence" (Field Notes p82). Again, James's final words to come in the Corrida closure might indicate a shift in this position, possibly as a result of the witnessing and participation in the Corrida events to come.

With the Declarations in small groups finished, it is time to begin the Corridas proper. However, given the suggestions made above that the Corrida set is not just a 'backdrop' but an essential component of the experience, we will first consider briefly the architecture of the Corrida set and familiarise readers with the general stage management procedures of the Corrida events.

## Episode 34

### Prologue to the Corrida: Architecture that builds belief?

Mention has been made above of the physical size and imposition of the Corrida set within the Chapel space and of

- a) Woolland & Lacey's (1992) observation that the conventions at the start of a performance event "...present us with the terms in which we are to understand..." the performance (p7)
- b) Schechner's (2003) theory of theatrical architecture embodying certain values, including those of solidarity

The choice of the word 'Corrida' is a deliberate one on the part of Geese. Corrida is of course the Spanish word for the arenas where bullfights are held, and as discussed above the set is intended as

- A 'sign' of the type Bolton (1992) argues is needed to 'build belief'
- A (final) restatement of the *semiotic building task* undertaken in the Residency, a representation of the shift along Schechner's suggested (sub) dimension of 'theatre – ritual'
- A 'making relevant' (question 2) of another (magical and/or ritual?) epistemology

The Corrida set overall is roughly circular. The panels forming the walls are made of coarse, black hessian sacking material and are eight feet high and approximately four feet wide, with each panel bordered and supported by a pair of black poles, each nine feet high. The panels are spattered, almost subliminally, with traces of dried red 'blood'. The entrance to the Corrida for the inmate is through the **Wasteland**: This is a roughly wedge-shaped metal and cloth tunnel entered at the 'low end' outside the Corrida on hands and knees, through a battered 'hatch' of wood and corrugated plastic. Once in the tunnel, there is room to stand, hunched, in front of the door to the main Corrida itself. This is the battered red front door that has been seen in *The Violent Illusion Parts 1 and 2*.

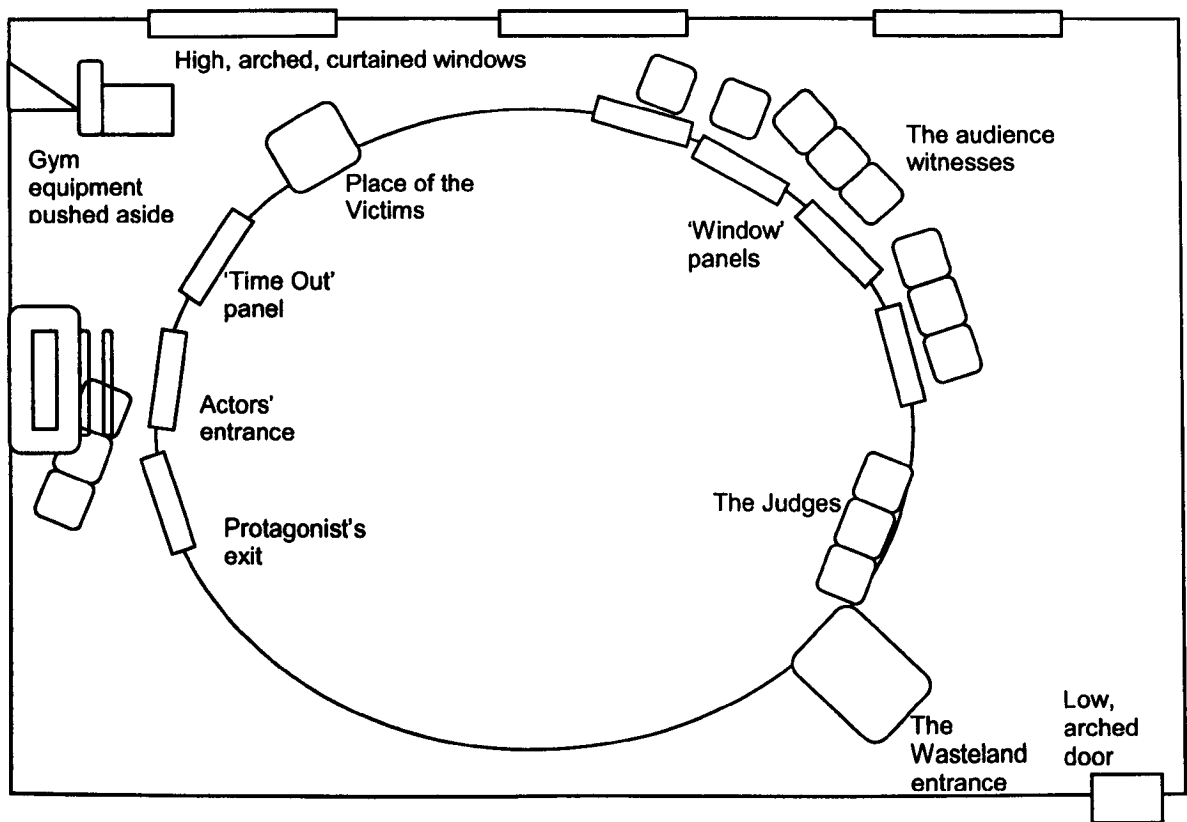


Figure (ii) The Corrida architecture (not to scale)

Standing inside the Corrida with one's back to the door, to the right is the **Place of the Judges**. This is a row of chairs, draped with black cloth, on which will sit the panel of judges comprising a Geese member, a staff member and two or three selected inmates. Moving anti-clockwise, to the right of the Judges is the first of four frames with large 'windows' cut into them: This is where the audience will sit, able to both see clearly into the Corrida from outside and be seen by those within in it.

Moving further round is a blank, black panel, before we reach the **Place of the Victims**. This is a 'Punch and Judy'-like booth, with room for a person inside, and which has a cut away front upper half. Netting usually obscures the resulting gap so that the figure inside can be seen only dimly. Moving round again is another blank black panel, before a panel which reproduces the 'Man in a Can' image from *V12* and which was used to symbolise the character's struggle to control himself; here it symbolises the 'time out' space where a man can 'pause' the Corrida temporarily. Next to this is a curtained entry/exit for the use of the actors in the Corrida and finally, next to that is a formal exit, which will be used by the successful Corrida protagonist. Another blank panel then leads us back to the door, where we came in.

The overall effect is of enclosure, of being isolated and yet under scrutiny. This is heightened by the lighting, which is dim when the Corridas are introduced and between Corridas and then brought up to full stage lighting intensity when the inmate enters the Corrida itself.

In assembling the set on this occasion we find that the material used for the walls has rotted in storage in the interim; we assemble it with trepidation and find that the effect actually works very well indeed symbolically. A further error is that the netting for the Place of the Victims is missing; we improvise with cloth 'bars' scavenged from the cage used in the Lifting the Weight show and find that this effect, too, works well (Field Notes p79). I mention these 'background' details because they illustrate a core value of the V.I.3 week: Spontaneity and being able to find adequate solutions (which do not have to be perfect) to unexpected difficulties, and the power of theatre to always somehow be relevant.

### **Stage management of the Corridas**

The Corridas begin with a specific introduction by the **Corrida Master**, (myself in this instance) which will be considered further below. When the specific Corridas commence, the same general pattern is followed. The Corrida Master will enter and announce

- The name of the man to take the next Corrida
- Who are the **Judges** and who has the role of **Second**

### **Judges**

The **Judges** comprise a Geese member, usually one who has been working with the man all week in the small groups; a member of the prison staff who has been in the man's small group; and two or three inmate participants who will have been selected according to aesthetic criteria of who is likely to behave respectfully, be insightful or constructively challenging and so on.

### **Seconds**

The **Second** is a role taken by another member of Geese. Where possible it will be a Geese member who has worked with the man, but if this is not possible with the casting of the Corridas, it will be another Geese member. Their role is to

- Help the protagonist through the procedures of entering through the Wasteland
- Help the protagonist keep calm in the lead up to the challenge
- Act as a prompt if the protagonist asks for a Time Out
- Be a 'friendly face' in a high-stress environment

Once the Judges are announced, they will assemble under the leadership of the Geese member, enter the Corrida through the 'actors entrance' and seat themselves. The protagonist of the Corrida will be collected by his Second who takes him around to the entrance to the Wasteland. This is out of sight to the waiting audience, because of the curvature of the Corridor walls.

### **The Wasteland**

The protagonist will then enter the **Wasteland** tunnel with their Second (the Geese member who has been working with them in the week) and when they are composed, will knock on the door, being told to come in by the Judges. Once the protagonist has entered the Corrida proper,

they will all then be greeted with the question: "What is your **Declaration**"? The inmate will read out their Declaration and may then (potentially) be questioned on it by the Judges until they are satisfied. The individual Corrida will then begin.

After each challenge is considered to have concluded (as determined by the Geese member in role as head Judge), the protagonist is told that he must wait in the Corrida while the Judges leave to deliberate. A chair is placed in front of the 'man in a can' panel and the protagonist sits within the silent Corrida, waiting as the audience do. When the Judges return, they discuss the Corrida with the protagonist, giving feedback on his performance and success or otherwise, and with the inmate Judges asking any questions they wish to consider. The Corrida is then announced to have concluded, and the protagonist receives applause. The audience is then cleared for a break before the next Corrida.

## **Episode 35**

### **Corrida Master's speech: Welcome to the Corrida**

Here we will consider briefly the key elements or themes as they relate to the Residency Discourse.

#### **1) "This week has been about change...new solutions to old problems"**

In terms of Discourse, this is a reiteration of the heteroglossic 'utterance' which began the week, when Kirkham read through the *Information for Participants*. Then it was part of the building and an instance of responsivity, comprised of an authoritative definitional voice setting purposes and boundaries and a second voice admitting complexity and limitations.

This heteroglossic quality is reiterated as Geese (through me) discard negotiations and claim the power to define what the week has been 'about'. The 'who' (socially situated *identity*) of the utterance refers to 'men who are trying to change' and the 'what' (socially situated *activity*) of it refers to that process. This matters because certain things may legitimately be expected of 'men whoa re trying to change', while others cannot. The second part of the phrase is also a definitional act: The violence exists and has been an 'old problem', a Conversational term which was far more negotiable (or deniable) at the start of the week, while 'new solutions' again references potential and transformation.

#### **2) "Your support as audience is vital"**

The week has played with boundaries throughout, exemplifying the Derridan and Chaotic concepts of contamination and undecidability and also the Boalian theatrical notions of the spect-actor. Now, the men who enter the Corrida will literally be *inside* the defined 'performance space' - but the men who watch are not intended to be *outside*, in the sense of a reinstatement of the spectator-actor boundary. Corti (1993) argues that the function of the witness is not passive, and the *audience* will comprise a *unit* that, while of a collectively lower

intelligence than its individual members, may be more emotionally acute (Nicholl 1962). Thus, this *collective, social, communal* aspect is crucial.

### 3) "In the Corrida, violence is not an option"

Despite the emphasis on potentiality, there is one potentiality which we do not wish to see actualised: A man behaving violently within the Corrida. This would be a laspe into a familiar role, a failure to respond spontaneously and originally, but also would be of real consequence in the 'life world' as it could be a Geese actor who is the target of the violence. This constraint further exemplifies the paradoxical processes at work in that:

- a) 'Drama lies in the constraints' (Bolton 1982b)
- b) These constraints, amid the fluidity and freedom of the improvised Corrida, have pedagogical implications for the channelling of the learning experience
- c) "...it is the unspoken that is brought to mind *because expression of it is not allowed.*" (Bolton 1982b p56).

This latter point has profound implications in light of the arguments presented previously for the unconscious, trauma-based experiences powering much violent behaviour.

### 4) "You may be called on to act as a judge"

Bolton (1984) argues that "What is individually understood can be socially tested and modified through the medium of *public language and action*" (my emphasis, p154) while also suggesting that in drama the *collective meaning of the context* dictates appropriateness of action from those doing (Bolton 1982b). The inclusion of the other men in the group in this role is a clear reference to the criminal justice Discourse of court, trial and consequence, with which they are obviously intimately familiar. It is further evidence of the 'social goods' now claimed by Geese, in that we are able and enabled to set up some men as judges over others, and yet at the same time renounce that power: It is the collective (through the panel of Judges), not the Geese, which will make a decision on the Corridas.

From this point onwards, the Corridas proper begin; data relating to this, and the associated analysis can be found in Chapter 6.