Fashioning and Flow: In the field of media education, to what extent can creative media production processes, with a particular emphasis on film production, develop young peoples' social, creative, cultural and critical engagement?

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

My 14 year old daughter went on a school skiing holiday in February 2011 and within several hours of her return she had made a 7 minute short film of the trip and posted it on YouTube, viewable here http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbxOiMmdxjw

Her efforts were intense and calculated: from pre-holiday ‘digital preparation’, through to the processes of capturing footage and photos and editing the final cut with a soundtrack. From a cultural studies perspective this seems to be indicative of how some more privileged and engaged young people are informally synthesizing an array of digital skills and technologies, indulging creative and social impulses and dynamically exploiting cultural repertoires to produce, share and ‘glory in’ a speedy text, of value not only for the producer and her peers but also for the wider community.

Questions must continue to be asked of how traditional school settings with creaking curriculums should be responding to some young people’s everyday capacity to manipulate rich media content. Furthermore and democratically speaking, diverse social groups should be benefitting from the affordances of digital processes and not just those with relatively easy access to creative forms of expression and communication. During a historical moment in which the turn to the audiovisual is being normalized in western societies, this dissertation aims to examine the edges of digital creative practice to assess the extent to which the processes of media production can enhance learning, higher order thinking and social participation in an environment of competing socio-economic tensions.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

2.0.i Loaded and overlapping Terms

Firstly I wish to define my terms and introduce some of the theoretical arguments permeating my account. The term “fashioning and flow” is taken from Loveless’ 2007 NESTA Futurelab report update (2007:14) focusing on debates about the use of ICTs and creativity. This has an important bearing on my question in that digital media production is conceived as a practice that draws on creativity for the ‘fashioning’ of resources and the creation of media texts which can induce ‘flow’, a term coined by
Csikszentmihalyi (1996, see 14: 24 mins) defining a sense of focused, sustained, enjoyable immersion that can often be experienced during the processes of combining and re-combining using non-linear digital video editing software.

I have borrowed the 3 C’s from the BFI’s 2006 ‘Reframing Literacy’ campaign, where they advocate a creative, critical and cultural approach to moving image literacy with a special emphasis on film production. I am using this approach and will extend it to assess the ways in which media production processes could impact on learning as well as on social engagement. Looking at the 3 C’s in more detail: I feel there is a pleasing serendipity to the A – Z order in which Raymond Williams’ “Key Words: a vocabulary of culture and society” defines “CREATIVE”, “CRITICISM” and “CULTURE” (1976:82 – 93), that is, they follow on consecutively almost as if the history of language development has conspired to bind them together as interdependent elements in the gradual transformation of culture and society.

For Williams the inherent complexities of each of these words is explained by their different contexts of use, which is further complicated by an inevitable tendency for meanings to overlap within each context. He talks about the unsettling “conventional” use of the word ‘creative’ as applied to “certain general kinds of activity” (1976:84), for example, the ‘creatives’ in a commercial advertising company or ‘creative writing’ as a subset of general writing skills. Such discursive use he sees as obfuscating its original meaning:

“to the extent that creative becomes a cant word, it becomes difficult to think clearly about the emphasis which the word was intended to establish: on human making and innovation.” (1976: 84)

Contemporary critical accounts in relation to creativity continue to circulate and will be referenced later in this commentary.

Given his massive influence on the field of British Cultural Studies and its elevation of context and lifestyle in the pursuit of meaning, it is not surprising to see Williams wrestling with the term ‘criticism’ and what it means to be ‘critical’. He insists that we
kick “the habit” of associating “criticism and ‘authoritative’ judgment as [an] apparently general and natural process” (1976:86) and simply stop abstracting our responses to cultural texts:

“when what always needs to be understood is the specificity of the [critical] response, which is not an abstract ‘judgment’ ... but a definite practice, in active and complex relations with its whole situation and context.” (1976: 86)

This is a key debate in the field of media education, where critical acumen might be examined less as a question of taste or discrimination nor on one’s capacity to look through the text to ‘hidden’ eternal truths and more as a question of looking at the text, at its historically situated “stylistic surface and rhetorical strategy” (Lanham, 1993:63, 84); better still, a truly rounded critical understanding would debate all such questions of cultural origin, value, credibility and positioning.

Williams lays emphasis on early uses of the word culture as “a noun of process” (1976:87) – from agricultural processes through to those of human development including popular culture. He makes explicit culture’s various strands of meaning: as “a particular way of life” (1976:91); as associated with “the works and practices of art and intelligence” (ibid); cultural anthropology’s focus on a culture’s material production and Cultural Studies’ primary reference to its “signifying or symbolic systems” (ibid, my italics). Thirty years on we still live with these unresolved ambiguities and our tendency is perhaps to isolate these strands or perhaps favour a particular trajectory. The struggle is to relate these seemingly contrasting and multiple claims on culture precisely because the resultant tensions have implications for educational strategies, and in particular those of media education.

2.0.ii Towards New Syntheses

I would like to finish this overview with an observation from Bill Green (1995: 400) identified by Burn, struck as he was by Green’s 1995 “ambitious synthesis of ideas” (2009:2):
“English teachers need(ed) to seek a critical-postmodernist pedagogy ‘within which notions of popular culture, textuality, rhetoric and the politics and pleasures of representation become the primary focus of attention in both “creative” and “critical” terms’” (ibid)

It is arguable that insight such as this should permeate the curriculum and not just inform the teaching of English, a subject to which media education often remains annexed. Burn echoes Green’s concerns and argues that it is surely time to use the affordances of widespread digital authoring tools in the service of such an undertaking: yoking critical understanding with creative production to illuminate cross-curricular learning paths, paths that would ideally be pursued throughout the school years and beyond.

Burn uses Green’s declaration as a rich source of inspiration for a new theory of criticality: one that subsumes the familiar nodes within and movements around the context-favouring “Circuit of Culture” and the text-favouring social semiotic multimodal framework introduced by Kress and van Leeuwen in 2000. Whilst Buckingham championed the significance of regimes of production and sought to reassert the non-slavishness of audience interpretation, Kress et al’s object of study remained the minutiae and arrangement of the sign itself. According to Burn, far from being antithetical in nature, “these two approaches need each other” (2009:6), especially in a turbulent socio-economic environment within which material media production as well as access to it, is accelerating and becoming more democratized. He proposes that in order for students to examine media texts, or indeed any text, “with some degree of confidence” (2003b:3), a more “(integrated) textual analysis” (2003b:4) is called for, one “rooted in social semiotics” (ibid).

Finally, whilst maintaining the same sense of even-handed caution evidenced in Buckingham’s “Beyond Technology” (2003), I seek to align myself with Burn’s “critical utopianism” (2009:23) which re-visits Williams’ historical perspective, draws together salient aspects of different academic approaches and shines a positive light on media education and ways forward.
2.1 Media Education Landscape

2.1.i The Challenges

Jenkins’ ‘White Paper’ (2007) is largely celebratory in terms of the participatory opportunities of digital media and interestingly draws attention to the cost of non-progressive media education, that is one that fails to confront three challenges that seem to address who, what and why?:

- The Participation Gap – raising issues of (in)equality of access to technological skills and contemporary cultural repertoires
- The Transparency Problem – the need for adequate media literacy programming
- The Ethics Challenge – problems associated with changes to current ethical standards and social hierarchies

Creative media production is no ‘silver bullet’ but its non-hierarchical and improvisatory processes are well placed to: wade through the ‘gap’, rather than bridge it; meddle under the bonnet of the ‘problem’, as well as appreciate the bodywork; tackle the ‘challenge’ by offering an engaging route to “decentre” (Buckingam, 2003:152), to appreciate other perspectives and to an awareness of complex online social mores through personal investment in and distribution of their own media texts.

2.1.ii Media Literacy in schools

Given the various social and economic factors feeding into the participatory divide and the politics of online ethics and regulations, it is to the 2nd of Jenkins’ challenges that media education might be more directly relevant. Buckingham professes dismay:

“... that the school system should continue to ignore the dominant forms of culture and communication of the last century, let alone those that are now emerging.” (2007: 180)

Burn and Durran (2007) signally do not ignore it and exemplify the pockets of media literacy best practice that have been developing since the 90’s in tandem with the
development of more affordable and intuitive digital software. Following on from Buckingham’s critique of Masterman’s 1980’s innoculatory project, where:

“Discrimination on the grounds of cultural value was ... replaced by a form of political or ideological demystification” (Buckingham 2003:9)

Burn and Durrans argue in favour of dislodging representation and the study of how media artifacts construct the world as the primary focus of media education so that communication can re-establish itself as a key concept. In line with much of the prescience of Lanham and his belief in “the radical enfranchisement of the perceiver” (1993:17) and Williams’ allusion to a future of “equitable access to the means and resources of directly determined communication, serving ... a qualitatively different social life” (Burn drawing on Williams, 2009:25), Burn and Durrans creative production practices materially demonstrate a renewed concept of “media oracy” (2007:167) or “Lit-oracy” (Burn, 2009: 19), foregrounding the stylistic surface of rhetorical performance as well as attending to its anatomy. I will expand on the relevance of orality to new media practices and literacy later in this account.

Burn and Durrans work builds on certain precepts established by the New London Group (1996) and their concept of multiliteracies in flux with social contexts, as set against prevailing linear, monomodally conceived notions of literacy which they saw as increasingly irrelevant in a environment of “hybridity and intertextuality” (New London Group, 2000:29, drawing on Fairclough). For young people at the computer interface, the confluence of informally acquired cultural repertoires and formally taught technical competence is a fulcrum for the articulation of “what Williams called relations between elements in a whole way of life” (Burn & Durrans, 2007:173). As such, complex kineikonic design work could critically inform and add much needed relevance to national curriculum content and delivery structures.

For Jenkins, the systemic promotion of media literacy in the US, given its fragmented and de-centralized educational infrastructure, must present problems. In this country the concept of standardized curricula and national teacher qualifications are already well established and while certain areas remain inconsistent, uneven and problematic –
curriculum delivery, assessment, lack of localized flexibility - we should be pursuing a more enlightened exploitation of this powerful network; more flow with fewer obstructive, inherited and antiquated routines. Jenkins (2011) laments thus:

“Media education may be one of the last professions to reinvent itself in response to contemporary media changes; we should have been the first.”
(www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk/2011/01/henryjenkins)

2.1.iii International Perspective
Despite pockets of thriving academic dynamism in the UK, as evidenced at the 2010 Media Literacy Conference (MLC) and in collaborative forums:
http://www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk and http://themea.org/, it does seem that UK media education policy lags behind more forward-thinking Nordic countries whose strategies have emerged from historical mass media pedagogic practices dating back to the 70's. The Finns in the field abide by this simply axiom:

“The central themes of the media education tradition are learning by doing, hearing the voice of children and young people and the active development of media skills.” (Finnish Society on Media Education 2010:16 my italics)

As distinct from the Finnish interpretation of the word, tradition has an altogether Victorian interpretation in this country, nuanced in favour of the 3 R’s and elitist Leavisite persuasions. Ken Robinson, in his introduction to the NACCE report (and elsewhere in the RSA Animate version http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U of his ‘Changing Paradigms’
http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinsonbring_on_the_revolution.html TED talk), alludes to this fundamental anachronism and the need to re-think the processes of teaching and learning:

“The foundations of the present education system were laid at the end of the nineteenth century ... no education system can be world-class without valuing and integrating creativity in teaching and learning, in the curriculum, in management and leadership and without linking this to promoting knowledge
and understanding of cultural change and diversity.” (1999:16)

The Finnish Society on Media Education booklet (2010) distributed at the MLC, outlines widespread national legislation supporting fluid, cross-curricular learning both about and through the media from the early years, throughout formal schooling and into other social spheres such as libraries, youth work, school clubs, museums and arts centres. See Appendix 1 for a table of themes and objectives in all tiers of Finnish education, embodying what Jewitt might describe as “an inter-textual web of contexts and technology” (2008: 47) with the intention of fostering individual expression, critical analysis, collaborative enquiry, active citizenship and well-being.

2.2 Mapping Creativity

2.2.i The Turn to the Visual

I begin this section on creativity with discussions around the visual because creativity has long been associated with a certain mysterious, talismanic aura; the ‘rare gift’ of artistic visual interpretation or a special aptitude for commercial visual innovation.

Now that digitization has to some extent democratized and demystified image-making production and publishing practices, it has become necessary for the meaning of creativity to widen its application which in turn has implications for the visual. What might have been regarded as “frenzied pixilation” (Jewitt, 2008: 6, drawing on Bauman 1998 & Castells 2001) a decade ago is now a normal aspect of everyday digital living for some social groups, if only in the ubiquitous use of mobile phone image-making, -editing and -distribution. However let us inform this societal swing with the insight of Mitchell (2005) who offers a historical perspective on ‘the visual turn’ or more pertinently ‘the audiovisual turn’ which:

“can be more usefully understood as a repeated narrative that marks ‘specific moments when a new medium, a technical invention, or a cultural practice erupts in symptoms of panic or euphoria (usually both) about the visual’” (Jewitt 2008:11, drawing on Mitchell, 2002:173)

Polarized debates around the educational uses and abuses of computer games illustrate how the visual can be alternately wielded as the dumbing-down pariah of
non-linguistic communication or the panacea “rescuing education from anachronism” (ibid 2008:12). Despite the contested nature of this terrain, schools have an obligation to recognize that literacy and symbolic forms of representation have now moved beyond those narrowly bound up with individual linguistic accomplishment: “the time for that habitual conjunction of ‘language and learning’ is over.” (Jewitt, 2008:6) heralding the need to move towards a multimodal and social approach to literacy.

2.2.ii The Rhetorics of Creativity

It is difficult to nail an all-encompassing definition of creativity when it is a term fraught with contingency and at times inflected with interventionist purpose. Banaji et al extrapolate these contexts and purposes in their 2006 report identifying 9 rhetorics discursively located within social discourses, the different emphases of which have an impact on teaching and learning strategies. They debate these key arguments:

“whether creativity is an internal cognitive function or an external cultural phenomenon; whether it is a ubiquitous human activity or a special faculty; whether it is inevitably ‘pro-social’ … or can also be dissident or even anti-social” (2006:4)

Wherever one sits on the various continuums or whatever affirmation suits one’s office, Buckingham in particular takes issue with claims to creativity’s socially transformative agency. As part of my research question revolves around the extent to which media production, which clearly deploys creative work, impacts on social cohesion, it would be useful to examine this debate. Buckingham argues that for assessment purposes, simply giving creative opportunities to disadvantaged young people and ‘unlocking their potential’ is not enough and that their activities should be viewed in concert with the surrounding social contexts and pedagogical apparatuses. For example how much of the process is in their control? Is it relevant to other aspects of their life? What are their motivations? Who is their audience? How much cultural capital is at their disposal? (Buckingham 2007b:53).

Similarly his critique of the NACCE report centres on its de-politicising tone:
“culture and creativity might come to be seen as magic ingredients for evening out the inequalities between youth. This ... will not happen unless issues such as inequality, disenfranchisement and poverty are acknowledged and tackled directly.” (Banaji et al, 2006:28)

Such a rational approach makes entire pragmatic sense but fails to take into account the more intangible contention that when young people are having fun creatively manipulating digital content in a medium familiar to them, they do become more engaged and arguably more inspired towards autonomous learning, even towards “possibility thinking” (Loveless 2002:6, 30). The argument is whether this pleasure is a lasting legacy with the potential to influence and extend to other areas of learning - and if so, how to measure that? - or whether it is an example of Buckingham’s ephemeral “edutainment” ? (2007:123)

Where Loveless and Buckingham might concur would be over matters concerning the deadening effect of organizations such as Ofsted and their commitment to management and standards; where creativity is seen to thrive in schools, it is despite these regulatory structures rather than because of them. There is a dichotomy here in that on the one hand New Labour formulated an economic imperative at the beginning of the century for education agendas to feed the creative industries in an effort to sustain the modern capitalist society (Banaji 2006:31), on the other, it restricted opportunities for teachers to innovate: to deviate from the curriculum, experiment with new approaches, follow their intuition or take risks. This could be construed as something of a paradox, the by-product of which is a de-motivated and de-professionalised workforce, whose job it is to tick off prescribed topics, suffocating opportunities for both teacher and pupil to experience spontaneity, surprise and delight.

In the interim many young people have fallen foul of the complex, incoherent matrices of socio-economic power relations characteristic of the knowledge-economy, with one-size-fits-all measurable educational strategies that fail to engage the individual talents and interests of many young people, marginalized or otherwise. The net result may be contributory factors to alarming NEETS statistics (those Not in Education, Employment
or Training):

“Between July and September (2010), 1.03m 16- to 24-year-olds were neets – 17.1% of the age group.”

http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/feb/24/young-people-neets-record-high

It is difficult to think of a better example of patronizing, exclusive “othering” and its damaging social consequences. As a result of strategic failure a new social group has been named, shamed, and labelled possibly bringing to fruition Buckingham’s sad forecast alluded to in one of my previous MA assignments:

“It is not inconceivable that new social strata will emerge, independent of social class, race or gender, characterised by a binary opposition between the technologically, creatively and critically equipped digital elite and, as Buckingham has predicted: “an educational ‘underclass’ that is effectively excluded from access, not merely to economic capital but to social and cultural capital as well”

(M. Cannon, MCT assignment, 2010:9, drawing on Buckingham, 2003)

2.3 Making New Media

2.3.i Social Semiotics & Multimodality

Like Jenkins, Loveless’ stance is largely celebratory of the affordances of ICTs in schools, emphasising process over more goal-oriented rhetorics associated with the pro-economic or Romantic text reification. Drawing on her work with Fisher & Higgins (2006) Loveless proposes certain “clusters of purposeful activities” (2007:7) for learning with digital media, many aspects of which chime with Burn’s synthesised conceptual framework.

Loveless’ four clusters seem to mirror Kress and van Leeuwen’s “schema of semiotic strata” (Burn 2009: 7) indicated below (IN CAPITALS), with Burn’s INTERPRETATION layer added to the cycle. The model also recalls Buckingham’s condensed ‘Circuit of Culture’: production (1 & 2) > text (2) > consumption (3 & 4). All the elements within the clusters are represented in my case studies, however, highlighted in red are aspects
which appear most salient to my account:

| 1. Knowledge building (DISCOURSE) | • Adapting & developing ideas  
| | • Modelling  
| | • Representing understanding in dynamic & multimodal ways (a) |
| 2. Distributed Cognition (DESIGN & PRODUCTION) | • Accessing resources  
| | • Finding things out  
| | • Writing, composing & presenting with mediating artifacts and tools (b) |
| 3. Community & Communication (DISTRIBUTION) | • Exchanging & sharing communication (c)  
| | • Extending the context of activity  
| | • Extending the participating community at local and global levels |
| 4. Engagement (INTERPRETATION) | • Exploring & playing (d)  
| | • Acknowledging risk & uncertainty  
| | • Working with different dimensions of interactivity  
| | • Responding to immediacy |

Table 1: Clusters of purposeful activities for learning with digital technologies (Fisher et al 2006)

a) Representing understanding in dynamic & multimodal ways – the monomodal written word is one way of demonstrating knowledge, by contrast the fluid, provisional and plastic nature of multimodal text-making, for example digital film production or animation, increases opportunities for peer-to-peer conferring and immediate feedback. It is written into ‘digital DNA’ for data to be ‘always on beta’, “always a set of instructions … waiting to be rewritten” (Burn 2009:65); the skill is to develop the confidence to go with the gut and intuit when to stop and deliver the audiovisual oeuvre. There are those who derive comfort from the fixity of ‘finished thought’ and from ‘intervention-free’ print and those who respond more keenly to open-ended, mutable modes of self-expression, that is, to the “electronic word” (Lanham, 1993) in its widest sense.
b) **Writing, composing & presenting with mediating artifacts and tools** – these are 3 cognitional skills familiar to traditional literacy, however, the capacity to ‘write’ multimodally, make infinitely editable *compositions, present* to innumerable numbers and immerse oneself in “digital bricolage” (Burn 2009:78) are core 21st century skills to which all children have a right in a ‘glocalised’ world. The challenge is for educators to achieve consensus on disseminating scales of semiotic and multimodal progression and assessment - such as the UKLA’s “Beyond Words” (2010) – according more value to the meaning-making properties of voice, gesture, dress, visual design, music, sound and movement and their integrated articulation, in short to the “kineikonic mode” (Burn & Parker, 2003).

c) **Exchanging & sharing communication** – the extent to which a audience is ever passive is a moot point but it becomes less relevant in a “networked public” (d. boyd 2008) where dialogic media exchange is the norm. Dialogue is no longer confined to the spoken, it is the defining asset of social media, even if it is only a *potential* audience with whom one is motivated to share, such as in the blogosphere. For some groups, digital interactivity creates an irresistible arena for the pleasurable rehearsal and spectacle of ‘self-performance’ or ‘self-filtering’. This ubiquitous form of digital identity play is succinctly expressed in Potter’s notion of the “curatorship” (2009) of the self.

http://www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk/2011/03/john-potter/

d) **Exploring & Playing** – in the traditional school context, time for these is often sacrificed in the name of top-down, easily assessed, goal-oriented activity informed by a tick-box mentality. Burn problematises this way of working suggesting that a more hands-off teacher approach that scaffolds, values pleasure, uncertainty and aesthetic experimentation, allowing it to flow within set constraints, will have pay-offs in terms of intellectual engagement, enriched social identity, being primed for risk-taking and going beyond one’s comfort zone.
### 2.3.ii Rhetoric, Second Orality & The Gutenberg Parenthesis

Burn further invokes Green’s 1995 observation with reference to the resurgence of the rhetorical, an approach that might be used as a means of balancing out prevailing reading modes of “suspicion” for media texts and “appreciation” for literary texts (Burn, 2009:9). Again looking for conceptual and interdisciplinary relations and a more holistic understanding of textual constitution, Burn neatly wraps Aristotelian rhetorical precepts around “how a text makes a truth claim, and what a reader makes of this” (Burn, 2009: 10); with consideration given to performance credibility (ethos/production), message integrity (logos/text) and listener interpretation (pathos/audience) such that:

“... orality and oracy may often be better metaphors for the communicative processes of new media than literacy” (Burn, 2009: 10)

This proposal recalls the historical continuities inherent in Walter Ong’s notion of “second orality” (1982), that is, the media text comprises elements of the pre-Gutenberg oral tradition informed by contemporary self-conscious reliance on the written word.

Tom Pettitt extends the historical perspective and perceives the period from the medieval inception of moveable type up until the postmodern digital age as something of an anomaly – “The Gutenberg Parenthesis”

http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2009/mitworld-pettitt.html (Pettitt, MIT Communications Forum, 2010) - to the extent that oralcy, through the agency of the internet and digitization, is now re-asserting itself as the predominant communicative medium. Texts once more share the impermanence and unprotected status of the manuscript. Interestingly, Pettitt even suggests that the beginning of ‘the parenthetical period’ coincides with increased levels of social and cultural circumscription and containment: from the nature of books themselves, to gardens, to underwear, to bodily etiquette and access to thought and language.

### 2.3.iii Moving Image Literacy, Software & Editing

Above as elsewhere there is evidence of a certain dissatisfaction with “the literacy metaphor” (Buckingham, 2007:147) given the primacy of print within which it is enshrined, lending credence to the BFI’s campaign to “reframe literacy” in the
curriculum (Reid et al, 2006) and subsequently to “move literacy on” (Marsh & Bearne, 2008). The premise is that:

“Literacy is the repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills that enables us all to participate in social, cultural and political life ... this repertoire has to include the ability to ‘read’ and ‘write’ in media other than print: in moving images and audio, and in the hypertext structures of the digital world.” (Reid et al, 2006)

The campaign largely concerned itself with the cultural and critical benefits of interpreting the language of film and the processes of its material production. What may now appear lacking academically in the move towards a more rounded moving image literacy paradigm is an examination of the design of digital editing software and the extent to which editorial choices are alternately enabled and/or constrained by it. In short, we ought to be considering the implications of media texts and practices determined, perhaps foreshortened, by a pick-n-mix, off-the-shelf, database aesthetic conceived by groups of elite entrepreneurial technicians, distinctly non-neutral in their motivations.

Furstenau and MacKenzie comment on how software iconography and rubric consistently refer back to professional film industry discourse sustaining the style and received wisdom of professional editing. However, references to the “promise of ... makeability ... (and) access to the movie-dream” (2009, 7-8, my italics) suggest that amateur efforts to imitate will necessarily be compromised and always deferred. These commentators claim that the diversification and expansion of “cinematic life” within popular culture should promulgate the Cultural Studies perspective of “occasionality ... the specific contours of the contexts within which cinematic texts circulate” (ibid, 11) as well as the extent to which amateurs, that is young people, are positioned as “subjects” and consumers of new media (ibid, 12).

The development of new media literacy is fraught in a number of ways: with the fetishisation of technology and the text, with the imperatives of the commercial sphere, with rigid subject-bound curriculum structures and the outmoded
preconceptions of some English and media teachers “blind to the extra-linguistic” (2009:89). Burn argues that they have inherited “a set of beliefs that representations of the world proceed organically from their referents” (2009:18), hence the devaluing of technologically mediated production and of texts with algorithmic origins. Drawing on Lev Manovich, Burn asserts that there need not be such a destabilizing “rupture” (2009:20) in the media education camp, reminding us of historical continuities with older representational forms and processes and of the flow of “common semiotic principles” (2009:89).

2.4 Learning and Engagement

2.4.i Vygotsky, Intuition & Flow Theory

Given his extensive writing on the themes of interactive play, rules and spontaneity and their role in the development of children’s thought and language, it is not surprising, in the context of collaborative children’s media production, for references to the work of Lev Vygotsky to emerge (Burn & Durran 2007:13 & Burn 2009:14). Development of a child’s “zone of proximal development” (Vygotsky 1978:90) - the space between independent problem-solving capacity and that achieved with guidance – is a highly relevant theoretical concept in this field. Vygotsky believes that “in play a child always behaves beyond his average age” (1978:102); further, a child’s propensity towards mimicry and roleplay - habits ideally developed from infancy - circumscribe his/her capacity to imagine a different reality. The interstitial spaces made available by these imaginative leaps should be identified and exploited by educators and allowed to flourish, paving the way, according to Vygotsky, for higher conceptual thought and abstraction.

Burn and Durran (2007) transpose this theory into the realm of digital video editing. Students borrow ideas and material from available symbolic popular cultural resources and by internalizing, recombining and repurposing audiovisual content they coin the new, brand it as their own and return it to society. The concept of re-presenting sampled audio material has been entirely standard in the realms of professional and amateur popular music mixing for the past few decades, therefore, is it not high digital time to accord similar widespread acceptability in schools to the act of mixing and editing the audiovisual, to Burn & Parker’s “multimodal mixing desk”? (2003b:23) Or
might this be regarded by some as the first step on the road to writing’s ruin or the erosion of the film canon?

In terms of interrogating the creative process I am interested in exploring intuition and a sense of the present and what the learning outcomes might be if these sensitivities are given the conditions to thrive. Burn & Durran argue that digital production tends to “the expressive needs of the moment” (2007:160) which chimes with Csikszentmihalyi’s research on flow theory. He suggests that “the autotelic experience” of “flow” (1999:824) is a paradoxical mode where one feels firmly in control whilst surrendering to impulse, exploiting a perfectly pitched configuration of skill, challenge and emotional investment. See Appendix 9 (p. 89) for a chart indicating the potential stages in the lead up to a productive and enjoyable state of flow – in any ‘making’ context. He interviews the former US poet laureate, Mark Strand, about the writing process:

“The idea is to be so, so saturated with it that there’s no future or past, it’s just an extended present in which you are ... making meaning. And dismantling meaning and remaking it” (1999:825)

Parallel patterns of thought can be seen in Sennett’s theory on the craftsman’s “intuitive leaps” (2008:27). His insights are workable in many contexts, not least in the “synaesthetic experience” (Sefton-Green, 2005:109) afforded by converging production software. Here are the four elements necessary to leaping intuitively, according to Sennett:

a) reformating – an aspect of reality is materially reworked.
b) adjacency – the juxtaposition of “two unlike domains ... the closer they are the stimulating seems their twined presence” (Sennett, 2008:210). Multiple domains in the case of editing.
c) surprise – “you begin dredging up tacit knowledge into consciousness to do the comparing” and experience “wonder” (ibid: 211). Trusting in the feeling of the right editing decision begets confidence and pleasure.
d) gravity – recognition that leaps do not defy gravity and constraints are something of a
constant: “The technical import, like any immigrant, will bring with it its own problems” (ibid:212).
(Cannon, 2011:13)

Sennett attends to production, context and human emotion in ways that could begin to suggest an alternative paradigm for the analysis of media texts.

2.4.ii The Question

It seems a shame, if not shameful, that outside the classroom, some teachers and students might engage in, even bond over exchanges in relation to popular cultural digital practices and representations, a relationship that could be fuelled and nurtured by “constant cultural churn” (Jenkins, 2010 http://www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk/2011/01/henryjenkins/ ) rather than problematised by it. However, as the classroom door closes, the top-down disconnect is so often restored. One suggested ‘innovatory’ scheme for primary schools emanating from current government think tanks is a centrally approved reading book list (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-13320661 BBC News). This is a scheme with a distinctive 19th century retrogressive Arnoldian - “best that has been thought and said in the world” - ring to it. “Best”? according to whose scale of values? using what criteria? to achieve what? at the expense of what? for whose benefit ultimately? Michael Rosen, former Children’s Laureate (2007 – 2009), has been vocal in his condemnation of “the state’s view” (ibid) and their prescriptive, rigid literacy strategies. The current Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, might do well to take as a source of inspiration Rosen’s play for voices “Under the Cranes” http://opendalston.blogspot.com/2011/04/under-cranes.html, now transposed into a hybrid, multimodal and aesthetic experience for screen by Emma-Louise Williams.

Might it be helpful, in the interests of an approach less infused with bias and historical baggage, to eliminate the word Media from school curricula altogether and to replace it with Communication and perhaps develop the new discreet subject of Audiovisual Culture? Over the past several years I have often thought of myself as a primary school ‘media mentor’ and it is a concept which could feasibly gain traction in line with some LEAs’ ‘lead practitioner’ training programmes. The difference being, instead of
furthering the perceived training needs of the teacher, I would seek to connect with
the student through reflective media chat, to engage in an ongoing dialogue cultivating
confidence, curiosity and participation. Similarly Brooks (2011) alludes to a teaching
style which values the unconscious learning and imitative processes associated with
*apprenticeship*:

“(her) goal was to turn her students into autodidacts. She hoped to give her
students a taste of the emotional and sensual pleasure discovery brings – the jolt
of pleasure you get when you work hard, suffer a bit and then something clicks.
She hoped her students would become addicted to this process.” (2011:82)

With these thoughts in mind I am motivated to explore the impact of digital media
production processes on young people’s social, creative, cultural and critical
engagement with the world around them. Leander and Franks claim that multimodal
theory sidelines to its detriment the *affective* in favour of the *ratiocinative*:

“The relations of persons to texts are strategic and rational ... rather than
embodied, sensual, and involved in personal attachments and cultural affiliation.”
(2006:186)

I would like to address that imbalance and argue that media production processes
facilitate learning to *feel* the following in an embodied sense: a good aesthetic decision,
a sense of conviction and wonder at seeing connections and uncovering patterns, the
self-affirming nature of identity play, the security of collective social interaction and
finally the pleasures of artifice, inscription and representation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Jenkins made this comment in a recent post in the context of media education:

“We are going to need to reconfigure knowledge to reflect profound shifts in the
realities of living in a transmedia and networked culture.”
http://www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk/2011/01/henryjenkins/
The reconfiguration of knowledge, or the re-assessment of what can be known, why, from whom, where and by what means, is no longer the preserve of academic experts. Most members of a democratic networked society, young and old, can now have a voice through the use of social media and other channels and it is the purpose of qualitative social research to examine the resultant highly visible ‘mess’ of public production and consumption. One way of unravelling the mess would be to deploy measured, self-reflexive ethnography, mindful of its sociological and anthropological roots, yet ready to grasp contradiction and anomaly; an approach which is resistant to essentialism and homogenization. That said, findings using this method must still be met with: “epistemological suspicion” (Gray, 2003: 176, drawing on Back); the more conviction with which a researcher makes a truth claim, the more acknowledged their “partially positioned” (Gray, 2003: 183) perspective must be.

As an educator with professional new media experience, one could be forgiven for anticipating a certain bias in my account; on the other hand, the outcomes I present are informed by years of varied local and international EFL (English as a Foreign Language) experience, management and training in the corporate sector and freelance web design work. I believe that EFL elicitation techniques in particular have much to offer not only mainstream and creative media teaching practice but also ethnographic research methods in terms of productive interview strategies and enhanced group dynamics. To varying degrees and in various contexts, my role has been to facilitate the articulation of meaning as relevant to the learner or user, be it the development of a brand, a new or latent language, an untapped competence or dormant sensitivities. Buckingham describes the importance of social context in learning and evaluation thus:

“Skills cannot be taught in any lasting way if they are not set in the context of the students’ attempts to communicate meaning” (2003:132)

3.1 Case Study Settings

Three of my case studies came out of a serendipitous meeting with Mark Reid, the Head of Education at the British Film Institute, in October 2010. I was looking for case
study material and he was keen to have current school partnership projects with strong multimodal components tracked, documented and in one case, evaluated.

**London Nautical School (LNS)** is a state secondary school with over 650 boys located in central London on the south bank of the Thames, near Waterloo. In terms of infrastructure, most of the original early 20\(^{th}\) century buildings are still in use, some listed as Grade 2, and the school has a well-thumbed, ‘old-school’ air about it characterized by vertiginous stair wells and peeling paint. The school is a Specialist Sports College and all boys pursue Nautical Studies at Key Stage 3. In 2010 42% [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/education/school_tables/secondary/10/html/208.stm](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/education/school_tables/secondary/10/html/208.stm) of students gained 5 or more GCSE’s including English and Maths. Once a week from November 2010 to May 2011 a small group of mainly higher achieving Year 9 boys attended a film production after school project based at Lambeth City Learning Centre in Clapham. Some had attended the same course the previous year.

Another group of similar aged boys from **Lambeth Academy (LA)** in Clapham attended the same project. Some had film experience from the previous year but neither group had met each other. Lambeth Academy is a new co-educational secondary school with £25 million worth of investment. In 2011 36% (ibid) of students gained 5 or more GCSE’s including English and Maths. Similar to **LNS** in terms of ethnic diversity, the difference with these particular boys was that they had all attended the Special Educational Needs department of **LA** at various stages, with issues related to autism and/or behavioural problems.

The last two case studies involve state primary school: **Telferscot Primary School (TPS)** – a mixed, multi-ethnic state school in south London with a mixture of middle-class and low-income families and **St Elizabeth Primary School (SEPS)** – a mixed, diverse, catholic state school in Bethnal Green in a socially deprived area of Tower Hamlets, East London, wherein a significant proportion are white, low-income families. The **TPS** project was a collaborative, multimodal learning experience with Year 4 children, based at the BFI & Southbank Centre, spread over half a term for two days a week; my role here was to observe and report back to the BFI on learning outcomes. As St Elizabeth’s is my part-time place of work, the **SEPS** case study was my own multimodal poetry/film
3.2 Research Design & Rationale

My research design draws on aspects of the Social Research Methods MA assignment and uses a similar rationale. The ontological position I have adopted throughout this study is influenced by interpretivism and constructionism; that is, I look at my participants’ world-view emically and interpret social phenomena as the outcome of human interactions. In terms of assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative analysis on these outcomes, I refer to Bryman (2008: 377) who, drawing on Guba and Lincoln, proposes that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are the evaluating criteria, in contrast with the quantitatively associated criteria of reliability and validity. A quantitative research strategy, with its emphasis on breadth, the collecting of numerical data and as Bryman has identified - “measurement, causality, generalization and replication” (2008: 140) - is best suited to deductively proving an existing, perhaps scientific hypothesis, one with a remit to measure broad societal changes across populations. The former four criteria, however, embody a sense of elasticity - which sit well with the non-realist view that absolute truths about the social world are simply unfeasible.

Hence qualitative research methods are favoured in my study of empirical data, with the emphasis on the depth and meaning evoked by language and gesture, on drilling down into an instance so as to inductively suggest a theory that might explain social relations, what Williams called the “structure of feeling” in and between social groups and structures. I explored this term in a previous MA module and it has relevance here in support of an understanding of evolutionary trends in social formation and later in my account with reference to pattern recognition:

“[these understandings] could only be achieved, Williams claimed, through a study of the complex interrelations, rather than comparisons, between the shifting agendas of social phenomena, their: “elements of persistence, adjustment, unconscious assimilation, active resistance, alternative effort ...” (1961) and the patterns of activity that can be traced therein. He draws on Ruth Benedict’s anthropologically inspired
“patterns of culture” to elaborate what he finally phrased society’s “structure of feeling”: a term that embodies both the rigidity of institutionalised codes and behaviours, as well as the more indefinable, “delicate” and “intangible” social norms in which one is almost imperceptibly immersed.” (Cannon, 2010a:4 quoting from Storey 2009:35, drawing on Williams)

It is arguable that Williams (cf. Einstein also and his “rather vague play” with images, referred to in my conclusion, p. 61) might have whole-heartedly endorsed Bassey’s “fuzzy generalisation” (1998) formulation. Bassey claims that the success of an educational theory depends on the extent to which an audience of educators can concretely relate it to their practice rather than the extent to which it can be generalizable:

“Fuzzy generalisation invites replication and this, by leading to augmentation and modification of the generalisation, contributes powerfully to the edifice of educational theory.” (Bassey, 1998)

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000801.htm

Appendix 3 houses a chart with an overview of approaches to educational research outlining the potentially rich outcomes from “studies of singularities”, as opposed to “studies of samples”, where qualified “fuzziness” is positively encouraged. Even Williams, with reference to the difficulties of studying any past period, refers to the “in solution” (Storey, 2009:36) nature of “the living experience of the time” (ibid) possibly implying the fruitlessness of extracting general principles from a range of data in the present, given that the data is always “an inseparable part of a complex whole” (ibid).

My case studies have involved mainly face-to-face audio-recorded, some video recorded, semi-structured interviews, phone interviews, focus groups and observations as well as photo elicitation. I will be taking into account the various sites of production and employing triangulation in relation to the research data, the texts, the virtual and physical audiences and the locations in which the texts were received in order to identify patterns between discourses.
In the Social Research MA module I wrestled with the issue of researcher responsibility and although with more experience I have to some extent come to terms with the fact that ‘someone has to do this, why not me?’, the same malaise informed parts of this study:

“I find myself struggling with the notion of what gives the researcher the right to investigative social enquiry and subsequent interpretation? One’s slant will unavoidably be informed by subjectivity which is a product of the environment and the discourses one inhabits. It is therefore incumbent on the researcher to explicitly acknowledge that their purpose is to suggest “a version of the truth” (Gray, 2003:21) from a particular vantage point, rather than seek fixed universal truths. Stuart Hall is reassuring in his approach to this problematic suggesting that researchers can never be absolved from the responsibility of transmitting new theories and conceptual insights because:

“one moves from one detotalized or deconstructed problematic to the gains of another, recognizing its limitations ... [why?] Because what is at stake really matters.” (Hall: http://cultstud.blogspot.com/2007/09/stuart-hall-cultural-studies-and-its.html).

However, Hall’s insistence on making a difference and on social research as a force for good is far from idealistic; continually “living with tension” (ibid), wrestling with “conundra” (ibid) and “struggling with the angels” (ibid) are the cornerstones of his theoretical framework.” (Cannon, 2010b:3)

Hall sees the correlation between the unceasing flow of social phenomena and the self-perpetuating nature of the research process: the fact that there can be no end in sight is its sustaining force. There are connections here with the continually shape-shifting potential of the media text and Merchant’s identity continuum “from which instances of identity performance are drawn” (Merchant 2006: 239). In an environment where meaning is inexorably deferred in relation to context and the sites for digital (self-)representation are multiplying, there is an urgent need for reflective commentary on the resultant social ‘perma-tension’ using as credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable data as possible. Bassey quotes from a paper by Helen Simons (1996) which embraces the paradox of generalising from a single case study:
“[We need to] ... explore rather than try to resolve the tensions embedded in them. ... Paradox for me is the point of case study. Living with paradox is crucial to understanding. The tension between the study of the unique and the need to generalise is necessary to reveal both the *unique* and the *universal* and the *unity* of that understanding. To live with ambiguity, to challenge certainty, to creatively encounter, is to arrive, eventually, at ‘seeing’ anew.” (pp237-238)

Source: [http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000801.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000801.htm)

### 3.3 Data Collection

As Hammersley and Atkinson have remarked, the interviewer is “intellectually poised between familiarity and strangeness” (Gray, 2003: 85) and I have found this to be the case throughout the data gathering process and throughout the MA. Indeed Buckingham has described “making the familiar strange” (Buckingham 2003:71) as one of the primary tasks of media education from the point of view of “Critical Framing” (ibid: 145, drawing on Cope and Kalantzis). Over the past couple of years I have assumed various guises as: student, writer, researcher, interviewer, observer, filmmaker, photographer, videographer, teacher, translator, mentor, blogger and consultant; and all the while it has felt like an elaborate identity-balancing act located somewhere in the pivotal space between the familiar and the strange, the subjective and the objective. I can conclude that the process of isolating aspects of ‘the normal’ to produce research material for creative interpretation gives one’s sense of intuition – or one’s willingness to follow it - a full work out. I like to think that openness, blended with a certain breadth of contextual knowledge limits the potential for the findings to be skewed or for common-sense assumptions to gain traction.

The two rudders of ethics and neutrality have informed my data collection strategy. I went to some lengths to comply with BERA ethical standards. Given that the majority of my participants were children, it was important to establish ethical boundaries and informed consent in an effort to reassure them as much as to preserve the integrity of the findings. This was addressed by implementing signed letters of parental consent (see Appendix 2) and by informing participants that their input would be completely
confidential and anonymous. The data would be stored securely and only entered into the public domain on their consent. It was also made clear that their contributions would be received with non-judgemental impartiality.

That said, remaining neutral in my different roles presented a real challenge, particularly whilst interviewing. There was a fine line between encouraging a natural revelatory conversation and as Connell has suggested - making sure you harvest your exploratory crop to produce the necessary “high theoretical yield” (Gray, 2003: 160). I often found myself fending off thoughts that the whole endeavour was merely the pursuit of the obvious. In these moments it is comforting, not to say vital, to bear in mind Hall’s and Simons’s insights above and an observation made by C. Wright Mills in 1959, that the ethnographic research process is a scholarly craft (Gray, 2003: 5), the accumulative impact of which could have dramatic consequences in the wider world. It can only be concluded that there needs to be an abundance of it, preferably disseminated in the public realm.

4.0 RESULTS, DISCUSSION, DATA ANALYSIS


Boys from The London Nautical School (LNS) and Lambeth Academy (LA) took part in a pan-European film production programme originally conceived by Alain Bergala at the Cinématèque in Paris where it has flourished for several years. One of the distinguishing features of this film project was its focus on the language of film. A yearly curriculum centres on one aspect of film ‘grammar’, be it camera movement, colour, light, depth of field or the more conceptual – hiding/revealing (montrer/cacher) – as was this year’s subject of study. With professional film-maker, Emma Sullivan, as their mentor the students experimented with a few highly structured film exercises which were then posted on the English blog http://markreid1895.wordpress.com/tag/montrer-cacher-2/ and also on the French blog http://100ans.cinematheque.fr/100ans20102011/?author=21.
Ultimately, after two terms, the participating European primary and secondary schools submitted a film of up to 8 minutes which interpreted and captured the relevant theme conceptually and cinematically. Over three days in June 2011 the films were screened at the Cinématèque, attended by the students who made them. On many levels, the project seemed ideal for the purposes of examining the impact of media production on young people’s social and cultural participation as well as on their creative and critical engagement.

4.1i The Critical: “... more on your mind”

The LNS boys have had the benefit of two years of intensive production work with a professional film maker. Having produced 4 short films in total, they have an advanced awareness of the structure of film, the processes of production, the vocabulary and the realms of the cinematically possible. In comparison with many contemporary film projects, theirs was privileged, even elitist access. I wanted to discover what residual critical insights remained once the tripods had been collapsed, the final cut was carved and the applause had died down.

I interviewed the 5 main players in the library of their school asking largely unspecific, broad ranged questions (see Appendix 5 for full interview transcript and Appendix 6 for interview schedule) designed to assess the way they felt about the production process. I also refer below to videoed footage of the boys whilst editing and have produced a 22 minute film with time indicators for ease of reference. Often discussions around the affective were good pointers to both a heightened critical awareness and also to a puncturing of the rhetoric around some people’s perception of all young people’s inherent fascination with and aptitude for digital media representations.

When asked what they hoped to get out of the project:

*John:* I hoped that I’d be able to get some experience ... not so much experience but erm sort of knowing what goes on behind the big films and stuff and such.

A few of the boys mentioned ‘experience’ and ‘skills’ which to me suggests they have internalised ‘school-speak’ about good opportunities for job experience or “credentializing” (Buckingham, 2003:189); but he quickly reverts to a more personal
motivation. Furstenau’s concept of “access to the movie-dream” (2009:7) is in evidence here.

...  

Lyall: Erm, I think I thought I was gonna learn a bit... some more acting skills...yeah... maybe a bit more filming as well. I was intrigued.

For Lyall film is about acting and his preference for ‘top deck’ rather than ‘engine room’ activities is illustrated by the manner in which he responds to questions. Whilst being interviewed he seems to ‘deliver his lines’ rather than converse.

...  

Tim: Um, I just wanted to make a film ... so.....(pause)

Tim is comfortable with “synaesthetic experience” (Sefton-Green 2005:109), he displayed the attributes of a ‘natural’ audiovisual choreographer. It was his cut that was selected early on in the editing process for screening in Paris. He is a boy of few words, no gloss here, just the simple facts suggesting some organic impulse he doesn’t fully comprehend himself. Perhaps his talent is for assimilating to cultural norms.

Interviewer: What inspired you to want to do that?

Tim: I dunno ... I just....(pause)

Lyall: I think Raf (Tim) means like, he was interested like by the film, I mean so he just wanted to see how it was like to make one,

Lyall interjects, assuming a spokesperson’s role and doesn’t really add much, except his voice to the recording.

...

Bob: I knew what I wanted to do, I think like, I wanted to gain experience from it I can use in later life, even if I didn’t go into the film industry ... I think in a way it helps you in all aspects once you’ve done it and I think it really broadens your perspective on life... your attitude on something ... if n like your visual interpretation of stuff is different

Bob is the most mature and articulate member of the group and assumed the role of Director from the start. Again there is a reference to gaining experience but qualified this time in relation to life. By using such words as perspective, attitude, and interpretation, Bob seems to have an understanding of context and the constructed nature of media texts. His father is a film-maker and so his confident manner may spring from his own family context.

Interviewer: So what... how do you think this whole experience has er, might have influenced other areas of your life...

Bob: Er, like, I think if I wanted to think of a certain image or something ... I know I’d think of that image and then through the film workshop the mentors that we had would tell us how to do that or a shortcut to make it look like this and so it makes you think about your Art more and what you want people to feel from what you’re doing, so...

Bob again displays intellectual acuity as regards the power of editing to influence audience perception. He suggests that guidance from film-making experts helps to realise his vision to affect the audience in specific ways. See Bob talking about the editing process and the audience: Ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 2:45 mins. This level of heightened awareness illustrates Buckingham’s notion of de-centering mentioned
earlier as well as the value of time spent articulating and finding solutions to design problems.

**Interviewer:** So the other person?

**Bob:** Yeah, also, I think like erm if I was to do English or something, just working with stories and stuff which make you ... with your ... more on your mind and so you might want to progress that further.

As well as influencing his Art output, Bob mentions that film-making has developed his storytelling instincts in English. The phrase *more on your mind* is telling and illustrates what Reid et al transposed from the context of writing to that of editing: “the act of juggling a number of simultaneous constraints” (2002:76, drawing on Flower and Hayes).

... 

**Lyall:** I think it makes me look at stories in a whole kind of new way by watching films and seeing how they’re made, it makes me understand like stories and films, just like, just that bit more and I kind of think like that’s a good skill to have.

Lyall echoes Bob’s comments and suggests that such a skill is interdisciplinary. I interviewed Morlette Lyndsey, (LNS English teacher and lecturer at the Institute of Education) and she corroborated the fact that Bob in particular brought a filmic sense to his narratives using advanced visualisation to enrich his writing. See Appendix 10 for an example of his written prose which she maintains is substantially influenced by his involvement in film production. She encouraged him to read Zusack’s “The Book Thief” and its portrayal of Death’s perspective. She felt that he may not have been motivated to read over 500 pages without the inspiration and framing of a filmic point of view. Ref. morlette4april2011.mp3 @ 9:20 > 11:20 mins.

I asked them to tell me about how it feels to be editing:

**Lyall:** Me personally I dread editing ... I’m sure probably that no-one here shares my opinion, but I just hate editing

Lyall makes clear his feelings about editing which in many ways debunks what is commonly perceived as a universal teen readiness to ‘get at the computer and start creating’. But this attitude has to be balanced against other possible contributory factors. It could be that: with extended access the novelty factor has worn off for him; he feels others in the group are better at it than him and so opts out; editing detracts from his identity as an actor; he enjoys contradicting what has been packaged as a positive experience or his level of self-direction is not as honed as the others.

**Interviewer:** That’s absolutely valid, give me why.

**Lyall:** I think, I’m not expecting it to be all action-packed, I just expect myself to be doing something like practical in the film, like I know editing is practical as well but I just prefer to be doing something like a stunt man or just being an actor, being an editor is just not my preferred position.

**Interviewer:** Could you be more precise about what it is that you just don’t like about it? I accept that you prefer to be in front of the camera...

**Lyall:** just the sitting down on the, you know, computer when you could be, you know, outside filming a shot again so it’s finally good and just.. I know this is kind of a stupid thing to say, but
I honestly... I know that there wouldn't be no film without no editing but I just don't see the real fun in it.

References to stunt men and practical action may indicate a need for physicality but observation and research data recorded later in this account contradict this assumption. I feel that Lyall would benefit from a different pedagogic approach offering more guidance and encouragement which would focus his powers of reflection and embody it on the screen.

**Interviewer:** OK. Does anyone disagree? ... (laughing) OK, go for it.

**Mali:** Erm, well, yeah, editing's not really supposed to be fun, it's just something you have to do in order to make the film look actually good, or stuff like that.

Mali’s agreement with Lyall is further evidence to suggest that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to media design processes. He needs more scaffolding than the software alone could offer and would have benefitted from concentrated one-to-one attention to move beyond mere sequencing of clips to adding more complex cut-aways, shot length variation and reaction shots.

...  

**Tim:** Erm well I enjoy editing, some people hate it, yeah and adding in all the music and putting the film together

Tim makes reference to the composite nature of film and the pleasures of integrating the whole. There’s a marked difference between interviewing Tim at the interface and interviewing Tim ... well... anywhere else. His increased confidence, sense of purpose and complete lack of self-consciousness in front of the screen is striking. See *Ins_shoot_editing.mov* @ 4:14 mins

**Interviewer:** yeah and what do you feel when you're actually in there, doing it, looking at the screen?

**Tim:** I just think of what could be done better, maybe we need to film that again or something.

Tim’s comment reveals the open-ended nature of the design process, the potential to keep on revising and refining. Tim’s speed of working is impressive and although he’s economical with his words he displays a dynamic, dialogic interplay with the screen. As Sefton-Green writes:

“digital software shows itself as an accessible social process locking a kind of ‘pedagogy’ into the relationship between screen and user .. a dialogue between producer and production” (2005:109)

Learners like Tim signal the need for a deeper understanding of the processes of selecting and combining from a database, in short, the anatomy of software and its impact on the imagination. Buckingham also raises the question of whether:

“the level of control afforded by digital technology somehow automatically encourages a more systematic approach” (2003:185) See *Ins_shoot_editing.mov* @ 4:30 mins

**Interviewer:** Right OK, and you know when you make decisions, editing decisions ... what do you think informs whether it’s a good or a bad editing decision?

**Tim:** whether people like it!
Like Bob, Tim is aware of audience enjoyment and interpretation. Although this reveals a certain need for endorsement, over time and with mass accumulated approval this may well morph into confidence with his own style of output. The boys exemplify Jenkins (2011) assertion that:

“Media education needs to be framed for participants, a role distinct from yet closely related to both producers and consumers as they were classically conceived.”

http://www.manifestoformediaeducation.co.uk/2011/01/henryjenkins/

...

John: When you feel like it's not, you've got to like be, you've got to have a mindset, when you've got to think you're an audience member who's watching the film, and you've got to think about that... is this gonna look really cheesy or is this gonna look decent when they're watching it cos there's some shots like .. like making people cringe...

John also articulates the complexity of achieving something original, plausible and engaging that avoids cliche and conventional cheese. Feeling when a shot looks decent whilst rationally maintaining the mindset of the audience is the ultimate aspiration of the editor: see ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 2:54 mins. Indeed this could be said of all creative media output.

4.1ii The Creative: “… it has to flow”

Bob: um and I think when you're editing, the decision you make, if you look back it has to like flow with the rest of the film, it has to flow with how the characters are, what their personalities are like, how do they act ...

It is pleasing to hear Bob use the same conceit selected for my account in his description of flowing material. The boys are copying the conventions of continuity editing, which for some is an all-absorbing process, and for which the conditions for Csikszentmihalyi’s “flow” are perfectly pitched. Bob implies that through a process of revision, the organic whole will coalesce, not just visually but also conceptually. This is despite his initial reluctance to get on with the technical task of editing his cut. See:

ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 2:00 mins.

... You gotta have it like mixed up with lots, you gotta vary it up, cos if you don't in editing then it's just going to be boring to watch with nothing to catch your eye... I think the most difficult thing in editing are the tiny decisions you make, not the decision to put this shot in, it's like where to cut it, how long do you have the scene for, I mean those little ones that we don't think about as much are really difficult for me to decide cos I don't know what's perceived to be right, it's like unknown.

Interviewer: So what have you got to rely on?

Bob: I think your gut helps a lot ...

Here Bob seems to perfectly encapsulate Sennett’s notion of the “intuitive leap” (2008:209) outlined on p.20 of this account. It is the creative process of sequencing “twined presence(s)” (ibid) of at least two elements and making a series of tiny decisions based on gut feeling. His sticking point seems to be his capacity for risk-taking - to allow himself to feel the “surprise” (ibid) of a unique juxtaposition and the “gravity” (ibid), in the sense of ‘fall’, of a constraint. His potential for spontaneity possibly suffers from his desire to be thorough, as evidenced in the transcript and in the clip of him editing, see ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 2:30 mins. This is the facilitator’s cue to steer him through that unknown territory and encourage faith in improvisation.
Lyall’s clip was the most revealing in terms of learning progression and Csikszentmihalyi’s “flow”. An apathetic, seemingly under-confident, resigned attitude changed over the course of a few minutes to one of engagement and pride in his work, to the extent that he offered his edit as the one to be viewed by the class at the end of the session. See Appendix 9 for a model of suggested levels of progression towards a ‘flowing’ state of productivity.

Coaxing Lyall into action could also demonstrate the Vygotskian principle of the externalisation of higher abstract thinking through guided experimental play. It may also be the case that talking and performing to camera facilitated Lyall’s passage from half-hearted, defensive group member (at this particular stage in the film making process at any rate, as elsewhere he made positive contributions and enjoyed the role of spokesperson) to assertive, creative and participative editor. See ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 22:10 mins.

4.1ii The Social – “...a place to put all our feelings”

Marion Hampton, Head of the SEN unit at Lambeth Academy (LA), enthusiastically advocates media production specifically for those children struggling within the mainstream curriculum. She preferred not to be recorded whilst being interviewed and so I made notes on her comments and observations. It is important to point out at this stage that there were three main LA SEN participants on the film project - Simon, Paul and Stephen. Paul and Stephen had low-functioning autism and whilst it would have been a fascinating study to have exclusively focused on their particular engagement with media production, it is beyond the scope of this account to do diligent service to such a much-needed area of research.

I have however included in my film clip a short exchange with Paul whilst the others were editing, which offers a glimpse of their different levels of sophistication and engagement. See ins_shoot_editing.mov @ 5:12 mins > 7:19 mins. One thing I would highlight is Paul’s obsession with Hitchcock; he would routinely bring his paperback of Hitchcock synopses to the Wednesday sessions and allude to them over the weeks, never missing an opportunity for lengthy plot discussions with any new adult. This was sometimes tricky to negotiate because of Paul’s speech impediment, but it represented an enjoyable social moment for Paul, who found the universality of Hitchcock a useful communicative point of access. In fact he would much rather talk about Hitchcock or the TV drama ‘Waterloo Road’ than concentrate on any of the stages in the film-making process, which is an interesting comment on the scope for social learning inherent in all aspects of moving image literacy.

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My discussion with Marion centered on Simon and his progress from when he first arrived in her unit to the present. In his primary years he had behavioural problems with fits of temper and anti-social tendencies which ultimately resulted in permanent exclusion. Interestingly, from an audio recorded interview I conducted with him within the unit, he is happy to talk about ‘the then and the now’ and looks back at himself as a different person who used to lose his temper but can now control it. Marion is convinced that sustained involvement with creative media projects has given him both a sense of belonging and a voice - an alternative means of self-expression that may otherwise have remained dormant.

I have chosen to concentrate on Simon in this social section of the data analysis for if ever there was an ambassador for the social aspects of learning, it is he. Although perhaps less articulate and less vocal than the LNS boys, his contribution to the group dynamic was always upbeat and fun. We see this in his decision to interpret one of the film exercises as a comedy routine with appropriately comic sound effects and music.

See the last of the four Youtube clips listed here http://markreid1895.wordpress.com/2010/12/09/session-4—lambeth-clc—11210/ - whereas the LNS boys chose to work with the tropes of more serious thriller/mystery genres. He can also be seen playfully mucking around with the other boys ‘on set’ in between shoots, but would remain on task and focused when required. See photo with Simon on the right, checking out Bob setting up a football trick shot. See lns_shoot_editing.mov @ 00:15 secs. His enhanced sense of sociability is also witnessed on his course evaluation sheet for the CLC. See Appendix 11.

Simon’s answers often reflect the social benefits of his involvement with the project and with the LNS boys. I asked him about his initial expectations:
**Int:** So what did you feel was going to happen?

I avoid the use of the word *think* in favour of *feel* as I think it is less challenging phraseology and more likely to produce rich commentary, especially at the beginning of an interview when he may have been feeling ill at ease.

**Simon:** I didn’t think there was gonna be another school there. So when I saw another school, I thought like... ooh, who are these people? So I got kind of shy when I saw them...

**Int:** Mm

**Simon:** I don’t like ... like ... talking to people I don’t know.

... which is gratifying to hear in the context of a one-to-one interview with a Year 9 boy in an ethnographic study - I appear to have gained his trust. This apparent lack of confidence does however remain ambiguous as later in the interview, *simon_lambeth_interview.mp3 @ 26 mins >*, he claims he would have the confidence to approach an outdoor film crew and ask what was going on. An indication that by the end of the film making process his confidence may have “grown” substantially. Indeed he finished my sentence for me when I asked him about it here: *simon_lambeth_interview.mp3 @ 26:35 mins.*

**Int:** But would you say things have changed now on that score?

**Simon:** Yeah, I think we’re mates now.

Simon appreciates being part of a group and it could be that he felt quite isolated within the Lambeth contingent because some of the others peeled off and lost interest. However, Simon successfully positioned himself in the group and maintained good relations with LNS and the boys from Lambeth with ASD.

**Int:** ... Er, what would you say are any other things that have changed, do you think, in that time?

**Simon:** Erm, I dunno .... Just the way I feel about that...

**Int:** Yeah

**Simon:** Like, it's like, cos some people, like, Nathan and them people, Victor, they came for a couple of weeks and they stopped cos they thought it was boring.

Simon distinguishes himself from *them people* and is proud of his staying power. He mentions at various points the amount of sustained *effort* that is required to produce something of value. This suggests that his work with Marion in previous film projects has lain firm foundations as regards what can be gained from high levels of commitment and engagement.

**Int:** Right, yeah

**Simon:** But I’m interested in like all the stuff about it, like the practical stuff

A recurrent theme in media production is indeed the allure of the *practical stuff*, the pleasing latitude for hands-on craftwork. Sennett’s breakdown of the forces at work whilst crafting an artefact belies the utilitarian associations of ‘manual labour’ and ‘working with your hands’. Moreover, Merleau Ponty in his 1964 observations on painting, poetically exalts hand-eye *co-ordination*; formulations which can equally be transposed to the art of editing, as referenced by Furstenau and Mackenzie (2009):
“‘The eye is an instrument that moves itself, a means which invents its own ends; it is that which has been moved by some impact of the world, which it then restores to the visible through the offices of an agile hand.’ “(2009:18)

... 

**Int:** Would you say that you bring in any of your own experience, from your own life into it?

Furstenau and MacKenzie discuss the impact of the video editor through which “eye plus hand restores something to the visible and audible world.” (2009:19), so how empowering would it be if that something to restore could be sourced from your own experience. A chance to re-work and re-present raw, personal, unfiltered and unmediated experience.

**Simon:** ... I liked to fight, liked to fight

**Int:** You **like** to fight or you **liked** to fight?

**Simon:** I liked

**Int:** You **liked, past tense.** Well you mentioned that actually... it was brought up on the football pitch, when we were doing the fight scene and you mentioned that you used to like fighting. Erm, so... you don't... you're not interested in that any more or..

I hesitate because I’m not sure how much he’s prepared to talk about this.

**Simon:** I haven’t had a fight in ages.

**Int:** Great!

**Simon:** Cos I’ve learned how to control my temper now.

Simon’s phraseology suggests that the potential for fighting will always be there, it’s a question of control. Indeed control and focus are fundamental to producing successful media texts – a dimension of film-making to which Simon surrenders himself willingly. Many of the LNS boys took more coaxing in this respect when it came to editing.

**Int:** Ah, interesting... and do you think there might have been periods over the past few months where you might have, I don’t know, somehow brought that experience into this process?

**Simon:** Kind of like... er.. giving the... information like how someone gets angry, angry about what someone else is saying .. or what their actions are.

The boys made a film exploring ‘small man syndrome’: the sad, loner who seeks to join and be accepted by a group of footballing friends and gets frustrated and aggressive in the process. During filming, Emma tried to elicit how exactly the fight scene might commence. Knowing his background I glanced at Simon and gestured with my head that he might have something to contribute; he then physically stepped forward, disclosed to everyone how his fighting experience had led to exclusion and offered advice on how this scene might be choreographed.

Simon was able to de-centre and assertively direct both dialogue and action in the capacity of an expert adviser; his identity and his past behaviour had been positively recast in an instant. The scene re-enacted what previously, in real life, would have been fraught and chaotic.

**Int:** Yeah, you offered some suggestions, didn’t you, about how that might work, yeah, so er, it’s quite good, I think, isn’t it to bring your own stuff to the table, as it were.
Simon: ...like everyone in the group has different views ... and like, they bring different stuff, so like, it’s a place to put all our feelings into one little film.

With democratic awareness, Simon again makes reference to the group and the value of everyone’s individual contributions. He is explicitly sensitive to film as a unique place to collaboratively articulate their feelings. This motif recalls Bourdieu’s notion of “habitus”, the territory where objective structures and subjective agency tussle to make meaning and also where pedagogy, as Burn argues (drawing on Buckingham and Sefton-Green), can be positioned as “a mediating force” (2009:11).

Int: Yeah. You’re absolutely right, and that makes it... what does that make it?

Simon: Group work

Int: Yeah, group work. I think that’s the other thing about film-making isn’t it? It involves lots of people doing different things, erm... students and adults. What do you think about our group... as a group?

Simon: Erm, which group? It’s like we only met a couple of months ago but it’s like we’ve known each other for a couple of years now. It feels weird.

Group work has a ring of ‘school-speak’ about it and it may well be that he has picked this up in his regular Wednesday afternoon sessions off-timetable in Marion’s unit. Learning collaboratively without recourse to hierarchical grouping allows Simon’s sociability to emerge and despite its weirdness he seems to appreciate a sense of abnormal intensity. I watched Simon interacting with younger children in the LA SEN unit one morning and it is clear he enjoys his mentor status. He remains a shining example of what can be achieved with access to sustained media production practices, always bearing in mind that his anger has not necessarily been ‘cured’ but is being managed in an ongoing fashion.

Int: It’s that every week thing, isn’t it? I know it’s great that you’ve come every week, cos you don’t have to do you?

Simon: I don’t have to, but I just enjoy it.

... Of the Paris trip:

Simon: My mum said can we come and I went ‘No!’, (laughs) I went “No!” this is my time!

Int: This is your what?

Simon: This is my time!

Int: Your time, well exactly, this is your special thing.

Going to Paris was always a significant draw for Simon. It was the first thing he mentioned at the beginning of the interview and we resumed the topic at the end. The above snippet indicates how empowered Simon feels over his film time. He exhibits a heightened sense of ownership in terms of time and place; the fact that Paris is one of those places raises aspirations and introduces an exciting cultural dimension for all the boys... and adults.
4.1iv The Cultural

The boys describe their film as an exploration of ‘small man syndrome’ and it was part of the Cinématèque brief to cut out a significant scene of the film at the end, so as to create an enigma and play with constraints. Interestingly, the boys had chosen to lose the fight scene even before this part of the brief had been revealed. This is significant because when the LNS boys started their filming activities two years ago, whilst elaborating the theme of camera movement they enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to film explicit fight sequences in the BFI corridors. Their decision to cut such a scene and leave it to the imagination of the audience could signal progress in terms of a more sophisticated and subtle approach to film-making. See the last Youtube link on this page [http://markreid1895.wordpress.com/2011/06/09/paris-cinematheque-screening-8611/] to view the final film, Tim’s edit, which was screened in Paris (4 minutes).

It could be that through critical viewing of film clips throughout the project (for example, the Cohen brothers, “No Country for Old Men”, see [blog post http://markreid1895.wordpress.com/2010/12/09/session-4—lambeth-clc—11210/]) and the direction of film-maker, Emma Sullivan, their output was influenced by the stylistic qualities of independent film-making as distinct from the conventions of mainstream Hollywood movies or TV drama, styles of output which, according to Alain Bergala, overtly show everything. The electronic sampling that makes up the soundtrack, however, was Tim’s own personal choice – an indication that he enjoys the bass driven beats of contemporary dub-step. The coupling of external cultural influences and internalised popular culture is constitutive of Williams’ “lived culture”.

I started this Cultural section with an examination of the style and content of the boys’ film in order to introduce how Williams’ “lived culture” evolves into “recorded culture” and media education’s vital role in ensuring young people’s participation in that process. Drawing on Hodge and Kress, Burn & Durran also re-assess the “selective tradition” – the third dimension of Williams’ tripartite structure of culture - concluding that:

“culturally valued texts become so through a historical accretion of competing commentary.” (2007:10)
Far from being separate phenomena, the *lived*, the *recorded* and the *selective* are intertwined, even more so in the digital age, feeding off each other in a hybrid, undisciplined, barrier-busting manner. As mentioned earlier, popular music seems to have found a legitimate, celebratory route to genre-bending, most recently seen and heard in the collaboration between the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and Dubstep/Drum n Bass outfit ‘Nero’ - [http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/sessions/2011-06-06_nerosdubstepsymphony](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/sessions/2011-06-06_nerosdubstepsymphony) but when it comes to the educational sphere, it seems there are too many diverging agendas, value structures and competing forces for progressive media education to gain smooth passage.

At certain stages of the Paris project various tensions manifested themselves: disparate discourses scraped up against each other likes tectonic plates. Emma, the teacher/filmmaker, was concerned about how much input to give the boys and how much latitude? How much re-editing of imperfect work versus letting it be? How much to consider professional reputation – given the context of its distribution – set against autonomous student-empowerment? How much teacherly order as opposed to relaxed spontaneity in lessons? How much technical teaching and how much independent experimentation? For the CLC evaluation submitted to Paris, Emma commented on some of these tensions:

“*It is always tempting to improve their work - but I think this would be a mistake. They have to learn that it is hard work and you have to be very organised and precise with filmmaking. If I tidied up their edit and added better music/sound I don’t think they would have understood necessarily why it was better. This film was entirely of their own making, and I think therefore their next film will be better for it.*”

Bob, the self-elected *student* spokesperson, at first expressed dissatisfaction with the highly constrained parameters of the Cinématèque film exercises - for example: ‘*A passes through a space and gives something to B, all in close-up*’ - interpreting the French pedagogical approach as mistrust in his and his peers’ versatility as young filmmakers:

*Bob:* ... *they’re trying to direct us in the right way but in that I think they’ve got a low opinion of what we can, us as teenagers, can view in film and what we can create in film and by having that structure it kind of breaks down our imagination a bit ... I think it would also be more personal to us cos it would be made through our minds*
Later however he contradicts himself by saying that perhaps they needed to fulfill the stringent briefs in order to nurture the creative empowerment that would fuel their future endeavours:

*Bob:* But if I hadn’t done this first then maybe I wouldn’t have had the perception to do something aside from action; but now that I have done it, I’d like a little bit more space ... I’m glad we had those boundaries cos now we know we can do something more.

During the mid-project screening and the final screening, both in Paris, the Cinématèque facilitator and the audience asked questions concerning the students’ choice of sound. Over a couple of the UK films, students from LNS and St. Catherine’s – a Catholic Girls Secondary in Bexleyheath, one of the three UK schools involved - had lain a heavy electronic soundtrack. It was suggested by some that these choices might be inappropriate for the project as a whole which demanded more subtlety, artistry and editorial guidance. Jack Hayter, the teacher/film-maker at St. Catherine’s, was animated in his defence of the girls’ work, asserting their right to interpret the theme as they saw fit.

Similarly, Tim was defensive when asked to comment on his choice of electronic samples from the Garageband library, stating that there wasn’t much time nor much choice. There seemed to be a clash between the French preference for a nuanced, more impressionistic style of independent film-making and the British contingent’s inclination towards sanctioned ‘freedom’ of expression - albeit drawn from the rigid parameters set by global digital software developers and informed by popular culture. Such are the more granular observations in relation to shifts in “lived” cultural trends, however, what may endure in “recorded culture” is the event itself.

There was a school-like meritocratic undercurrent running through the project: the Cinématèque invites back the participants they feel have performed well and excludes others, with consideration given to how much the participating school may have contributed to the French blog and to what extent the “règles du jeu” have been followed. Nevertheless the fact that hundreds of young Europeans congregated, watched one another’s films on the same theme and discussed their work in a multilingual context, is an arresting cultural achievement. An achievement which continues to make full use of the Cinématèque’s institutional gravitas to bring Alain
Bergala’s annual visionary spectacle to fruition. Perhaps only an institution with a sense of something to preserve would conceive of such a unique, ambitious and international venture in the first place?

At the risk of extolling the redemptive powers of media production processes, it has been a privilege to track a discernible path between the international partners’ thematic input session in November 2010 (see Parisian lecture notes http://markreid1895.wordpress.com/2010/11/16/bergala-notes-from-paris/) and several months later, relate that to the social development and scholarly ambitions of a formerly excluded child. See simon_lambeth_interview.mp3 @ 27:40 mins.

4.2 Case Study B - Telferscot Primary School (TPS) - BFI & Southbank Centre ‘Cultural Campus’

The Cultural Campus is an initiative involving national institution partnerships and local schools, the purpose being to promote learning and socio-cultural understanding beyond the classroom and between institutions. The education departments of the BFI and Southbank Centre (SBC) teamed up with Lambeth City Learning Centre (LCLC) and a few local schools to deliver the school curriculum over a few specified weeks. The project is ongoing and my analysis centers on Telferscot Primary School (TPS), in Balham South London, from January 2011.

Beverley Keyte and her Year 4 class, under the guidance of Fran Welch the Assistant Head, spent two days a week in and around the Southbank complex for the first 6 weeks of the Spring term 2011. The idea was for the children to experience the entire Southbank environment as their ‘classroom’ for this period and display their creative output as part of the ‘Festival of Britain’ exhibition. Fran drew up an integrated programme of arts and media activities – highly original and multimodal in nature - under the theme ‘Feel the Beat of London Life’ which was to underpin its creative content as well as reflect the diverse footfall of visitors to the Southbank. In most cases, Fran’s thematic approach was a stimulating source of inspiration for the children and of ‘possibility thinking’ for the teachers. Activities included: writing narratives illustrated with surreal photoshopped collages of their own photos; performing their
poetry in front a time-lapsed film using green screen technology; being filmed busking their poems outside the RFH; visiting the BFI Mediathèque and watching films; creating wordle http://www.wordle.net/ compositions; producing podcasts and blog postings; sound collection & recording for later editing.

4.2i The Critical – “It feels like work, but fun”
Near the end of the project I interviewed a group of three higher achieving girls, interested to know what and how they were learning. They were in the playground assessing my photographs taken during four days of observation and I videoed the first part of it and for practical reasons audio-recorded the rest. I had asked them to annotate the photos with any memories, comments or observations. See Appendix 8 for example photos and their comments. This transcript picks up the latter half of the conversation and makes reference to various sections of the video:

Interviewer: Did you feel as though you were doing a lot of playing?

... this is how it looked to me because the input seemed like a seamless stream of linked fun activities, however as is often the case in qualitative research ...

Sarah: No, I felt as though I was doing lots of working.

... one’s assumptions are challenged from the outset, thankfully. Sarah emphatically sets up a dialectic between working and playing and by repeating my sentence structure it is clear she has strong feelings about the project. From this and later comments, it strikes me that this is a girl who likes known parameters and for whom the fluidity of this project may not have worked so well.

Int: Really?

Milly: Yeah, so did I!

Milly’s agreement stems from an intensity of engagement in particular aspects of the project rather than from any negative feeling.

Jemima: It feels like work, but fun.

Jemima has nothing but praise for the Cultural Campus and is eager to redress the balance in favour of fun. At the same time, however, the dialectic is maintained with the word but. This same distinction is drawn by another child in the video, who looks at a photograph of their Maths lesson and comments: “That was when we were working” See telferscot_culturalcampus_interview.mov @ 00:10 secs

Sarah: I think it feels like work, work, work, hard, hard, hard

Sarah maintains her position in the most rhetorical manner. Could it be that she is challenged by group work? dealing with change? making an extra effort or using her imagination?
Int: Yeah, but did you enjoy it?

Sarah: um... er....average...

Int: Average type...

Sarah’s disinterest is a refreshingly honest response and a testament to how young people’s responses are by no means homogenous. No matter how much adult time and effort invested, or opportunities or resources made available, Sarah reminds us that arts programmes of this nature are not necessarily the universal golden ticket and there will always be room for diversification and widening of appeal.

Jemima: It was fun work though, it was fun work though

Jemima is once again keen to make her voice heard and restore the positive. She was particularly enthusiastic most of the time. Indeed after a session recalling all the various creative and media-related activities that the children had undertaken over the previous weeks, she got up and exclaimed “Thank you world! This has been the best day ever!” See telferscot_culturalcampus_interview.mov @ 04:48 mins She also wrote “I love life!” on one of the photos a couple of weeks later. (See Appendix 8b)

Sarah: But I prefer being at school sometimes because I’m tired

Sarah will not be swayed by Jemima’s optimism and perhaps the daily commute to the Southbank ‘to be put to work’ was just too much for her, preferring the predictable daily school routine closer to home.

...

Int: Do you think anything’s erm.. changed since you started the...?

The vagueness of the question is intended to generate as varied a response as possible, hopefully one that is personalised and heartfelt.

Jemima: Yeah a lot!

Milly: A lot

Int: What's changed?

Milly: I've learnt so much about England

Jemima: and Indonesia

Both Milly and Jemima respond with a characteristic willingness to learn. What has changed for them is the extent to which they have become more knowledgeable individuals and their critical awareness is primed to make the most of opportunities as they arise. They even suggest the next one should take place in Paris because they know so much about England now.

...

Sarah: What do you mean what's changed?

With a natural sense of pragmatism, Sarah asks for clarification, she does not accept the vagueness of the question and needs specifics.

Int: I mean is there anything different now to ... the way you think about things?

Sarah: Do you mean like if I have learnt anything?
Int: Yeah

Sarah: Erm, yeah, about Indonesian instruments, the Southbank and the Festival of Britain and stuff

There’s a sense of reeling off a list here, of going through the motions. The CLC noted that some of the children were unclear about their ultimate aim i.e. to produce an art installation in Royal Festival Hall exhibition space, and that this objective needed to be explained on a number of occasions. Perhaps Sarah is a child who needs context in order to fully engage and perhaps more input as to why an art installation is considered a good thing in the first place.

It is a further reminder that children need to be regarded as individuals where possible and although for most people collaborative, immersive arts projects might be fun in and of themselves, other more critically engaged children may need contextualisation and a rationale. Indeed, just as History has us questioning the reliability of sources, we could all benefit from a focus on context in the Arts, the better to start making connections between cultural institutions and the education sector.

Int: ... and what about the performing and all that, the poems, and the sketching, the photoshopping?

Milly: I know right now that I want to be a poet when I’m older

Recalling Simon at LA, here’s another unprompted, heartfelt and gratifying reference to future aspiration. This comment exemplifies Milly’s having reached Vygotsky's “zone of proximal development” (Vygotsky 1978:90). She has enjoyed being stretched beyond her comfort zone and has a thirst for more.

Sarah: Really? You want to be a poet?

This was the only time in the interview that Sarah responded with anything other than indifference. Her zone lies elsewhere. From her surprised tone, perhaps she’s more of a scientist and her needs might have been met with more of a science focus?

4.2ii The Creative – “I never knew elevators could sing!”

Throughout the project media production was seamlessly integrated into the literacy and arts curriculum; it was not bolted on with a sense of privilege or reward, nor taught discreetly as an IT lesson, but woven sensitively into other activities without fanfare. Photoshop montage was used as a means through which a surreal narrative – inspired by their own photographs and other found resources – could be written and recorded in their sketchbooks.
Having completed research at the Poetry Library, their London poems were lifted off the page and embodied through filmed performances outside the RFH. Photo. The children were each given the chance to have a go at filming and made decisions about camera distance based on the content of each poem.

A further opportunity for public display was afforded by the use of time-lapsed Southbank scenes as a backdrop whilst they performed their poems in the foreground with accompanying dramatic gestures. See telferscot_culturalcampus_interview.mov @
05:02 mins onwards. This video then ran like a commentary to the rest of their “Festival of Britain” installation. Children watched the video of themselves performing repeatedly, indicating that this is a medium of compelling interest to them, one which generates a sense of familiarity, strangeness and delight. As already stated, such an ambiguous terrain is well-suited for pedagogic intervention in multi-disciplinary educational contexts.

It is clear from the videoed poems that the normal hierarchical structures inherent in traditional literacy teaching have been unsettled: the emphasis is not on how well you can inscribe but on how well you can communicate your thoughts and ideas rhetorically, through gesture and voice. What surfaces is not the individual aptitude of the children but their collective, uninhibited willingness to experience wonder, to indulge their imagination and produce an entertaining group performance, even from the most challenged and ordinarily challenging children. As earlier, see telferscot_culturalcampus_interview.mov @ 05:02 mins and the ensuing 4 mins.

The link between motivated creative engagement and opportunities for public performance is explicitly revealed in this exercise. Arguably much of its success was down to the opportunities for recursive rehearsal afforded by creative media processes: you do not make and correct mistakes in a traceable way, you experiment and overlay design revisions, the route is invisible and immaterial – an empowering experience, especially for struggling children. Integrated immersion in an environment combining established literacy and craft practices, digital media processes, and oral and gestural performance has proved fertile territory for the creation and sharing of quality
texts and for the inspiring of confidence.

4.2iii The Socio-cultural - “It felt like I’m at home”

It was difficult to separate the social and cultural benefits of this case study as they overlapped in so many respects, not least because the setting was a major European purveyor of culture. Both Beverley and Fran reported significant socio-cultural benefits for them, for the children and for the school. The school has a history of Arts projects involving the local school community and innovative animation projects and as such it was primed for taking risks. Indeed Fran had herself been educated in an unorthodox manner where integrated, non-subject driven content was central. During my interview with her, she was impressed with being given so much freedom, so much in the way of resources and so much expert back-up: “At no point did they say ‘No!’”. For Bev also, the Year 4 teacher at the coal-face of delivery and logistics, it was a dream team fuelled by flow.

At the outset Bev said she would have walked away from the project given the chance because of her perceived lack of control over it, however, she gradually began to see how all the different activities were coming together and the concomitant effect on the children:

“I really do think their self confidence and their belief in what they can do has really improved ... and they’re proud of what they’ve done. I think they’ve come together as a whole class. Really great. Supporting each other on the interviews, you know, really helping, helping Harvey come up with a poem, they’ve gelled together, really worked well together as a class... It’s been an amazing thing.”

When asked if she could have changed anything, Bev merely said that she would like recognition, almost absolution in fact, that she would perhaps not have time to cover the ICT topic for that term... which shows the pressure that most teachers are under to ‘sign off’ chunks of content in a timely fashion. The overall irony being that there had been an overwhelming accumulation of learning for all concerned in the areas of information, communication and technology. Media education is as much about the teacher’s ongoing willingness to learn and grow and Bev was a great example of this.

A further consideration in terms of enhanced engagement in media-related
educational practice is spatial arrangement and the physical environment in which children are immersed. Whilst the children were annotating the photos I videoed the group of girls in the audio transcript above and asked them how the photos (featuring locations rather than events) made them feel. Milly was unhesitant in her appraisal: “It felt like I’m at home”. There is an interesting mix of tenses here, as if the feeling, as prompted by the photo, was still fresh weeks later. See telferscot_culturalcampus_interview.mov @ 03:06 mins.

As opposed to a one-off, this was a sustained project. Bev noted how much the children grew into the Southbank Centre: “Their confidence at using the Southbank is amazing, they believe it to be theirs”. A fact corroborated by Fran who received an email from parents whose child, on the strength of this project, had taken them to the Centre and given them “a guided tour”. There was an overwhelming sense that the children had claimed this public space as their own: this was seen in the way they would settle into a particular ‘lunch space’ and interact with the area (photo1 below); the way they went from space to space and up and down stairs in an orderly, confident, chatty fashion (photo 2); also in the way they would settle down to work in groups (sometimes lying on the floor) in whatever space was allocated to them within the building (photos 3 & 4) without recourse to asking for permission, which had notably been the case at the start of the project.

Photo 3 shows the children planning how their artwork and media creations could be publicly displayed: they are making co-design choices in the vicinity of toddlers, grandparents and chatting adults in a bar. This is mobile, relevant and engaged learning in a real-life context. Although most boroughs are not blessed with the resources of an international Arts Centre, this project is testament to the impact of committed institutional partnerships and restoring executive status to the teacher. It is the teacher leading the process, not the expert and this is the premise on which such a project could be more broadly replicated.
4.3 Case Study C – St Elizabeth Primary School (SEPS)

When I started working at SEPS it was with ‘gifted and talented’ children; my ICT-related skills were earmarked to cater for the higher order thinking of more able children. This may well be a legitimate expenditure of school funds, however, my personal interest lies with the less able children and my conviction that digital processes can to some extent stimulate their heretofore dormant gifts and talents.

After two years of film-making experience, 14 year old Bob from LNS, has this to say on simplicity in film making:

“If I simplify the story then if I make it sort of simple enough then I can make it look more advanced in the way I shoot it, if you have a simple enough story then like you can make really good and fantastic shots around it, and make the film sort of… elevated in a way”

Bob understands that cinematic representation is not all about overt showing and literal telling. Recalling Bergala’s hiding/revealing theme, it’s about the thoughtful and
tightly wrought crafting of a scene. With ‘film-maker as manipulator’ in mind, I attended the 2010 LATE (London Association for Teachers of English)/BFI Conference on Re-framing Poetry, where Michael Rosen presented the case for the learning that can come from Performing a Poem http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk/ and filming it with simple gestures. I took this a step further and had a small group of SEPS Year 6 children with low literacy skills editing their own performed poems with i-Movie. The children had been studying the World War 2 Evacuation and had written a short poem from the evacuee’s point of view. We had sourced photographs, found web movie footage and most groups had produced a shot list from which they created a moving image representation of their poem. We discussed camera distance and the use of visual metaphors to express certain concepts and emotions. For example, Taylor came up with a close-up of hands fumbling a tissue for sadness and receding footsteps for saying good-bye. See Appendix 4a & 4b for shot lists.

Chloe, Elijah and Tyler’s poems, accessible here http://www.stelizabeth.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=203&Itemid=204, are good examples of what can be achieved with traditional literacy input and some technical guidance, but mainly with these children’s existing understanding of the medium of film and their capacity to be social and supportive.

4.3i Critical Creators: “…they made it go like a shadow away”

As regards the teacher, any planning time involved in this type of ‘lesson’ takes the form of eliminating any barriers to flow. That is, the project is as set up as possible, making sure that photos, footage and clips are already sourced and loaded into recognisable categories and folders and that their “multimodal mixing desks” (Burn, p.20) are ready for action. Most importantly, the task must be simple and achievable with clear parameters; parameters which can and indeed should be stretched, preferably at their own pace and with some kind of accompanying rationale. If left to their own devices what results is a form of anarchic, playful mash-up as exemplified in max_mashup.mov. This is great fun and it could be argued that children should be given the latitude to experiment, play and map the possible in this way, as one might brainstorm a topic and then follow up with a more focussed exercise.
In an opportunistic moment when all the children were ‘on task’, I film them whilst editing and believe that the film demonstrates Csikszentmihalyi’s autonomous “flow” and Vygotsky’s “zone of proximal development” in action. From the beginning of *stelizabeth_film_project_editing.mov* to approx. 2:37 mins, a study of each pairs’ gestures, dialogue, voice-over performance and eye movements (from written poem to moving image representation, from viewer to timeline, from image bank to film project) reveals the children making a series of small collaborative judgements: these routinely disengaged children are absorbed in sustained critical evaluation. The foregrounded girl and boy are twins who rarely interact in the school context but are seen here working as a unit. At 2:16 mins Tyler is even semantically engaged: “… so we can use a still one for this”. Tyler is particularly taken with the editing process and relishes the opportunity to explore other features autonomously. At 3:00 mins I ask him a rather abstruse question: “Does it work?” and his triumphant “Yep!” is testament not only to his level of confidence but also to his understanding of what “work” actually means. I do not have to say: “Have you designed an aesthetically pleasing, meaningful, flowing combination of image, voice and sound for maximum audience engagement?”

Daniel invites Taylor to look at some functionality he uncovers and I ask him to expand. From 3:09 – 5:50 mins, he provides a commentary on the beauty of this medium for him as he edits a piece on his day at the BFI. Although he doesn’t have the vocabulary in places, he has a good conceptual grasp of the affordances of the software:

**Daniel:** You can … if you press these buttons, look, you can like, do the back, or pass it. If you want to change anything, you just like, you just gotta do that … cos look … if you make a mistake you can just take it out from the video.

**Int:** Brilliant!

**Daniel:** So, if you, if you make a mistake you can just go back, and just delete it and when you’ve deleted it, you can just watch your film over and then you’ve got a film with no more mistakes.

He talks to me with all the unselfconscious candour and enthusiasm of new discovery and in ways which perfectly rehearse Loveless’s “clusters of purposeful activity” referenced earlier. His preoccupation with correcting mistakes is an indication that they are a regular feature in his school world.

**Int:** Brilliant! Can I see it from the top? … Have you put your “Good Night Mr. Tom pictures in?

**Daniel:** Yeah

**Int:** Fantastic! How did you do that?

**Daniel:** Well we’ve got a picture library with all our pictures and… well … Miss got pictures from
Daniel consistently uses the first person plural indicating his appreciation of the group effort even though this is his own film. With more fluency in his delivery now that he can physically demonstrate it – he shows me how to drag photos into the project, select the appropriate music and record a voice-over. He has rediscovered the pleasures of matching, sifting and sorting that should ideally characterise infant play. Even Taylor next to him, has stopped to listen and watch. See stelizabeth_film_project_editing.mov @ 5:05 mins.

At 5:56 mins, Chloe signals her intentions. She has considered how best to proceed and revises her written poem on the basis of how her digital composition is progressing. In the normal course of a lesson I am told that Chloe is mouse-like and hardly speaks and when she does, you can barely hear her. In this context she finds a clear, decisive and commanding voice, sending her ordinarily more assertive “assistant” off to get her a pen. She also has plans for the sound: “It’s gonna be all over that bit, but the rest that don’t fit in, I’m just gonna cut it off” with a confident waft of the hand. The class teacher, Carolyn Linsday, also the Assistant Head, reports how empowered these children have become in comparison with when they started; the way they interact in this video is witness to the fact. Tyler knows that there were two ways of dragging sound into I-Movie – one where the sound underlies the whole piece and one that introduces finer editing control on top of the clip. From 7:12 mins onwards we see him peer teaching his sister on these issues in a mentor-like capacity as they explore a Rhythm and Blues take on the Evacuation...

Lara, in an impromptu fashion, picks up my Flip-camera and starts filming and interviewing. Meanwhile Daniel has found a quiet place on his own to continue his work; indeed this is the case with many of the children, they splinter and wander off to different parts of the available space and make their own creative, communicative bubble. At 7:57 mins Daniel resumes his commentator-style delivery and again, unprompted, explains to Lara that he has been reviewing Tyler’s film and looking for inspiration:

“Hi, I’m just watching Tyler, well he’s doing his poem for ...um.. his video which he’s just
finished ... and am watching these parts so I can get more ideas about my poem, so...
yeah. it’s all good you know and, yeah it’s really good and I’ve got some pictures of
Good Night Mr. Tom.”

Csikszentmihalyi’s theory that the state of ‘flow’ makes the activity worth doing for its
own sake without any explicit end-purpose (see Appendix 9 and “Intrinsic motivation”
on p. 89), is particularly resonant here and further reinforces the ways in which media
production can enhance engagement.

Brooks, drawing on Robert Burton, claims that thoughts are more like sensations whilst
one is ‘in the moment’:

“Feelings of knowing, correctness, conviction and certainty aren’t deliberate
conclusions and conscious choices. They are mental sensations that happen to
us.” (2011:95)

Lara then records Chloe’s finished film on the screen, introducing it in the manner of a
TV presenter. The amount of self-directed learning, as opposed to compliant, is striking
and I am left wondering how much more these ‘under-performing’ primary school
children could independently achieve with recursive access to mobile, digital
technologies. From the audio we hear Tyler is already conceiving of his next project in
relation to genre and audience; he feels the need to redress the emotional balance
from sad non-fiction to “comedy fiction”: see steliz_interview.mp3 @ 06:25 mins. With
more time I would have developed the issues they introduce around the plausibility of
fiction and the veracity of non-fiction, the imagination and written narratives
compared with the imagination and moving image (see steliz_interview.mp3 @ 03.30
mins & steliz_interview.mp3 @ 06:00 mins); arguments and debates on which they
appear to have strong views.

4.3ii The Socio-cultural – the 3D Facebook experience
As a social experiment I tasked the film group to introduce editing to some of the more
able children in their class. This was an attempt to dislodge existing literacy hierarchies
and have them explicitly exercising their new knowledge in a peer-to-peer social
environment. The experiment had mixed results. One group of girls seemed not to have the confidence to peer teach possibly because they felt sidelined by the more able children who simply got on with the task independently having been shown the basics.

One pairing worked well giving Taylor a boost of confidence as heard in the audio; when the group was asked if anything had surprised them about themselves, Taylor replied:

“that I was getting good at like doing the... like... on computer. Like, technology, yeah, computer technology. And it was surprising that.. doing it in class wasn’t... I didn’t pick up that much but when we done a movie, it was like, I picked up more things - learning " steliz_interview.mp3 @ 04:35 mins.

When asked whether their confidence had been affected after peer teaching:

“Yes! my confidence in showing people different things ... on computers ... and...and... like talking to them about my...my evacuation things” steliz_interview.mp3 @ 08:05 mins.

Her hesitations were the result of real reflection on her experience. She struggled to express herself verbally but this is a child who revealed a great deal of confidence and sensitivity with the camera, playing with high and low angles and moving camera work when I had not yet even mentioned these techniques. She entirely directed the filming of her brother Tyler’s poem. She felt that she was learning and says as much. This counters negative perceptions of children falling behind in the current system who a) need to be listened to and b) need to be given alternative ways to participate; indeed Taylor indicated that she was happy to have the opportunity to show and talk about her work to her peers.

Taylor’s vocalising of her willingness to reflect reminds me of what Buckingham has observed in relation to Vygotsky’s theories. Both stress the importance of:
“a dynamic (or ‘dialogic’) approach to teaching and learning, in which the students move back and forth between action and reflection ... (moving) progressively towards greater control over their own thought processes” (2003:143)

I would argue that the interview itself has formed part of the pedagogic process and that “moving between one language mode and another” (ibid) in a social process involving their teacher and peers has helped them relate chunks of knowledge, generalise about their experience, internalise it and move beyond it. Perhaps writing ought not to be so dominant a means of expression in terms of showing critical aptitude and engagement. As Ken Robinson pointed out in his TED talk http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_bring_on_the_revolution.html @ 4:10 mins referenced earlier, “education in a way dislocates very many people from their natural talents.”

I recently had the opportunity to experience being an utter novice in an entirely different physical discipline (Tai Chi) and now after several weeks I am able to show other complete beginners the basics. It was the most empowering experience I have felt in years. Tyler, the boy twin, was particularly vocal in the interview, keen to express his knowledge and aspirations. It seems he has experienced similar empowerment and is primed to learn more:

“I think I can teach people when I’m older, like kids in school, like you teached us and show them how to work the computers properly ... and go round the world. I might be a TV producer and can do advertisements, it would be easy to show people cos I know, I know what to do properly now.” steliz_interview.mp3 @ 02:10 mins.

I interpret working the computers properly as exposing him to a multimodal medium with relevance to his life beyond school, over which he has control and with which he can express sensitivities beyond those he can convey in words.

Daniel on the other hand, who was so willing to commentate and express himself on video weeks earlier clammed up and declined any invitation to talk on the audio. The
flow so evident on film had deserted him in this context. I believe he felt exposed in the company of more assertive class members which only goes to show the rhetorical “zones” he did reach whilst in the process of editing and the impact of context. As seen in the video, the children moved around helping each other, spontaneously appreciating and sharing knowledge and interacting in what appeared to be a co-operative and reassuring environment – quite literally a level playing field of their own making or a 3D (or is that 4D?) embodied Facebook experience.

Some support staff showed disapproval that these children should be allowed to attend the editing sessions seeing them as a treat to be earned or denied. There was a feeling that the film group were being rewarded with media fun for bad behaviour and on one occasion Taylor was absent from a session for this reason. It is understandable but unfortunate that media-related learning is at times perceived in this way. It is an attitude that undermines creative media practices, perpetuating the spurious idea that they are bonus privileged activities, or “dispensable embellishment(s)” (Jewitt, 2008:15, drawing on Millard & Marsh) to be delivered by transient experts. All too often they constitute a break from ‘what really matters’ - the delivery of largely passive institutional learning.

It is officially acknowledged that mandatory curriculum content is bloated with bolted-on directives:

“(it) was originally envisaged as a guide to study in key subjects … As it has developed, the National Curriculum has come to cover more subjects, prescribe more outcomes and take up more school time than originally intended.” (April 2011)


Thankfully there are school leadership teams, even in the most deprived areas as evidenced in my case studies, with the expertise to meet and exceed the standards set by the National Curriculum as well as the vision to exploit the playing fields beyond.
5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The mind is a plastic snow dome

I believe I have shown through my case studies that the manipulation of non-verbal modalities is an effective pedagogic method of engaging the mind, of sharpening our meaning-making faculties and of structuring the blizzard of everyday experience. Borrowing once more from Williams, our media texts are mini material “structures of feeling” projected into the world to be engaged with anew by willing agents. Like uniquely patterned snowflakes, they combine, recombine and accumulate into compacted layers. The “snow dome” (Geary 2011:16) reference above is lifted from Geary’s ode to metaphor “I is An Other” in which he expounds the often hidden and influential workings of metaphor in creative thought across disciplines.

He argues that the mind is at its most beautiful and productive when “it’s all shook up” (ibid), when seemingly disparate thoughts collide and make new connections. These abstract concepts are made more concrete in the work of a research group called “Adventures in Multimodality” http://muldisc.wordpress.com/class/course-description/ in the Dept. of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Charles Forceville is developing a course where students understand how metaphor structures language, audiovisual discourse, and cognition on the basis that:

“metaphor is nowadays considered a phenomenon of thought rather than language. But even today only few scholars examine non verbal metaphors”

Earlier I referenced Sennett’s reflections on the conditions under which intuition can thrive in the world of the craftsman and the ease with which these can be transposed into the environment of media production. Similarly Geary liberates metaphor from its traditional moorings as a literary device, identifying its enduring and subtle influence in a variety of discourses. He theorizes that:

“Our brains are always prospecting for patterns” (ibid:32), hard-wired as a matter of survival to look for things that are like other things. To ensure that this is the case, when a pattern is detected “the neurotransmitters responsible for
This may go some way to explaining the pleasures of flow and absorption in the processes of multimodal manipulation. Recombining the already familiar into audiovisual synaesthetic patterns connects our senses in “a meaningful cluster of purposeful activity” (Loveless p. 14). According to Geary, we humans are primordially urged not only to anticipate and perceive these patterns but to communicate and disseminate them. How can we encourage more even participation in the unconscious “blending” (Brooks 2011:248) of data and the conscious, relentless pattern-seeking/making of social relations?

To this end I have attested to the sensitive and structured deployment of media production processes as an essential component of mandatory curricula. Currently these activities, indeed cultural education activity as a whole, according to Mark Reid at BFI Education, is subject to disaggregated “project-ism” (Reid, 2011) fuelled by “extrinsic motivations” (Pink, 2011). In the context of business management, Pink distinguishes between 20th century “extrinsic motivators” in the form of enticement and threat and 21st century “intrinsic motivators” namely: mastery, autonomy and purpose. (See http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html / @ 12:40 mins.) Pink’s research findings echo Csikszentmihalyi’s in terms of the synergy between the mastery of a skill and the appropriateness of the challenge. Pink claims that appeals to subjectivity have a more profound effect on motivation than explicit rewards and his findings mirror my own in the field of media education.

Surely the ideology inherent in the ‘carrot and the stick’ model, or learning by rote, has run its course and a commitment to sustained, long term transformation, galvanized by “intrinsic motivation” must be researched and developed. Policy changes in favour of progressive media education will see all young people up to 14 years old gaining sustained access not only to the pleasures of creative digital manipulation but also to the rigours of critical interdisciplinary looking and thinking, to levels of awareness that will take them beyond themselves to ultimately perform as agents in the public realm.

This is ambitious thinking, some might say idealistic when faced with seemingly
implacable obstacles in relation to socio-economic constraints, inequalities and social deprivation. However, continual pressure must be brought to bear on education policy-makers to find imaginative routes to raising teacher and child aspiration. In this way “some impact of the world” (Merleau Ponty, p.37) may not be met with a damn of apathy or disinterest but with the permeable flow of perception. I contend that creative media practices kick-start an alert eye and mind, fostering a disposition for more social participation in the form of judicious pattern detection, tension release and feelings of pleasure. In microcosm, it is like solving a Sudoku puzzle. Brooks calls this:

“being propelled by the desire for limerence .. the moment when the inner and the outer patterns mesh” (2011:208)

Pursuing the cross disciplinary thinking in my account, I conclude with two additional observations - one by Albert Einstein, referenced by Geary in his TED talk http://www.ted.com/talks/james_geary_metaphorically_speaking.html (@ 7:00 mins) and a further one by Sennett. According to the following source, http://enchantedmind.com/html/creativity/inspiration/secrets_creative_genius.html, and also referenced by Brooks (2011:168), Einstein has this to say in answer to Jacques Hadamard's question about mental images and mathematicians:

"The words or the language, as they are written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought. The psychical entities which seem to serve as elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be "voluntarily" reproduced and combined ...

There is, of course, a certain connection between those elements and relevant logical concepts. It is also clear that the desire to arrive finally at logically connected concepts is the emotional basis of this rather vague play with the above mentioned elements. But taken from a psychological viewpoint, this combinatory play seems to be the essential feature in productive thought - before there is any connection with logical construction in words or other kinds of sign, which can be communicated to others ... The above mentioned elements are, in my case, of visual and some of muscular type. Conventional words or other signs have to be sought for laboriously only in a secondary stage,
when the mentioned *associative play* is sufficiently established and can be reproduced at will." (my italics)

If Einstein sanctions “*rather vague play*” with non-linguistic modes as an essential prerequisite to “*productive thought*”, perhaps there is something in this as a basis for future educational strategies as a whole, as well being a vindication of Bassey’s “fuzzy generalisations” in the field of educational research.

Inspired by Sennett’s formulation in relation to craftsmanship:

“Reformatting and close comparison decant a familiar practice or tool from an established container; the stress in the first three stage of an intuitive leap is on the *if*, on *what if?* Instead of *then*. That final conscious reckoning carries a burden – in technology transfer as in the arts, the burdened carryover of problems – rather than the clarifying finality of a syllogistic conclusion”

(2008:213)

I argue in favour of embracing the rhetorical, open-ended and self-renewing “what if” of intuitive thought as a premise for creative media education, rather than the concluding “then” of an “if” clause - which I speculate, is the emphasis underpinning much National Curriculum decision-making. Perhaps the faltering progress of media education and the fact that it is the last profession to “reinvent itself”, as referenced earlier by Jenkins, is because it shoulders the “burden” or “gravity” of media change on behalf of the rest of society and at the expense of widespread creative practices which are crucially relevant during the switch from page to screen.
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Figure 1: Finnish Media Education Policies: approaches in culture and education (2010:12)
Appendix 2

Example letter to Parents:

23 Chester Crescent
London
E8 2PH
3 March 2011

Dear Mrs. Medhurst

I write with respect to your son, George’s current involvement with the film project at Lambeth CLC on a Wednesday afternoon. I am a student at The Institute of Education studying for an MA in Media, Culture and Communication and have been attending most of the Wed. sessions in a research and observation capacity. My tutor, John Potter, has signed the letter below confirming my status.

I would like to include the film project as part of my dissertation and was wondering if I could interview George? I’d ask him general questions about his understanding of film and what he’s getting out of the project. For me it’s really important to hear the student’s voice and I’d really like to hear George’s viewpoint.

Ideally I would like to audio record what he says, but if that is not acceptable to either of you I am happy to take notes of what he says. Please be assured that George will not be identified and the findings will remain anonymous.

It may interest you to know that I visited Marion Hampton today in L5 – in the interests of educational research - and had a long and interesting chat about her work at the Academy. It would be a pleasure to interview George (as informally as possible), who seems to be getting a lot out of the Wed. sessions, and I look forward to your response.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Cannon

John Potter
Appendix 3


“It is suggested that ... there are two arenas for educational research: studies of singularities and studies of samples. Case studies, experiments and action researches are examples of the former, surveys of the latter. It is also suggested that there are two kinds of outcome: predictions and interpretations. Fuzzy generalisations and statistical generalisations constitute the former, stories (narrative/analytical accounts) and pictures (descriptive/analytical accounts) constitute the latter.”

Source: [http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000801.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000801.htm)
Children on the train

All I see is watery eyes around me
Trains on the track squeaking
I feel petrified to go on the heartbroken train

I dream, I dream of a juicy strawberry
And I am thrilled about the way it tastes

How would you feel? Mid Shot both walk from sides

[Handwritten notes and drawings]

Figure 3: St. Elizabeth Primary School, Bethnal Green, E2, Evacuation Poem no. 1 Shot List
Figure 4: St. Elizabeth Primary School, Bethnal Green, E2, Evacuation Poem no. 2 Shot List
Appendix 5

Interview with London Nautical Boys in their school library – April 28 2011

Interviewer: you know, as ever with these things I have to kind of say that there are no right or wrong answers, you can say what you like and anything you say is anonymous. I won’t be using your names, I might make up a few names actually or you could give me another name if you like, there you are...

(decide on names/identities... Bob, John, Lyall, Tim and Mali...)

Int: Right so I’ve flung a few questions down here Erm, which hopefully will be quite broad questions which hopefully might fire your imaginations in some way, erm and I want you to think back to the very beginning of all this, this venture ... you know, cast your mind back and I’d like to know what you hoped you’d get out of it, at that point. If anyone’s got anything to say about that?

John: I hoped that I’d be able to get some experience ... not so much experience but erm sort of knowing what goes on behind the big films and stuff and such

Int: Why?

John: because I’ve always interested in films and like how they managed to do that, cos whenever, cos my cousin used to take me to see the Harry Potter films and when there’s a scary part in it, she always used to say it’s all computerised, how can they possibly do that? And I used to get frustrated in the cinema .. a bit weird ..yeah

Int: Ok what about anyone else?

John: I always used to get scared, but this was when I was really young, you know the first films...

Int: Yeah

Lyall: Erm, I think I thought I was gonna learn a bit.. some more acting skills ...yeah... maybe a bit more filming as well. I was intrigued.

Int: Uh-ha

Tim: Um, I just wanted to make a film ... so..... (pause)

Int: What inspired you to want to do that?

Tim: I dunno ... I just....(pause)

Lyall: I think Raf means like, he was interested like by the film, I mean so he just wanted to see how it was like to make one,

Int: Yeah, OK, fair enough, Josh?

Mali: Erm

Int: Sorry, erm, Mali?

Mali: (laughs) Erm, erm, I forgot what I was gonna say, I just wanted to know how, how to make films.

Bob: I knew what I wanted to do, I think like, I wanted to gain experience from it I can use in later life, even if I didn’t go into the film industry.

Int: Yeah, come a bit closer cos it’s not a great recorder

Bob: I think in a way it helps you in all aspects once you've done it and I think it really broadens your perspective on life... your attitude on something...

Int: Well it’s interesting you should say that...
Bob: ...if n like your visual interpretation of stuff is different

Int: So what... how do you think this whole experience has er, might have influenced other areas of your life, following on from what you were saying

Bob: Er, like, I think if I wanted to think of a certain image or something

Int: Yeah

Bob: I know I’d think of that image and then through the film workshop the mentors that we had would tell us how to do that or a shortcut to make it look like this and so it makes you think about your art more and what you want people to feel from what you’re doing, so...

Int: So the other person?

Bob: Yeah, also, I think like erm if I was to do English or something, just working with stories and stuff which make you ... with your more on your mind and so you might want to progress that further.

Int: Mm, yeah

Lyall: I think it makes me look at stories in a whole kind of new way by watching films and seeing how they’re made, it makes me understand like stories and films, just like, just that bit more and I kind of think like that’s a good skill to have.

Int: You think that in English and storywriting and any other... I mean, even outside school, hey let’s think outside school, is there an outside school? (Laugh) Erm, what about other areas?

Lyall: Well it’s definitely helped me when I’ve wanted to act... acting in your normal life? Are you acting now? (laughs)

John: Yeah, Lyall!

Lyall: Yeah, I act for a theatre kind of club thing

Int: Oh do you? Oh right, I didn’t know that.

John: I didn’t know that.

Mali: I did

Int: Maybe he’s acting?

John: (laughs)

Lyall: Yeah, maybe I am.

John: Was he the one to come up with the names thing, you were weren’t you!

Int: er, OK, what do you? What do you think has changed since.. what was it a year and a half ago?

John: I now believe my cousin, when she says like it’s computerised.. I sort of think like erm look deeper at what Lyall said... like deeper into the film, about even like TV programmes, dramas, “A Touch of Frost”, I used to watch that with my mum, er I sort of look deeper into it and look for like the slightest thing ... the slightest thing... the smallest thing that could possibly lead to a suspect or something that could lead to a clue.

Int: Yeah

John: Something like that... (unintelligible...) people get annoyed cos I say like Oh do you remember that bit that bit ... shutup ...like when they’re trying to watch something that they haven’t watched before, like I was watching Shutter Island not long ago ..and like Oh that’s why... ‘I’m trying to watch the film!’
Int: Well people call that, I've heard that, from what you're saying, called the curse of the media student, because you, can you interpret that expression for me? Anyone? Josh?

?: Mali!

Int: Sorry – yeah ...

Mali: er

Int: What do you think that means, the curse of the media student?

Mali: It means like you’re interested in like media and telling people stuff that it may become a curse, I don’t know...

Int: Go on, try again with that, I think you’re on the right track ... I mean, people think of a curse as a bad thing

Lyall: I think the curse of just knowing like how things are done in film and probably might sprout it out a lot and basically you just know the whole kind of movie set up

Int: Yeah

Lyall: It’s just a bit annoying for other people just to hear you explain how a certain shot is made or how a green screen is used

Int: yeah how it’s .. constructed... er... and do you think it’s a curse, or would you, do you actually get off on it and enjoy it and like to talk to people about it

Mali: I do

Int: You do.

John: I sort of like tease people about it, like if I’ve seen a film they haven't seen, I know what’s going on like... I don’t always do it, I just do it to annoy people

Int: So you’re sitting in the cinema going, oh that was a good over-the-shoulder kind of shot and the high angle. And theyre just going Shutup

John: oh yeah, that was a good shot used, yeah (laughs) I’ve got this friend like called David, who I go to the cinema with.. he actually like has to sit 2 seats away from me

Int: Oh really? That’s quite extreme, isn’t it?

John: I went to see this film with some other friends, with Mark Walhberg, yeah and he actually, there was a gap in the seat, 2 seats there, it wasn’t actually that crowded so it was OK and even then I still tried to distract him... yeah but he just ignored me really well which not a lot of people can do.

Int: and were you like that before this project or did it get a hold of you... how long have you had this problem? Er John?

John: A year and a half now... (goes on to talk about asking questions .. spoiling film watching for others ... 345)

Int: (354) and would you say that from all your film watching, just your own...or tele or in the cinema, has any of that informed your film-making on the project? Have you thought ooh, I might try that...

Tim: Yeah, some you like try copying the shots

Int: Like what? Can you give me an example? Like a Die Hard car crash? Or...

?: Helicopter crash!
Int: Helicopter crash! Can you work that in on Clapham Common? I don't know...

John: It could happen...

Int: Sorry Rafa, er.. Tim... can you give me an example?

Tim: it's hard to think of it now, but... it's just like when I think of all the films that I've watched...and like I look for one for the best situation and try imitating that thing..

Int: Mm, and would you be imitating a storyline or an editing decision

Tim: just the editing decision

Int:...or whatever else...

Tim: just the editing thing

Int: Yeah, yeah, well about editing... what can you tell me about this whole business of editing? It is an entirely different set of skills isn't it from what you may have been..may have known before..

Lyall: Me personally I dread editing

Int: Do you?

Lyall: I'm sure probably that no-one here shares my opinion, but I just hate editing

Int: That's absolutely valid, give me why.

Lyall: I think, I'm not expecting it to be all action-packed, I just expect myself to be doing something like practical in the film, like I know editing is practical as well but I just prefer to be doing something like a stunt man or just being an actor, being an editor is just not my preferred position.

Int: Could you be more precise about what it is that you just don't like about it? I accept that you prefer to be in front of the camera...

Lyall: just the sitting down on the, you know, computer when you could be, you know, outside filming a shot again so it's finally good and just... I know this is kind of a stupid thing to say, but I honestly... I know that there wouldn't be no film without no editing but I just don't see the real fun in it.

Int: OK. Does anyone disagree?

Tim: Uh-hu

Int: (laughing) OK, go for it.

Mali: Erm, well, yeah, editing's not really supposed to be fun, it's just something you have to do in order to make the film look actually good, or stuff like that.

Int: Mm, it's not supposed to be fun, OK, so you do it out of a sense of duty?

Mali: Yeah

Int: just something that...

Mali: has to be done.

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Int: you gotta do it.

Bob: It don't mean it can't be fun.
Mali: Yeah, you can make it fun

Int: OK, Rafa, what do you think about that?

Tim: Erm well I enjoy editing, some people hate it, yeah and adding in all the music and putting the film together

Int: yeah and what do you feel when you’re actually in there, doing it, looking at the screen?

Tim: I just think of what could be done better, maybe we need to film that again or something.

Int: Right OK, and you know when you make decisions, editing decisions ... what do you think informs whether it’s a good or a bad editing decision?

Tim: whether people like it!

John: When you feel like it’s not, you’ve got to like be, you’ve got to have a mindset, when you’ve got to think you’re, you’ve got to think you’re an audience member who’s watching the film, and you’ve got to think about that... is this gonna look really cheesy or is this gonna look decent when they’re watching it cos there’s some shots like .. like making people cringe, stuff like that..

Int: What... cheesy and decent are really interesting words, tell me about cheesy and decent.

John: Cheesy’d be like a chase scene or something like that we had a chase scene in a film .. you know the films we made in English?

Lyall: What you mean like imitated badly?

John: Yes, yes

Bob: Chase scenes don’t have to be cheesy.

John: I didn’t say that they had to be cheesy.

Mali: Rubbish ones ....

(Talk about lack of continuity in films and in their own one – Josh’s hair and George’s braces and different clothes....)

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Int: Milo – Bob- what do you think about when you’re editing?

Bob: I don’t know I mean, when I’m editing I think it’s best to be like .. be as thorough as possible

Int: as what?

Bob: thorough , as thorough as possible cos then if there are continuity mistakes you can do like good things with editing that they don’t seem as big as they are cos you have all the tools at your disposal to do stuff like that, hide little mistakes or cut before there is one

Int: Yeah

Bob: um and I think when you're editing, the decision you make, if you look back it has to like flow with the rest of the film, it has to flow with how the characters are, what their personalities are like, how do they act, if it’s a bit mis, mishap then it’s not gonna work, and it’s gonna be a flaw in your editing work which it normally takes a long old while and it’s quite tedious..

Int: to fix you mean?

Bob: Well no, when you’re doing it, if cos, it has to be done and you get moments that are like fun because you may see a scene that you thought was great or you may notice something .. what one of the actors has done is really, really superb but then you might get 25 takes of someone making the worst mistake possible but you gotta chip it down to find the best one
Int: Yeah, so you've got to be quite persistent haven't you.

Bob: Yeah definitely

Int: You've got to persevere

Bob: Yeah – it's a tough job

Int: Er, yeah, it's a tough job, and er, yeah I mean what are the downsides? I mean we know what Medhi thinks, erm, Lyall

John: Who's Medhi? Who is this?

Medhi: We should stop making fake names!

Int: Yeah, should we drop that now? …

All: Yeah!

John: We all like acting but it's a bit...

Int: I mean there are absorbing aspects to editing but there are also bits that are you know just such a pain …

(talk about redoing shots and how annoying that is and it shows with the acting...)

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John: but I'm not looking forward to the editing for this one because I thought like. oh look like we got 2 twins here… er there’s one with a school uniform on and one with a jean jacket on the next week, one with an afro, one with no afro,

Int: Do you think you can get round those problems through editing?

John: I think we can

Tim: Maybe if we like cut it too quick and then cut it quicker and then maybe we'd be able to get round it

Int: There are always creative ways round these things, aren't there? I think...er.. especially with a football kind of scene.I mean, you did take, I think Emma called them dirty shots, did she call them dirty shots, when you were in amongst, and I don't know, maybe you could cut a few of those in at key moments,

Bob: You gotta have it like mixed up with lots, you gotta vary it up, cos if you don't in editing then it's just going to be boring to watch with nothing to catch your eye. It's either got to be the way you shoot it what the character does.. so.. cos I mean if you have just a geeza walking, it's not going to keep your mind active for long. I think the most difficult thing in editing are the tiny decisions you make, not the decision to put this shot in, it's like where to cut it, how long do you have the scene for, I mean those little ones that we don't think about as much are really difficult for me to decide cos I don't know what's perceived to be right, it's like unknown.

Int: So what have you got to rely on?

Bob: I think your gut helps a lot but also if you have a mentor who is a bit of an expert, they can tell you as well. I also think that like, if you studied and worked with the film long enough you'll get at least a rough idea of what you think it should be. So just follow that.

Int: Mm, I'm interested in the business of the gut (laughing)... in the sense that...it's my impression, correct me if I'm wrong, that you in school you don't get that much opportunity to exercise the gut feeling, or do you? I don't know I might be wrong.

Bob: It depends what the teacher sets you I guess
Lyall: I think that in our school we do get chances, but when we get our chances our gut is used a lot but when we don’t I think we still, it is still beneficial because some teachers make learning beneficial more than kind of for their own sake. And I think that this is what BFI is, it’s more beneficial to us, it’s just kind of something benefitting us more than … us being told to learn something even though it’s incorporated in it.

John: Yeah that’s what I found, it wasn’t like we come here .. teachers like, sit down and learn something because we volunteered to do it and we wanted to do it. We come here and it wasn’t like it’s like we was free to do what we wanted with our films, we wasn’t told we had to have a set structure, well there was a set structure but the only rule was …

Lyall: It was bendable

John: We wasn’t allowed to use violence in our first films which was fair enough but we didn’t have any sort of rules we couldn’t do. But some of them .. I say bend.. someone tried to like bend them... someone said we could use a helicopter..yeah no we can’t use a helicopter...as Medhi said.erm..

Lyall: one film was a horror film and I have to say it was quite good, so, I think when you bend the rules sometimes, sometimes it’s a bit more beneficial than when you stick to the rules

Bob: depends how much you bend them by.

John: Yeah – some people bend them some people smash em to bits

Int: another thing that interests me about what you’re saying is ermer, this project has quite clearly defined like briefs, don’t they, like you’ve got to take A to B and pass through this space. But, as ever, with everything, there are pros and cons, good things and bad things

Bob: I can see why they would want us to do it, they’re kind of, through that they’re sort of educating us in a certain type of film or what we could do but I think it’s better that we uncover that. I think they’re trying to teach a more adult way, a more cinematic way of doing a film instead of just doing a violent fight scene

John: instead of just grabbing the camera

Bob: they’re trying to direct us in the right way but in that I think they’ve got a low opinion of what we can, us as teenagers, can view in film and what we can create in film and by having that structure it kind of breaks down our imagination a bit cos we want to make a good film that sticks to that. And so I think if you let us have a bit more breathing space then we can create something which is as good as the hide and reveal and the camera movement and stuff and I think it would also be more personal to us cos it would be made through our minds, as with that I almost feel like it’s more the BFI or the CLC or the Cinema de Jeunesse’s film rather than our film cos it’s what they’ve told us to do.

Int: Right

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Lyall: I think we would probably, if we got a chance to make our own kind of you know, like, film with no boundaries. I think what they’re mainly worrying about is like what we put in it, like violence n stuff .. I think we would incorporate a lot of things which would only make the film better because we’ve got a lot of experience with these. I know this might sound a bit cocky or something like that but I think we probably wouldn’t do something stupid if we made, got the chance to do our own kind of.

Bob: or we might if we ... it could be quite likely but at least we’ve had that chance, at least they’ve given us this chance. I’m grateful for the things that I’ve learnt from the BFI.
Lyall: Me too!

Bob: But if I hadn’t done this first then maybe I wouldn’t have had the perception to do something aside from action; but now that I have done it, I’d like a little bit more...

Int: a bit more latitude..

Bob: a bit more space... cos it almost feels like they don’t trust our film ability. But I’m sure what they’re doing, what they’ve provided for us, I still think is fantastic so..

Int: Mm, yeah. OK

John: Can I add?

Int: Yeah, go...

John: Can I add on what Medhi said about if they was to give us like opportunities to film something we wanted to film, most of the films that our year group made in English, was to do with like someone running away... and so there wasn’t actually any boundaries and it’s just like, that’s what our film was about really

Bob: Yeah, I’m glad we had those boundaries cos now we know we can do something more. I’m glad that’s happened, but now that we’ve experienced two years of it, I’d sort of like to go on our own journey and through that they can teach us more things on the side...

Int: so there’s a value to having had those structures but you wanna go off n do your own thing now?

Bob: Yeah, possibly.

Int: (talk about making the Intro film for Paris...and John’s bad hair...)

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John: I think everyone’s sort of grown from that first film we made, everyone’s sort of grown into their own filmmaking personality, how they like to do things, and how they like to shoot things and what sort of things, film they like to shoot, so I was looking back at that.

Int: So, just picking up on that, how do you think you all differ then as film makers

Lyall: I think we all have very, well not very different personalities when it comes to film but I think there’s still a lot of difference between our preferred style of filming.

Int: Can you give me an example?

Bob: I think we each have our own aspect of film which we enjoy and when we see it in our film we admire that. As I say Medhi, as he’s an actor, he might think it was a good acting performance or Raf might think the way that was edited, he might notice it and think yeah I’ll use that one day, I dunno, but..

1037

Int: What about Peter?

Bob: Peter? I think Peter wants to be an aspiring actor, I think, am I right?

John: You’re... you’re on the right sort of tracks, yeah.

Int: and what about Milo?

John: I think, Milo, Milo has got a backseat, or even more front driver seat of a Director because his vision in shots is probably the best I’ve seen in the whole project we’ve done, since the whole 2 years
Tim: When we started this project everyone had different ideas but it turned out everyone agreed on Milo’s idea

(Talk about Medhi’s idea, need for big budget, English versus rest of Europe, competitive, 12 films, theirs 2nd last, couldn’t understand a word, excitement, 3 translators, Paris last year and difficulties of translation, only English people?)

1130

Bob: I think our film was well received ...like.. even though we all spoke a different.. a different language, through like the language of film they understood us.

NOTES ON THE REST...

Want to be viewed as the best, others were as good as ours, school time, more equipment, lots of experience, don’t get enough time on stuff, cutting down ideas, only 1 hour with a partner to make story, brain juices going, just a scratch of what they could come up with, ideas not as foolproof, slap-bang, more time over story creation, more meaningful and mature if we had more time, John wanted back-story, 2 hours on a Wed. not enough, not realistic amount of time, Bob: long gap between film making experiences, absences, hope Emma doesn’t think we’re taking her for granted, need for balanced criticism, don’t want to criticise anyone, 1132,

Memorable moment: Paris, photos after the screening, students commenting on hair, only people in uniform, English cool not being showed off. Getting picked out of a hat, Medhi got to go cos he’s French, video on train, Tim – bring in footage for the short,

Photos: talk about photos, more acting class, more experts to elevate performances, rafa – back stage – thinks it’s a good example of development, moulding of film through sound collection, 3 before this film: one on colour, one on camera movement and one on sound, most freedom/space with the sound one, maybe asking too much, might go all over the shop 1521, with freedom, but would be good to experience that a freedom, more workshops,

Learn anything surprising? 1571 John: childish and mature, Lyall: more to film than acting, appreciate n see the joys of camera, shooting and everything else, idea of film has changed for Rafa, action, all learned from mistakes, lots of diff ideas now, extras as important as main actors, Bob: simplification of the story helps, 1669,

“If I simplify the story then if I make it sort of simple enough then I can make it look more advanced in the way I shoot it, if you have a simple enough story then like you can make really good and fantastic shots around it, and make the film sort of... elevated in a way”

Proud of? Tim – more people in last project, more doesn’t necessarily mean better, vibe in last group was a bit of a laugh but this time more committed bunch, makes film making more enjoyable, worked well as group, Tim prefers editing on own, arrogant to have own version of film, human instinct to want your own vision of film, Lyall: learnt how to, how to honestly, grown as people through this, share a common joy and that is filming and learnt to film quite well.
Appendix 6

Interview Schedule – London Nautical School – 28 April 2011

1. Tell me what you were thinking before it started? Hope to get out of it?
2. What has changed since then? (themselves? Film-making choices/techniques?)
3. Has there been anything surprising about the process of film-making?
4. The most memorable thing that you've learned?
5. Is there anything you find particularly boring? Fun?
6. Consider our group... surprising things about other people? Yourself?
7. Has there been any change in the way you watch things? Example? TV? Films? Adverts?
8. Film making choices .... Has any of your viewing turned up in your films?
10. Are you conscious of any influence that the project has had on other areas of your life?
11. What are you most proud of?
12. Choose a photo to talk about..?
Appendix 7

Simon at Lambeth Academy Interview Transcript

Int: So what did you feel was going to happen?

Simon: I didn’t think there was gonna be another school there. So when I saw another school, I thought like... ooh, who are these people? So I got kind of shy when I saw them...

Int: Mm

Simon: I don’t like ... like ... talking to people I don’t know.

Int: But would you say things have changed now on that score?

Simon: Yeah, I think we're mates now.

... 

Int: OK, erm, so you mentioned that, you know, things have changed in terms of like socially between the 2 groups, which is great to see and you certainly seem like you’re having a good time. Er, what would you say are any other things that have changed, do you think, in that time?

Simon: Erm, I dunno .... Just the way I feel about that...

Int: Yeah

Simon: Like, it’s like, cos some people, like, Nathan and them people, Victor, they came for a couple of weeks and they stopped cos they thought it was boring.

Int: Right, yeah

Simon: But I’m interested in like all the stuff about it, like the practical stuff

Int: Yeah, the practical things, yeah

Simon: ... and the editing

Int: yeah, yeah, what is it about the editing you like?

Simon: Putting things in the right order and putting in like some music and stuff like that ... and so that affects what you can do with it

Int: So, why is that a good thing do you think? What, what makes a good order and good effects, what’s that all about?

Simon: I don’t know really, it just makes it more interesting. I guess, so when you’re watching and there’s music on and a big bang noise (?).. who’s shot? It gets the audience to focus more ... on the storyline

Int: Absolutely, it engages them more in the story...

... 

Int: Would you say that you bring in any of your own experience, from your own life into it?
Simon: ... I liked to fight, liked to fight

Int: You *like* to fight or you *liked* to fight?

Simon: I liked

Int: You liked, past tense. Well you mentioned that actually... it was brought up on the football pitch, when we were doing the fight scene and you mentioned that you used to like fighting. Erm, so... you don’t ... you’re not interested in that any more or...

Simon: I haven’t had a fight in ages.

Int: Great

Simon: Cos I’ve learned how to control my temper now.

Int: Ah, interesting... and do you think there might have been periods over the past few months where you might have, I don’t know, somehow brought that experience into this process?

Simon: Kind of like.. er.. giving the... information like how someone gets angry, angry about what someone else is saying .. or what their actions are.

Int: Yeah, you offered some suggestions, didn’t you, about how that might work, yeah, so er, it’s quite good, I think, isn’t it to bring your own stuff to the table, as it were.

Simon: ...like everyone in the group has different views .. and like, they bring different stuff, so like, it’s a place to put all our feelings into one little film

Int: Yeah. You’re absolutely right, and that makes it... what does that make it?

Simon: Groupwork

Int: Yeah, groupwork. I think that’s the other thing about film-making isn’t it? It involves lots of people doing different things, erm... students and adults. What do you think about our group? As a group?

Simon: Erm, which group? It’s like we only met a couple of months ago but it’s like we’ve known each other for a couple of years now. It feels weird.

Int: It’s that every week thing, isn’t it? I know it’s great that you’ve come every week, cos you don’t have to do you?

Simon: I don’t have to, but I just enjoy it.

...

Int: How would you say... I think we’ll probably finish with this one.. How would you say that the whole, the series of the whole few weeks has helped you in other ways, apart from learning about film?

Simon: Um, I dunno , like if I’m engaged to one thing, like the film, then I think it engages me to other subjects like when I’m at school, especially when it’s on a Wednesday cos like after school I’ve got film and I was like, yeah, film cos I like *going* there, cos it’s close and it’s interesting.

Int: It’s interesting, it's a nice group of people, yeah... and you're gonna go to Paris! ...

Simon: Yeah!
Int: ...which is I think the first thing you said... which is er great, I'm gonna be going as well.

Simon: My mum said can we come and I went ‘No!’ , (laughs) I went “No!” this is my time!

Int: This is your what?

Simon: This is my time!

Int: Your time, well exactly, this is your special thing.
Appendix 8a

Telferscot Primary Photo Elicitation 1

I wonder what the seagull is thinking.

young bird

poop

What is he looking for fish?

Their legs is foot staff.

nice blue background!

Old fashion.

relaxing
eating our lunch push

Why is there a tv?

Who’s the guy?

I am at home.

Cinema.

Old fashion. We got to watch old British films that were exciting.
Appendix 8b

Telferscot Primary Photo Elicitation 2
Appendix 8c

Telferscot Primary Photo Elicitation 3

A boring white room.

So much work to do!

I am lucky to have a classroom in another place.

I love learning!

boris old marks

People on the ceiling.
Appendix 9

The chart is taken from a YouTube clip of Csikszentmihalyi’s TED talk 2008: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXleFJcqsPs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXleFJcqsPs). He explores the various emotional stages conducive to the state of flow: a state in which one seems to abandon a conscious state of experiencing reality and enter a new, highly productive and enjoyable realm of focus.

These 7 points are taken from the same source:

The benefits of “Intrinsic motivation” have been taken up by Daniel Pink in his recent publication: “The Surprising Truth about what motivates us” (2011) in the context of business productivity.
Appendix 10a

Morlette Lyndsay from London Nautical School and The Institute of Education gave me transcripts of a monologue written by Bob, Year 9. Their task was to put themselves in the shoes of a much older person recalling an event from the past. She suggests that immersion in film production processes inspired this evocative piece of writing, which reads like the opening voice-over of a film. In the four pages that follow there is a strong cinematic sense to the rhythm, the nuances of accent, the detail and the description of a thirties New Orleans jazz club. See

Anybody who was anybody was there. You had politicians, and film stars best, right and center. You had fine restaurants and bars set up in the street just for the festival. When we reached the stage in the park, it was amazing how many people were there dressed in their smart clothes. Not only that, you had a multitude of the rich or poor bound together by great music. When we stood up through something very surprising happened, the guard told us to take these passes and head backstage. We weren’t gonna decline a chance to go backstage so we just went for it. He must have thought our tickets were VIP’s, whatever happened it didn’t matter because we and the
I was backstage at the biggest music festival of the year! As we entered the backstage area, we saw the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, Frank Sinatra, The Soul Brothers, and The Cuban Salsa Band. They were just there drinking and chatting like normal people. We went up to the bar and as I’m ordering my drink, still completely star-struck, I bump into a man dressed in a smart tailored suit. I’m apologising the crazy and he says, “It’s cool, no need to say sorry.” And then it hits me – standing before me was my hero, Muddy Waters. He said to me, “Would you like a drink soon?” I accepted and we chatted for some time, and then by chance, I mentioned I had a blues band.
He laughed and said, “I need a partner for my set, fancy playing?”

I was shocked by what he said. It took a while to get to grips with what he just asked.

Eventually, I said that my band would definitely do it. I told the rest of the band and they were as excited as I was. We hurried to get our instruments. It took some time but eventually we were ready. Now when we were on stage with, unluckily it was the most exhilarating moment of my life, no doubt about it. He introduced us to his friends and said, “Do you mind if I play with you one of your songs?”

I instantly said yes and knew the song we should play. The song we picked was called “A Hero by the River” Being the singer lead
I lay bed and sleep, with Muddy doing a magical accompaniment and he didn’t even know the song. A hero by the river was a song about a young blues artist wanting to become a Model for blues in Orleans. When the song finished, Muddy stood at the crowd “Now that is what we call blues!” and we saluted, it was a spectacular moment. Afterwards celebrities congratulated us, calling us a great band. When they went off to their own business, I decided to order a drink to help sink in what had just happened. When I ordered my drink, he said “Your one of the ‘Ragged’ Blues. Odem Loyal, I gotta say you guys can play. May I have your autograph?” No one had ever asked me that before in my life, I signed it gladly.
Appendix 11 - Student Evaluation

To section to be completed by Tutor before distributing

Name of Course: Film club  Tutor Name: Emma

Total Number of sessions: Dates:

Type of course (please delete) Technology/Arts  Family Learning

Name (optional): Simon  School: Lambeth  Year Group: 9

1a. What did you think of the course? (please tick one)

😊 ☐ It was excellent  ☐ It was good
😊 ☐ It was okay  ☐ It was poor
😊 ☐ It was very poor

1b. Please explain why.

because met new people and I learnt a lot.

2a. I feel that my skills and understanding in this area have been improved? Yes/ No

2b. What have you learned?

How to edit and make videos.

3a. Would you recommend this course to a friend? Yes  No

3b. Why?

because it's a good experience

4. Please tell us anything else about your experience.

going to Paris on the Euro star for free.

5. It would have been better if....

It was longer.