

Issues of self-directed learning in a drama-driven curriculum

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A research project conducted in Queensland in by Dr. David Warner, provided what he has called, '... some alarming evidence about the lack of disposition and skill for self-directed learning,' in Australian schools. It is not surprising therefore that when he was principal of ELTHAM, College of Education appointed for the new millennium, self-management and self-directed learning became a central feature of teaching and learning from K – 12 at the school.

What is surprising is that a Head of School, with an orientation to Knowledge era schooling saw the potential of drama within his vision for change and innovation. It is within this philosophical and political climate that an integrated Year 3/4 program, with drama at the centre of students' learning, was born. The space is known as The HISTORY Centre with the emphasis placed on STORY.

INTRODUCTION

This paper will explore the extent to which drama processes in The HISTORY Centre conform to a vision which moves primary aged students towards the disposition and skill for self-directed learning.

LANGUAGE GAMES

As I was writing this paper at my kitchen table, Don Watson, author of the language text *Death Sentence* was speaking on the radio about the word, 'enhance'. You can 'enhance' anything, he said: your nose, the military, or in the case of my school,

'... the talents of individuals in an environment of care...' (ELTHAM, 2002). I use Watson's sardonic point about enhancement to underline the potential for language to be cleverly manipulated unless grounded in context. In this paper I hope to contextualize

the notion of self-directed learning as it is played out in a teaching and learning program called The History Centre situated in ELTHAM, an independent school in Victoria. I will incorporate relevant theories of autonomy from drama literature and from the broader field of education as a way of understanding my own investigations into teacher interventions and self-directed learning.

Orwellian language, says Watson is language that is anaesthetised of meaning, and as far as he is concerned: 'Education is one of the worst' (Watson, 2004). Needless to say, my courage regarding research into 'self-directed learning' diminished for some time after that broadcast, yet I am aware that notions of autonomy have prevailed in the literature and in staffrooms for over half a century. The vocabulary that is used is however ever-changing. I have also been curious about the way that partially synonymous words like self-actualisation, autonomy, empowerment, ownership and agency are used in educational contexts. These shifts in language are not solely a function of fashion but also a kind of marking of territory to indicate a change of emphasis or perspective.

At the time of my teacher training in the 1970s Abraham Maslow's notion of '*self-actualisation*' was popular. Maslow placed self-actualisation into his model of a Hierarchy of Needs after basic physiological needs, safety, belonging and esteem (Maslow, 1954). The Macquarie dictionary describes self-actualisation as the '... realisation of man's potential to develop as a mature, autonomous, creative being'. As a point of comparison, autonomy is defined as: self-government, independence, self-sufficiency and self-regulation (Macquarie, 1989). These ideals dovetailed comfortably with the humanistic, child-centred theories of the seventies, which formed a cornerstone of my teacher education. In this paper I use autonomy as the generic equivalent to self-directed learning, which is the preferred term in my school setting.

Current curriculum documents add self-management, self-education and self-determination (as well as self-direction) to this complex family tree (Queensland Studies Authority, 2003). This is all the more curious since in post-modern thought, the very concept of an essential 'self' has come into question. For the purposes of this paper 'self' is recognised as part of a language game, which can be 'read' and understood contextually, and which exists as an ongoing concern of education. It remains problematic therefore how we can balance this 'self saturation' (Gergen, 1991) with the '...interests of different groups and individuals in order to bring about outcomes that are satisfactory to all' (Winch, 1999 p.83). With notions of autonomy and self-actualisation already implanted in my teacher education and experience, it took little to rekindle the ember of curiosity when '*self-directed learning*' entered the vocabulary at ELTHAM.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

ELTHAM, College of Education, formerly Eltham College is a K-12 independent school. It has been my place of employment for 12 years and the site of my research study through Griffith University, Queensland. I decided to formalise my investigation into my

teaching interventions in process drama and the ways they impacted on self-directed learning through reflective practice (O'Mara, 1999; Schön, 1983; Taylor, 1996). The research was conducted with primary aged students who were engaged in an integrated curriculum that was narratively framed.

My research interests emerged from the way that my personal and social history in drama education intersected with the values of ELTHAM'S new Principal who was looking for more than 'change at the edges' (Warner & Maher, 2002).

The staff meeting in January 2000 at Eltham was a 'fresh start' at many levels: a new millennium, a new principal, and a new strategic plan. The address by Dr. David Warner instantly alleviated fears of the rumoured transformation into a 'grammar school' but instilled new ones. We were asked by Dr. Warner to assume change as a way of life for our students and to prepare them for global citizenship. Central to this view were the Key Goals of student and staff flexibility and teachers as managers and designers of constructivist classrooms. Warner challenged us by saying:

For years we have talked about life-long learning, independent learning, and the autonomous learner. However it is still a lot of talk.... How often do we...think about planning and preparation [but] start with content? As an educator, I believe that if there is one skill that students need [from the beginning]... to the end of formal schooling, it is self-directed learning (Warner, 2000 p.5).

The school documents state that self-directed learning '... refers to the disposition and capabilities of learners to accept responsibility for planning, seeking out learning resources, implementing and evaluating their own learning' (Brookfield, cited in Warner & Christie, 2000 p.2).

More recently Dr. Warner has elaborated for parents in communication to parents:

In simple terms it is having the disposition or character to want to learn and the skills to be able to access learning when, how and where it is needed... (Warner, 2004).

There is no aspect of schooling on which Warner is more uncompromising. An autobiographical perspective would show his research interests have evolved from earlier studies of Guglielmino and Guglielmino who have developed research instruments associated with readiness for self-directed learning. For most practical purposes Warner considers self-directed learning and autonomous learning to be synonymous although autonomy is not used in the school literature. Warner, Christie and Choy's research (1998) into the level of readiness of vocational students for flexible delivery and on-line technology led to his alarm about the lack of disposition and skill within the VET sector for self-directed learning. Why then did Warner's view of self-direction as the most essential of all enabling skills resonate with me, a drama specialist employed in the primary sector? I imagine it was because his message overlapped with notions of autonomy within the highly social, collaborative practices familiar from drama literature.

AUTONOMY IN THE DRAMA LITERATURE

The terminology used by selected drama practitioners brings into relief significant agreement in the language allied with autonomy including: *informed choice, freedom within structure, accumulated mastery and independence*. The selected overview which follows provides a backdrop against which I will examine my own practice.

Joe Winston, a drama writer and practitioner rejects abstract principles of autonomy for those that are constructed narratively within historical and social contexts. Community is emphasised over personal autonomy and is therefore central to the actual and fictional stories that are shared in drama. Stories for Winston become a way of building social repertoire with the potential to ‘...*inform* our choices in life ...[not] dictate them’ (1998 p. 21).

Autonomy as proposed by Helen Nicholson and others resides in finding the balance between structure and flexibility. Nicholson advocates ‘guided interventions’ over ‘didactic instruction’ for the teacher who is introducing new ideas and forms. ‘Part of the magic of teaching drama lies not only in introducing students to a diversity of dramatic languages but also in giving them space and time to find the gaps and silences where meaning is made’ (Nicholson, 2000 p.6). Neelands (2002), Fleming (2001), Cahill (2001) and Queensland’s arts rationale (Queensland Studies Authority 2003) also discuss the tensions of freedom within certain rules or constraints. Neelands celebrates the diversity of social contracts that are made in schools in spite of the very real constraints of time, space and numbers (1998).

Bolton aligns autonomy with ownership of the material, but like Nicholson, highlights the tenuous ‘balancing act’ of freedom and structure. He cautions against ‘leader-dependency’(Bolton, 1992) particularly with teacher in role experiences, ‘... for over a period of time the students ... need to understand and be in charge of their own theatrical structuring – as artists responsible for their own art product, as students discovering new understandings, as group members developing autonomy.’ He continues:

The teacher is always looking for opportunity to ‘hand-over’. S/he has to be able to select the kind of input most appropriate for both the material and the class, to insert that input deftly while seeking the chance to withdraw (1992, p.17).

Bolton’s ‘leader-dependency’ is echoed by Dr. Warner’s research in the tertiary education sector but his conclusions have implications for teachers at all levels. A ‘...culture of teacher dependence has its roots in a highly structured and teacher centred/controlled curriculum in schools’(Warner & Christie, 2000 p. 9). O’Toole is equally forthright in pointing out that a ‘... classroom is a context of setting which naturally disempowers its clients, rendering them under the control of others’ (1992, p. 157). It is Heathcote who is offers insightful strategies for reversing that control.

DOROTHY HEATHCOTE

A keynote address delivered by Heathcote in 1998 was tellingly known as the *Sisyphus* lecture. It recommended teaching for *self-education*. Its features, (originally recommended by James Moffett in the seventies) included: individualised learning modes, active meaning construction, interactivity, integration, cross-age learning, higher order thinking, and greater development of oral language acts. To that end, Heathcote recommended drive and independence within an active environment utilising, 'self-directed activities.' Challenging her audience, she asks, 'Do you see much of this happening' (Heathcote, 1998 p. 9)? Her frustration is reminiscent of Warner's retort that independent autonomous learning 'is still a lot of talk'.

For Heathcote teaching for self-education involves: drive and independence over passivity and dependence, process skills, and creation of an active environment utilising 'self-directed activities' (1998 p. 9). It is the social grounding of learning that creates the conditions for self-education. *The Mantle of the Expert* strategy, for example, models ways whereby self-direction is preserved in mastering skills not as students but in role as members of a community in which dedication and pride are brought to the enterprises of being – for example – early settlers under Governor Bligh in the colony of New South Wales. 'Everyone is grown up...' she states, '... carrying the responsibilities of adults and facing up to the results of their decisions'. As a result curriculum work is purposeful and important and '... students practise skills and learn about things within the contextual needs...' (Heathcote, 2000 p. 35).

At ELTHAM several primary level teachers have adapted Heathcote's *Mantle of the Expert* strategy as enthusiastically as many drama specialists have. The seeds of a storied curriculum however were sown in the nineties with the professional development of Kieran Egan.

THE STORY FORM MODEL

In his first year as principal, Dr. Warner became familiar with the long-standing collaboration between my colleague Sara (a Year 4 class teacher) and I. She had been adapting Kieran Egan's story form model (Egan, 1988) as a means of integrating curriculum for several years. Egan's framework identifies stages whereby curriculum can be shaped into the form of a story. In a recent publication, Egan returns to the importance of story for meaning making in order that school subjects are not offered as '...disembodied pieces of knowledge or skill' but as '... human adventures, full of drama...' (Egan, 1998, p. 64).

Applying Egan's framework, Sara developed the class work narratively with students as characters 'in role' in a variety of settings and contexts derived from focus questions, literature or history. In the drama lesson we would we would examine the class events and issues using the languages and skills of drama for 45 minutes each week. As the drama specialist I attempted to engage students further by using a range of drama strategies to increase the significance of events, which students encountered in the class

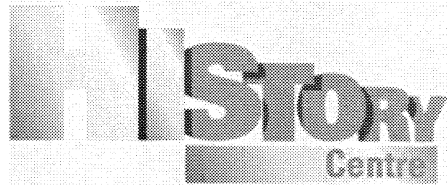
narratives. The collaboration with Sara demanded time-consuming consultation to catch up with the details of the story's development but also offered a continuity, which paid off in the students' enthusiasm and sense of 'communal empowerment' (Neelands, 1996).

The addition of 'built environments' or indeed 'sets', which were elaborately constructed in their classroom by the students over the course of a semester, provided an important layer of investment in the story and the learning. Over the years I have found myself engaged in intrigues in underground caves, endangered fishing villages, Venice during the Renaissance, and a ghost town on the Murray. Eventually, more and more of the drama sessions took place in the constructed class worlds where the 'sets' mediated real and role engagement, instead of the designated drama room. The stories unfolded in the fictional present as 'living through' experiences (Bolton, 2003).

Dr. Warner recognised from this rich but awkward collaboration that drama had more to offer than a 40-minute weekly lesson. He agreed to an expanded version of our collaboration with a more flexible timetable. In his second year as principal, Dr. Warner supported Sara's proposal which put drama at the centre of teaching and learning in a newly assembled Years 3 & 4 team. I was delighted with the collaboration that was to become the HISTORY Centre.

THE HISTORY CENTRE

A visitor to the HISTORY Centre would not necessarily notice anything unusual if walking through the colourfully branded STORY space at ELTHAM'S primary school. There are four classrooms, four teachers and a centre area into which any combination of the Years 3 and 4 classes can gather.



At those times when the students are engaged in creating their physical environments or actively participating in role as members of a community, the sense of ownership of the space is particularly evident. Some of the 'built' environments have included the simplicity of a village well for Lloyd Alexander's story *The King's Fountain* (1971) and the complexity of an archaeological site along the Nile. The community is usually framed in a historical context and most curriculum outcomes are integrated into the story frame. My role in this setting is that of an embedded drama specialist- a fifth teacher- whereby I am expected to mentor and work alongside teachers 'in role' as well as to conduct the specialist drama lesson. Instead of the weekly class, I have to date been assigned to the History Centre for a full day each week. There is a great deal of flexibility over the proportion of time spent in physically building a community, 'living through' a fiction, having a 'formal' drama lesson or completing related journal tasks.

I have watched a class of students as villagers gather at the well to discuss the conduct of a selfish King and enjoyed a re-enactment of the myth of Isis and Osiris. I have seen all four classrooms transformed into the first settlement of Sydney Cove using timber, nails, tyvek (plasticised paper), paint and tape. In Sydney Town itself there was

an inn, the homestead, the dairy, as well as a bank, newspaper office and a doctor's surgery. The centre area remained free as a town square where a flag reminded us of the authority of the governor.

IT'S ALL DRAMA

A natural distinction has evolved between what History Centre staff call *Role-play* – i.e. the deep-end 'living through' convention of the narratives and *Drama* – the timetabled subject, where a broader range of drama forms are utilised **based** on the role-play. The class teachers and I all take part in role-play as appropriate, but the responsibility for **drama** is mine alone. Drama practitioners would recognise all the strategies as part of process drama and/or theatre repertoire. The allotted (but optional) time for specialist drama resembles a workshop structure that is designed to expand knowledge of drama skills as well as to isolate and shape the meanings from the naturalistic group role-play sessions. The distinctions are further blurred by the fact that the sessions no longer exist in physically separated, self-contained spaces.

Over the years the metaphor of the floodlight and the spotlight has helped Sara and I to illuminate the differences between the two drama worlds. Interestingly, the 'living through' part is considered by students to be 'class work' more than 'drama work.' Asking, *are we doing role-play today? or are we doing drama today?* is in no way confusing for them within the context of the History Centre. But putting the differences into words can be a bit of a struggle:

With role-play it's kinda like you can add things to it but you can't add that much like and you kinda have these boundaries of what you can add to it. And ...in drama... you could [sic] add anything to it.

In role-play, you really can't make it up 'cus you're playing other people's lives. (Audio Transcripts 2002)

The degree of autonomy vocalised by the Year 4 classes from which I have selected two representative examples, was in direct contrast to the impressions of self-directedness that I was anticipating. I was convinced the empowerment enabled by being able '... to suspend the real relationships of the classroom and explore other relationships,' (O'Toole, 1992 p. 157) would dominate students' reflections about drama experiences. Drama processes in the History Centre have led to fresh examinations of what autonomy or self-directed learning might *look like* in this teaching and learning context. Let's consider the story of Maud.

THE STORY OF MAUD

Scene 1

The students have used school desks to construct and anchor a classroom 'set' to represent Sydney Town in the year 1806. I have adopted the role of Maud, housekeeper to Governor Bligh. A Year 4 teacher (who is not drama trained) is Bligh. Maud is a low status character who has been able to enter into conversations around town by virtue of her near-invisibility. The end of semester is advancing and she has served her purpose. Out of role, I ask my colleague to 'sack' me publicly during role-play. We wait until the streets are bustling with enterprise. I enter as Maud looking anxiously up and down the 'street' looking for the Governor. A student/ settler fetches 'him'.

You wanted to have a word with me Maud? says Bligh.

Well you see. You've never missed before, sir. With me pay that is, says Maud, awkwardly.

Of course, Maud. I'm glad you mentioned it. In fact it will actually be your last one.

But, I don't understand, sir. I work hard

My niece will be coming out from England says Bligh with a tone of finality *and she is going to be taking over the housekeeping duties.* He hands Maud some coins.

By now the men from the Inn are enjoying the prospect of a confrontation and begin to chant, *Sack her, sack her* but then seeing the look on Maud's face their voices fizzle out.

Most of the Year 4 'settlers' have by this time left their various enterprises and gathered around the source of the noise.

The assistant to the town doctor, steps forward.

Come with me Maud, I'll show you what you will have to do.

I think I can offer you a few hours a week Maud, says the man from the Homestead. Various settlers join in with offers.

You'll be alright Maud. We'll help you out. We'll find you a place, Maud. And finally:

Now, the first thing you will have to do is open a bank account, says the Doctor's assistant as she steers Maud toward the bank.

Scene 2

Two days later the scene is replayed for some visiting Year Nines in the centre area. The Year Fours have cleared a stage space to perform for the older visitors. The references to Maud in this scene are of the 'character' Maud now portrayed by a student, complete with bonnet and feather duster. The actors take their starting positions and a narrator (a girl) begins 'his' story:

Well two days ago, I got married to a lovely lady called Ann.... I also got a job in a clothing shop.... There's ...been some lovely babies born in the colony...[and] Maud's still on the road, earning moneyAnd the first newspaper came out in the colony (Video Transcript, 2002).

While the narrator is delivering this rehearsed account, four actors move around the space and form images of a wedding ceremony, a transaction in a shop, and Maud with shawl and duster getting her last pay from the Governor. The only additional spoken text is offered by the miming actors at the point where the narrator cues: *And the first newspaper came out in the colony.*

The townspeople gather around the 'pretend' newspaper and read chorally: *Maud's been fired!*

As the teacher I was pleased with *Maud's* success as a catalyst for students to share their 'expertise' in negotiating the treachery of Sydney Town. I was grateful to have recognised the most natural moment for 'Mantle of the Expert' that had come my way. Not long after I organised for a student/officer of the colony to read Maud's death announcement at a public meeting. I was desperate to tie up loose ends before the end of semester. I was confident her death would be neatly linked to polluted water, which the class teacher had introduced as a focus for some of the interdisciplinary work.

Unfortunately, not only was I misguided about the loose ends as students took over the investigation of Maud's death but we were forced to carry over the story into third term. It became obvious at our first gathering that they had been very busy compiling details into written form during the winter break. A student who had always taken pleasure in looking out for Maud asked to speak. She then proceeded to enumerate the accumulation of evidence from a formal report describing Maud's alleged murder. This student normally resists writing tasks. We now had a murder mystery on our hands. Teacher's plans were abandoned.

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES

The story of Maud took place over several lessons using a range of conventions from whole group spontaneous improvisation with teachers in role, through to community meetings to devised scenes. Chosen as a typical series of process drama lessons, it serves as a useful interactive story for closer scrutiny of the self-directed learner. As stated earlier, drama educators have always shared an interest in autonomy while elevating social interdependence to the foreground of those discussions. Gergen reminds us that notions of individual rights and autonomy in the modernist sense do not stand up to scrutiny. 'One chooses not between relationship and individual autonomy, but between varying forms of interdependence....' (1991, p. 242).

The public humiliation of Maud presents opportunities for students to witness, take responsibility for and deconstruct issues of justice and power. Where there are no preconceived notions of what is worth learning, both students and teachers become open to possibility and authentic inquiry. Gallagher's 'pedagogy of choice' derives from

Sartre's theatre of situation whereby 'man's choices can be exposed and examined' (2003 p.4). Had my intervention as Maud been ignored in favour of the excitement of life on the streets of the settlement, I expect 'she' would have set about seeking work herself. The 'sacking' scene was a genuine offer, which I as teacher was prepared to sacrifice. After all, the detail of unclean water was totally overridden by students who instead, grasped the opportunity to take over authorship and power after Maud's contrived death announcement.

James Walker gives a historical perspective of autonomy, which he calls 'self-determination' which resonates with the language of ELTHAM. Walker makes a case for self-determination as *the* fundamental educational aim (1999). He emphasises those social processes, which enable individuals '... to be aware of what is conducive to self-determined growth and to decide, accordingly, what action to take' (1999, p. 117). Implicit to the teacher/student relationship is an agreement to community and to what he calls 'natural authority' whereby 'control is exercised through agreed social practices' (1999, pp.119-20).

It is important to underline that the agreed social practices of drama at ELTHAM include the establishing of routines and repertoire in more traditional settings before students find that drama is at the centre of their learning in the History Centre.

FEATURES OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

The drama moments that were drawn from the research data, I believe are generally representative of story-building at primary and secondary level programs that use process drama. Extended role-play in 'built environments' may be under-utilised but the modes of dramatic play, teacher in role using Mantle of the Expert provocation and group-devised scenes, represent a familiar repertoire of experiential through to more 'distanced' and deliberate drama forms. I am interested in examining the features of self-directedness that are evident in the Story of Maud in the account already offered.

Bolton might want to examine the signs that led Mrs. Moore the teacher to hand over responsibility for both story development and for artistry for evidence of any 'leader-dependency'. I think he would have commended the distancing required to reshape the story for a visiting audience and the transfer of ownership regarding the circumstances of Maud's death. The evidence accumulated by the students to shift the emphasis from a natural to a suspicious death was acknowledged and students capably led the new directions. It is worth mentioning that several days later at a subsequent hearing to assess whether the evidence was of sufficient quality to press charges and go to trial, teachers in role determined the results to be inconclusive. Bolton's notions of input and withdrawal are I believe effectively illustrated by the metaphoric tennis match that was the story of Maud.

Heathcote might acknowledge the environment of authentic enterprise and the subtle shifts between the real and role power relationships. She has said: '*A good teacher*

knows when to tell and when to enable that children learn' (Heathcote, 1981). Experience helps us to build foundations carefully and read the interactive signs increasingly more skilfully.

Winston would look for 'informed choices' in art-making and Nicholson for the transformative potential in meaning making. But as easy as it might be to make a list of the characteristics of self-directedness in drama and then tick them off like the Guglielmino 'readiness scale' it remains, like any other isolated feature of drama, simply one part of the story, skimming over the nature of the pedagogical relationships, the pressures of outcomes-based education and the ways that experiences and interactions are cumulative and interlinked; what O'Toole calls the '...crucial intangibles of classroom relationships... (2002, p.50).

ASKING THE PLAYERS

As the teacher/researcher, I made many assumptions about varying degrees of student autonomy within the range of drama processes encountered in experiences like *The Story of Maud*. It seemed reasonable to assume that when improvising spontaneously in situations like Maud's public 'sacking', that participants would feel most self-directed. Conversely, when I took over as the drama workshop leader, focusing action, restricting form and space and time in order to re-shape class stories for an older audience, I was unapologetic about regaining control. I was of course, thinking mostly about their self-directed learning in regards to choice over form. Their responses focused on the ways that they were often limited by the content; that is, the need to respond appropriately within the set historical parameters. In other words, the artistic choices offered to students who witnessed Maud's public humiliation were in some senses more restricted than those of the devised scenes intended for an audience. The replaying of the scene shifted participants from reacting in the moment into actor/authorship where they were able to 'try out' and thereby manage the power relationship of the characters themselves. The role-play however, was critical to the engagement and investment in the story. The time devoted to this exploratory stage creates the conditions for real sharing of power, authorship and playfulness. There is no doubt that flexibility of time can liberate the teacher from feeling a need to control pace, focus and form under the pressure of 'getting something done.' At this stage of the data analysis it would seem that the greater the ownership over the story, the less is apparent over the form. When story choices are minimised, the attention to artistry seems to be maximised.

I re-visited students' impressions of History Centre experiences some months later when students were in a more conventional drama setting with weekly 40 minute classes in Year 5:

Well another thing about it is...well, in role-play... if you want to show what happened [historically, you'd be...] sort of acting out just what exactly happened and...in drama... you could change it around and make it really funny....
(AudioTranscripts, 2003)

For these students, the autonomy invariably begins with the content, and the form just naturally follows as appropriate. That is not to say that artistic repertoire should not be taught.

What started four years ago as Watson's 'anaesthetised language' at staff meeting, is a significant feature of the current literature of learning in the arts. The rationale statement for Queensland's Arts curriculum cites lifelong learning, self-directed learning and self-management skills as valued attributes gained through arts education. The Handbook for Productive Pedagogies (as cited in O'Toole) includes **student direction** '... where students influence the specific activities or tasks they will do in a lesson...' (2002, p.51). Life skills and lifelong learning feature as prominently as self-actualisation fifty years ago.

THE NATURE OF DRAMA

In taking a historical perspective of notions of autonomy, the slipperiness and cyclical nature of language becomes apparent. Fleming has regularly cautioned about assuming that language has a 'transparency' independent of social practices, contexts or pedagogy (2001). It is fun to test this out with the word *integration*.

While Dr. Warner's own research investigated self-directed learning quantitatively, I do not believe that his enthusiasm to implement a drama-driven curriculum had anything to do with a checklist of characteristics conforming to notions of self-direction. It is all too easy, as Bolton has stated '... to deceive ourselves that we teach for these things directly' (1980 p.8). Dr. Warner's vision was as much a response to the engagement of students managing 'living fictions' with their teachers, as it was to advance his passion to prepare for the Knowledge Era. Like Heathcote, he understood the ways that power relationships can be subverted when the student/teaching partnership includes being 'in it together'. He would appreciate the purposefulness of re-telling Maud's predicament from a number of different perspectives and value the partnership of creating knowledge together. I believe he recognised intuitively the ways that drama allies with the features of new curriculum paradigms (Doll, 1993; Egan, 1998) which feature the importance of narrative.

Robert Fulford, a Canadian journalist, reminds us why we need stories:

Stories are how we explain, how we teach, how we entertain... and how we often do all three at once. They are the juncture where facts and feeling meet. (1999 p.9).

To that end, Dr. Warner has done more than change language or enhance engagement. He has reconfigured learning spaces, set up drama mentorship and reorganised the timetable. If these are the necessary conditions required to set up the predisposition and skill for self-direction so be it. Drama teachers will know exactly what to do next.

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